



Leader Tools

2018

COUNCIL BYLAWS

The official guide for members serving as council officers,
committee chairs and delegates

American Business Women's Association Mission Statement

The mission of the American Business Women's Association is to bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support and national recognition.

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PROUD CODE OF CONDUCT

Ethical dilemmas occur as a result of values in conflict. It is important that the values of the American Business Women's Association are communicated to all members, and so Express Network and Chapter leaders are asked not only to communicate but also to embrace, support, reinforce and uphold ABWA's Proud Code of Conduct.

ABWA's Proud Code of Conduct was developed as a means of guiding all members in making ethical decisions. The broad statements of the code of conduct that are listed below are not expected to cover all conduct for all situations. This is why the Proud Code of Conduct was created as a living and fluid code.

1. All members will serve as goodwill ambassadors for the American Business Women's Association.
2. Members will not allow their personal beliefs and convictions to interfere with the representation of ABWA's mission.
3. Members will always treat their member colleagues, guests, vendors and sponsors with honesty, respect, fairness, integrity, responsibility, kindness, and in good faith.
4. Members will maintain compliance with ABWA National, Chapter and Express Network Bylaws.
5. Members will not use their personal power to advance their personal interests.
6. Members will strive for excellence in their professions by maintaining and enhancing their own business knowledge and skills, and by encouraging the professional development of other members.

2016 CALENDAR

JANUARY 1	Council Officer Election Report and administrative fee are due to ABWA National.
JANUARY 31	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To award an Impact Scholarship in May 2016, submit your network's SBMEF contribution and selection criteria to jmiller@abwa.org before January 31, 2016.2. Select and vote on the nominee(s) for the Top Ten Businesswoman.
MARCH	Women's History Month
MARCH 1	Nomination for National Office and Acceptance of Nomination forms must be submitted to ABWA National by this date.
MARCH 28	Biz Mentoring Monday
MARCH 31-APRIL 2	Eastern Regional Conference (Districts 1 and 4) in Greensboro, North Carolina
MARCH 31	Elect Nominating Committee for officer elections.
MARCH-MAY	Nationally sponsored Spring Membership Recruitment Campaign
APRIL 7-9	Central Regional Conference (Districts 3 and 5) in Indianapolis, Indiana.
APRIL 12	Equal Pay Day
APRIL 14-16	Western Regional Conference (Districts 2 and 6) in Ft. Worth, Texas.
MAY 1-30	Universal Officer Election Month for all leagues (Chapters and Express Networks).
MAY 15	2017 Top Ten Business Women of ABWA applications due to ABWA National.
MAY 15	Councils' IRS Form 990-N (e-Postcard, Return of Organization Exempt Form Income Tax for small tax-exempt groups whose gross receipts are \$50,000 or less is due. The IRS's filing deadline for councils is four and one-half months after the Council-year end.
JUNE 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The last day for SBMEF contributions for the 2015-2016 Award Year.2. Applicants for Outright Grant Scholarships must have process completed.3. Applicants for Business Skills Tuition Reimbursement must have process completed.
JUNE -JULY	Newly elected leaders develop a business plan, goals and budget for the 2016-2017 Award Year.
JUNE 30	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Liability Insurance (Administrative Fee) premium payment due to ABWA Nat'l.2. Report names of Executive Board and Standing Committee Chairs to ABWA Nat'l.3. Website Hosting or Listing Agreement (Terms and Conditions) due to ABWA Nat'l.4. Website Hosting Subscription Fee due to ABWA Nat'l. (if applicable)
JULY 31	Last day to submit your Best Practices Submission for the 2015-2016 Award Year.
AUGUST 1	New term begins for newly elected officers for the 2016-2017 Award Year.
OCT 26-OCT 29	ABWA's National Women's Leadership Conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee.
DECEMBER 15	IRS Form 990-N (e-Postcard, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax Form for small tax-exempt groups whose gross receipts are \$50,000 or less is due. The IRS's filing deadline for Chapters/Express Networks is four and one-half months after the end of the Award-Year (August 1-July 31). Mail copy of filing to ABWA National.

