



**LEVELS 1-3  
WHEELCHAIR TENNIS  
TOURNAMENT  
DIRECTOR MANUAL**



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## PREFACE

This manual is meant to be a guide for Tournament Directors and Tournament Committees in planning a USTA wheelchair tennis event. It is important to note that this is only a guide and the USTA Wheelchair Tournament, Ranking and Sanctioning Regulations Document supersedes any information contained within this document.

### 1. TOURNAMENT PERSONNEL

- a. Tournament Board/Committee - a group of volunteers that is responsible for all organizational details of an event. This group may be a Community Tennis Association (CTA), a non-profit organization, club/facility staff, etc. whose duties include:
  - i. Appointing a Tournament Director (TD) and, if deemed appropriate within the tournament's organizational structure, a Tournament Chair
  - ii. Completing USTA tournament sanction applications
  - iii. Hiring a Tournament Referee and officiating team following the minimum requirements of the tournament classification per USTA regulations
  - iv. Appointing an In-Event Tournament Committee comprised of at least 3 people including the TD, Referee and the Tournament Chair, which is tasked with:
    1. Making decisions about the basic format and structure of the tournament
    2. Conducting the tournament in conjunction with the Referee under the applicable rules and regulations
    3. Completing post-tournament work and any supporting documentation
  - v. Holding regular meetings to plan the event:
    1. Minimum 3-6 months - up to 1 year ahead of the event

2. Time frame depends on the size and USTA Level of the event - **See Part 2, ["Sanctioning and Tournament Planning"](#)**
- vi. Recruiting volunteers to assist with tournament planning
- vii. Organizing the full committee into subcommittees and appointing leaders for various aspects such as:
  1. Meals/Beverages
  2. Volunteers
  3. Sponsorship and fundraising
  4. Venue
  5. Transportation
  6. Marketing and promotion
  7. Any other areas of tournament organization - **See Part 3, ["Organization"](#)**
- b. Tournament Director - appointed by the Tournament Committee to oversee the event which includes the following duties:
  - i. Manages all aspects of planning and executing the tournament
  - ii. Appoints Coordinators/Chairmen for all necessary tournament operations
  - iii. Coordinates with the Tournament Committee and Referee
  - iv. Liaises with the USTA as necessary
  - v. Receives and confirms player entries
  - vi. Confirms eligibility of all players entered into the event - **See Part 9, ["USTA Letter Division Eligibility List"](#)**
  - vii. Works with the Tournament Referee to seed all singles and doubles draws after entry deadline - **See Part 9, ["USTA Wheelchair Tournament, Ranking and Sanctioning Regulations Document"](#) and ["USTA 12-Month Rolling Wheelchair Ranking Lists"](#)**

- viii. Serves as the point of contact for players to provide all information and arrangements
  - ix. Responsible for producing all materials including fact sheet, entry forms, schedule of events, etc.
  - x. Coordinates hotel and transportation arrangements
  - xi. Complies with all USTA promotional and publicity requirements
  - xii. The USTA requires that all Tournament Directors be Safe Play certified beginning in January 2021 - **See Part 9, ["Safe Play Registration"](#)**
- c. Tournament Chair - may be appointed by the Tournament Committee, if necessary, to oversee specified organizational aspects of the event which include the following:
- i. Liaises between the TD and Tournament Board/Committee
  - ii. Assists the Tournament Director in coordinating Tournament Board/Committee, subcommittees and other tournament volunteers
  - iii. Organizes logistical aspects including meals, transportation and any other areas assigned by TD
- d. Tournament Referee - hired by the Tournament Board/Committee to govern all aspects of tennis which include the following:
- i. Ensuring that all aspects of the event are run in accordance with the rules and regulations of the USTA
  - ii. Before tournament play begins, including:
    - 1. On-site preparation such as:
      - a. Match and practice court layout and accessibility
      - b. Nets, singles sticks, fences, and player benches
      - c. Umpire chairs
      - d. Umpire area



- e. Referee's desk
    - 2. Conducting player sign-in
    - 3. Making draws
- iii. Serving as the on-site representative of the USTA, responsible for the uniform administration and interpretation of the:
  - 1. USTA Wheelchair Tennis Regulations
  - 2. USTA Code of Conduct
  - 3. ITF Rules of Tennis
- iv. Utilizing the required Serve Tennis program
- v. Arriving on site at least one (1) hour prior to the first match of the day, and be present through the completion of the day's order of play
- vi. Submitting draws, results and daily order of play through the Serve Tennis program
- vii. Governing of the USTA divisions in combined events
- viii. Hiring all officiating personnel  
**- See Part 7, ["Officiating"](#)**
- ix. Fulfilling all other needs required of a Tournament Referee

## 2. SANCTIONING AND TOURNAMENT PLANNING

- a. 2021 USTA Application and Bid Process
  - i. USTA Tournament Levels/Maximum Duration
    - 1. Level 1 - National approval (4 days)
    - 2