STANDARD COUNCIL BYLAWS

Each council of the American Business Women’s Association is an organization as set forth in the National Bylaws in a category established by the National Board of Directors. By accepting charters from the Association, all councils agree to operate under the direction and control of the American Business Women’s Association (herein also referred to as “ABWA”) including compliance with the current National Bylaws, Council Bylaws, Chapter and Express Network Bylaws, rules, procedures and policies of ABWA.

Council Bylaws are **STANDARD** for all councils with the exception of the articles and sections indicated below. At a council’s first meeting by the majority vote of the active delegate membership of record, every council decides the following:

ARTICLE I, Name of the council, city, and state

ARTICLE III, Section 2: Amount of fees and how payable

ARTICLE VI, Section 2: Months of the regular quarterly council meeting

Provisions for amending these articles and sections, once approved, are specified in Article VIII.

For situations not covered in the bylaws, rules, procedures and policies of the Association, a council may draft standing rules.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Council shall be:

COUNCIL: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ARTICLE II. Council Goals

The goals of the Councils are to enhance and support the mission of the Association and its Chapters and Express Networks; to support and improve the earning power of all members; advance working women by providing them with opportunities for professional development and facilitating the exchange of ideas and information among the Chapters and Express Networks in their areas and provide enrichment opportunities for area members. Councils serve as a conduit for information between local Chapters and Express Networks and venues for face-to-face connections between members of those Chapters and Express Networks.

ARTICLE III. Council Members

Section 1. Council membership is a valued privilege. Candidates for membership in this council are active ABWA Chapters and Express Networks, whose members shall enjoy the privileges of council activities.

Section 2. The annual fees of this council shall be \$_____, payable in advance to the council financial officer. Any Chapter/Express Network that shall not pay council fees within thirty (30) days after due date shall be removed from the Council membership roster.

Section 3. Only Chapters/Express Networks in good standing locally and nationally shall be eligible to vote and participate in any council activity. Chapters and Express Networks shall elect a delegate and two alternates from their active membership of record to represent them in all council votes.

Section 4. All active members of a Chapter/Express Network that is an active member of the council may attend council meetings and are eligible for council office and/or committees.

ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. The executive board of the council shall consist of the council officers. The chair shall act as chair of the council executive board.

Section 2. The executive board shall have general supervision of the affairs of the council between business meetings, set the time and place of executive board meetings, make recommendations to the council membership and perform such other duties as specified in these Bylaws. The board shall constitute council authority in deciding matters of council policy not otherwise decreed. The majority of the executive board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of all business at executive board meetings.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of this council shall be a *chair, vice chair, communications officer and financial officer.*

Section 2. A nominating committee, consisting of three members, shall be elected by the council's membership no later than the third quarter, and an auditing committee, consisting of two or more members, shall be appointed by the chair by the fourth quarter council meeting.

Section 3. All officers shall be elected in the fourth quarter by secret ballot to serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their term of office shall begin January 1 of the following year. No member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms in the same office.

Section 4. With the exception of the office of chair, a vacancy in any other office shall be filled by a majority vote of the executive board. Should the office of chair be vacated, the vice chair shall serve as chair through that term of office. In the event the vice chair cannot serve as chair, the executive board shall appoint a member to serve as chair until her successor takes office.

Section 5. Accountabilities:

The **CHAIR** is the authorized leader of the council. She maintains unity and harmony within the council and directs officers, committees and members toward common goals. The chair:

- Appoints committee chairs except the nominating committee, which is elected.
- Assigns the executive board members as sponsors of specific committees.
- Plans yearly goals, projects, activities and budget for the council with the board and committee chairs and presents plans to the membership at the first council meeting.
- Ensures officers and committee chairs training through orientation and sharing.
- Reviews ABWA materials and information received (i.e. league materials, tools and templates located in the Women's Instructional Network) and distributes to the council officers, committees and membership as appropriate.
- Prepares written agendas and presides at all meetings of the executive board and council.
- Countersigns checks with the council financial officer or vice chair in the financial

officer's absence.

- Conveys information received by the council to the membership.
- Recognizes the efforts of all council members and presents member awards at council meetings.
- Welcomes and introduces all new council affiliates at the first meetings they attend.
- Notifies the communications officer, financial officer and membership chairs when a league is to be removed from the council roster for nonpayment of annual national administrative fee and/or the local council dues.
- Keeps informed of bylaws, rules, procedures, policies and award programs.
- Serves as council ambassador and spokeswoman to the community.

The **VICE CHAIR** is the council host and primary assistant to the chair. The Vice Chair:

- Assumes all duties and responsibilities of the chair in her absence or when called upon by the chair.
- Coordinates the assignment of members to committees.
- Countersigns council checks in the absence of either the chair or financial officer.
- Serves as an official council host, welcoming members and guests at council functions.

The **COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER** is the transcriber of the council meeting minutes and correspondence. The communications officer:

- Records the minutes of all meetings of the council and its executive board. Minutes should include the number of Chapter/Express Network delegates and individual members in attendance.
- Provides one copy of the minutes to the chair and sends a copy to ABWA National. Copies can be sent to ABWA National via e-mail to abwa@abwa.org. Copies should also be distributed to the council delegates.
- Obtains approval of council minutes from the delegates and approval of executive board minutes from the board.
- Prepares reports of meetings of the executive board and provides a summary to the delegates.
- Preserves in a permanent file all minutes and records of value to the council. Minutes and financial documents should be retained for a minimum of seven years.
- Conducts general correspondence for the council.
- Shares correspondence at the chair's request.
- Maintains a roster of officers, committee chairs and committee members, and reports changes to the council and ABWA National.
- Receives payment of and gives receipts for council fees or other monies in the absence of the financial officer and turns over all payments accompanied by an itemized report to the financial officer.
- Presides at council meetings in the absence of the chair and vice chair.
- Reports all status, name and address changes to the council and ABWA National.

The **FINANCIAL OFFICER** is responsible for all council money and is custodian of the financial records. She advises the council regarding finances and budget matters. The financial officer:

- Prepares a formal budget for the council.
- Administers the bank account(s) of the council, keeping itemized records in the permanent file of all receipts and expenditures, which should be retained for a minimum of seven years.

- Collects, deposits and issues receipts for all council monies.
- Disburses money as approved by the council. All disbursements shall be made by check, countersigned by the chair, or in her absence, the vice chair.
- Reconciles bank statements with council records.
- Presents a quarterly financial report to the council.
- Knows the membership status of all delegates, i.e. if both national and local fees have been paid.
- Places a suspended status on a league that has not paid council fees within 30 days after the due date. Notifies the league president in writing that benefits and privileges of council membership have been suspended. Notifies council chair of the league's suspended status.
- Obtains and files required Internal Revenue Service (IRS) forms.
- Provides the communications officer and membership chair with the names of Chapters/Express Networks that have been removed from the council roster for nonpayment of council fees and/or nonpayment of the national administrative fee.
- Submits her books for audit before the end of her term of office or at any time upon the request of the membership or executive board.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular meetings are the normal quarterly gatherings of the council to transact business, typically held at regular intervals. Special meetings/events are the opposite, convened only to consider one or more items of business specified in the notice of the meeting/event.

Section 2. Regular meetings shall be quarterly, the _____ (day of the month) and shall usually consist of food, program or speakers, and a business meeting. Meeting times shall not conflict with the regularly scheduled meetings of member Chapters/Express Networks. Members of each Chapter/Express Network shall be notified in advance of the time and place of each council meeting.

Section 3. Special meetings/events may be called by the chair or by the executive board and shall be called upon the written request of one-third (1/3) of the delegates in good standing. The purpose of the meeting/event shall be stated in the call. Except in case of emergency, at least three days notice shall be given.

Section 4. The quorum of the council shall not be less than one-third (1/3) of the council membership. A quorum must be present for the valid transaction of council business. The right to vote limited to delegates or their alternates in good standing of Chapters/Express Networks in good standing who are present at the time a vote is taken at a meeting.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The standing committees shall be those the council shall deem necessary to achieve the goals of the council. Possible standing committees and their duties are listed in Article VII, Section 5.

Section 2. Special committees shall include the nominating committee, auditing committee and any other special committees the council shall deem necessary to achieve the goals of the council.

Section 3. As soon as feasible following the fourth quarter elections, standing committee chairs shall be appointed by the newly elected chair and must be approved by the council executive board. They shall serve for one year beginning January 1.

Section 4. Committee chairs are empowered to select their committee members immediately upon their appointment. The chairs shall provide the names of their committee members to the current communications officer and membership chair promptly following their acceptance.

Section 5. Duties:

The **AUDITING** Committee shall audit the financial officer's accounts annually, upon a vacancy of the office, or upon demand of the membership or executive board.

The **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** Committee shall inform the membership of seminars, leadership opportunities and other educational opportunities in the community. The committee is responsible for promoting attendance at ABWA regional and national conferences.

The **FUND-RAISING** Committee shall present recommendations for projects that will provide sufficient funds for the council. The major fundraising efforts will be directed toward raising money for professional development, including subsidizing ABWA conference registration fees. The committee shall be responsible for the completion of the approved projects, including maintaining accurate records.

The **MEMBERSHIP** Committee shall maintain an accurate council roster and report all status, name and address changes to the communications officer. The committee also shall assist the vice chair in performing her duties as council hostess.

The **NEWSLETTER** Committee shall publish a council newsletter update quarterly. The newsletter may be distributed in hard copy and/or by email.

The **NOMINATING** Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall present a slate of candidates to the membership at the fourth quarter meeting.

The **PROGRAM** Committee shall plan, select and schedule professional development programs/ speakers for council meetings and other special events as requested. The committee shall be responsible for planning the time, place, reservations, food and other special arrangements needed for these meetings or events. The committee also shall notify all members of the date, time and place of each council meeting and special event.

The **PUBLICITY** Committee shall send promotional information to all appropriate media covering council activities. The committee shall send copies of major publicity coverage to ABWA National. The committee also shall list or file information about the council with sources for potential member contact in the community, such as the local chamber of commerce or public libraries.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

All proposed amendments to these bylaws must be reviewed and approved in advance by ABWA National, with the exception of Articles I, III and VI. Allowable amendments to the Council Bylaws require an affirmative vote by a *majority of the active delegates of record* (not simply a majority of delegates present). Such amendments shall not conflict with the National Bylaws, Standard Chapter Bylaws, or Standard Express Network Bylaws of the American Business Women's Association.

The Articles permissible to amend in every council are:

Article I: Name of the council, city and state.

Article III, Section 2: Amount of fees and how payable.

Article VI, Section 2: Day and month of regular council meeting.

No other Articles to these Bylaws may be amended except by ABWA National, which reserves the right to do so at its discretion.

ARTICLE IX. STATUS

Section 1. The council is organized as not-for-profit and recognized as exempt from federal income taxation. As such, no part of the net earnings shall inure to the benefits of any members, and it shall not engage in a regular business of the kind ordinarily carried on for profit.

Section 2. If deactivation of this council should occur by vote of the membership, written notice shall be provided to ABWA National by the current executive board. All funds remaining in the treasury, after payment of all debts, shall be contributed to the American Business Women's Foundation and/or the Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund (tax-exempt organizations for which contributions are deductible under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code).

Section 3. The council may be deactivated by vote of the Board of Directors of ABWA as a result of the misfeasance, malfeasance or other failure of the Council to act in accordance with the spirit of ABWA, ABWA National Bylaws, Standard Chapter Bylaws, Standard Express Network Bylaws or these Standard Council Bylaws.

POLICY ON RAFFLES, CASINO NIGHTS AND SWEEPSTAKES

There are significant restrictions on the conduct of any games of chance (charitable or any other type of “gambling”) under the laws of most states. Missouri is one of the rare exceptions, as it has Constitutionally excluded charities from the restrictions on gambling. However, we believe it to be the only state to have done so. Under the laws of most states, gaming and games of chance are illegal lotteries and strictly prohibited except in those instances where state laws allow for regulated gambling by charitable organizations. Thus, as a basic rule of thumb, any game of chance where the three elements of “prize,” “chance,” and “consideration” exist is defined as an illegal lottery. A raffle (where persons have to buy a ticket to participate) clearly fits these parameters and is typically illegal. Poker and other gambling activities are also generally precluded under state laws.

In the charitable fundraising area, there are three basic exceptions to this general rule. Some states specifically allow “charitable raffles” to take place, but only after a charity files for and receives a special permit to conduct such a raffle and then only under the strict provisions of the state’s law enabling the raffle.

Secondly, most states allow for “sweepstakes” activities – where the element of “consideration” is taken out. In short, you must allow persons to participate without making a purchase or donation.

Third, “contests” are generally lawful. A skill-based or talent-based contest (“contest”) differs from lotteries/raffles and sweepstakes because the winner is not selected at random, thus eliminating the element of “chance.” Rather, the winner is selected based upon his or her display of skill or talent which is demonstrated in the manner and medium described in the rules of the contest.

Charitable Raffles/Casino Nights/Sweepstakes

The variances from state to state in the regulation of charitable gambling – primarily through raffle activity makes it very difficult, if not impossible, to conduct raffles on a nationwide basis. This does not necessarily mean that raffles could not take place on a much more limited *geographic basis* – requiring individual state review and licensure. The primary hurdles are physical presence, prize limitations, advertising restrictions, and the need to obtain a license or permit from the state (if required) in which the raffle or gambling will take place.

In so many instances, it is much easier and more advisable (although slightly more complicated) to conduct traditional raffle-like fundraising activities as “sweepstakes.” As set forth above, there is an important distinction to be made between a “sweepstakes” and a “raffle.” Most organizations can accomplish everything they want to accomplish in a fundraising promotion/drawing by structuring it as a sweepstakes rather than a raffle. There is really no practical or legal way to structure a prize promotion in the form of a “raffle” and not run afoul of the majority of state laws which prohibit illegal lotteries.

As described above, an illegal lottery, by definition, is an activity that includes the elements of “prize,” “chance,” and “consideration.” Raffles fit this definition. The difference between a “raffle” and a “sweepstakes” is typically the elimination of the element of consideration, or payment of money, as a pre-requisite to entry. The simplest way to do that is to structure the promotion so that one who wishes to enter does not have to pay/purchase/donate to enter. With an alternate, free method of entry, the drawing simply becomes a sweepstakes.

It is very important for the rules to specifically, if not boldly, disclose that no purchase or contribution is necessary to participate.

In addition to state lottery laws (which again will not have application so long as the promotion is truly a sweepstakes), four federal agencies (the Department of Justice, the U.S. Postal Service, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Federal Communications Commission) enforce federal laws that specifically apply to sweepstakes, only some of which are listed below:

1. 18 U.S.C. 1301 prohibits the transportation of lottery tickets in interstate commerce;
2. 18 U.S.C. 1302 prohibits the mailing of lottery tickets;
3. 18 U.S.C. 1304 prohibits the broadcasting of lottery information;
4. 47 CFR 73.1211 prohibits television or radio stations from disseminating advertisements or information about lotteries;
5. and 39 U.S.C. 3001(a) *et seq.* prohibits the use of the U.S. Mail to disseminate lotteries.

There are a handful of states that have laws applicable to sweepstakes depending on the value of the prizes and the medium through which they are conducted (primarily via direct mail). Some states require marketers to post bonds (New York and Florida, when total value of prizes exceeds \$5,000) and many states require specific disclosures in specified font types in immediate proximity to a sweepstakes headline, while some others require disclosures on a sweepstakes envelope if conducted by direct mail. Most of this compliance can be accomplished in the rules and in the actual operation of the sweepstakes. Absent holding the drawing in New York or Florida, those states will not apply their registration and bonding to the organization.

Another important issue is to afford non-paying sweepstakes participants the same ability to compete for the same prizes in the same time frame and format as those who make a donation to participate. This is known as the Equal Dignity Rule.

To comply with the Equal Dignity Rule, ABWA and/or its chapters must avoid any perceived form of discrimination against non-paying participants. Disparities between paying and non-paying sweepstakes participants include:

- *Diminished number of chances to win;*
- *Different prizes or different prize pools;*
- *Different deadlines;*
- *and/or the speed of response.*

Such disparities could subject a sweepstakes to legal scrutiny. This creates some concerns for Internet-based "instant winner" contests or sweepstakes, where it is physically impossible both to offer an alternate means of entry and to allow for the time delay needed for offline entrants to mail, fax or even phone in a response. Logic dictates that contests and sweepstakes promoted only online can reasonably be limited to requiring online methods of both entry and winner notification without running afoul of the Equal Dignity Rule. If an alternate means of entry is permitted, disclosure of the alternate method of entry in different, prominent locations in the rules or website is important. If an alternate means of entry is permitted, disclosure of the alternate method of entry in different, prominent locations in the rules or website is important.

Raffles, Contests, and Sweepstakes Should Have Written Rules

Again, the other common method of fundraising promotion is the "contest."

All relevant facts and circumstances must be considered in determining if the contest is a *bona fide* contest, as opposed to a raffle or other random drawing. This analysis involves considering the following factors:

- What degree of skill is required to make the submission?
- Is the person eligible to enter the promotion likely to have the degree of skill necessary to win?

The heart of any raffle or sweepstakes promotion is the "Official Rules." These rules constitute the contract between the organization and the consumer. By accepting the rules and agreeing to be bound by them, a participant enters into a binding contract with the organization. At a minimum, the items listed below should always be included in the rules of either a raffle or a sweepstakes conducted by ABWA Councils, Chapters and Express Networks:

- **No purchase necessary** (suggested that this be prominently stated);
- Eligibility requirements, such as age, residence (may want to limit eligibility to U.S. residents, to residents of certain states, and to adults only, and be aware of foreign language requirements in some countries which may apply depending on the geographic reach of the promotion);
- Exclusions (should restrict eligibility and advise entrants that they will shut the sweepstakes or contest down if "hackers" and "flamers" attempt to affect the outcome of the sweepstakes or overload the capacity of the site);
- Duration and deadlines;
- Instructions on playing (if applicable);
- Entry procedure;
- Prize description(s);
- Odds of winning (take care in computing);
- Not responsible for lost/delayed mail or e-mail, printing or posting typographical errors;
- How winners are selected;
- Right to obtain winners' names and how to do so;
- Right to publicize winners' names and likenesses;
- Method of distributing prizes not claimed;
- Liability release; and
- **Void where prohibited by law.**

The foregoing covers drawings/prize promotions engaged in at any level and through any medium. With specific application to direct mail sweepstakes (even though it is unlikely that ABWA will engage in such activity as most direct mail sweepstakes are "preselected winner" such as the famous Publisher's Clearinghouse Sweepstakes) there is a federal sweepstakes law that is a postal regulation and that has specific application to any sweepstakes advertised, offered or otherwise conducted through the mail. Specifics follow – but again – remember that the above information is going to have greater relevance and application to typical sweepstakes activity.

Federal legislation also exists governing mailed sweepstakes and contests. The law is titled the "Deceptive Mail Prevention and Enforcement Act." and prohibits the mailing of deceptive material relating to sweepstakes, skill contests, facsimile checks, and mailings made to look like government documents.

The Act requires certain disclosures and is limited to mailed solicitations which provide an opportunity to enter a contest or sweepstakes. It does not apply to on-air advertisements or other types of media not involving the mail. Mailings that only provide general information on a contest or sweepstakes rather than an opportunity to enter are not subject to these disclosure requirements. Advertisements in newspapers, magazines and other periodicals are also not affected provided that the ad is not directed to a specifically named person and the ad does not offer an opportunity to purchase a product or service.

For skill contests, rules are equally important. Following are the basics for any set of rules for a contest of skill (as opposed to a raffle or sweepstakes). The official rules should contain at least the following disclosures:

- Complete name and address of the sponsor and promoter of the contest (Plan)
- The number of rounds or levels – it may just be one.
- That no entry fee or other consideration is required.
- The identity or description of judges and their qualifications.
- How winners will be determined and when.

- Number of prizes, the accurate description of each prize, the retail value of each prize.
- Geographic area of the contest.
- Opening date and scheduled termination date of the contest.
- Where and when a list of winners can be obtained (this can simply be Plan's address).

Other items that should be included in contest rules include any special eligibility requirements, an exclusion of employees of the sponsor from participation, a general release of liability, agreement with the rules and acknowledgement that the decisions of the judges are final, etc., and agreement/release to use the winner's name and likeness. Once the official rules are published and posted, they must be followed exactly and cannot be changed.

We also recommend that the rules state that any taxes owed on the prizes are the sole responsibility of the winners (based on the described prize, there may be no taxable value). This is true with a raffle, sweepstakes, contest, or other gaming.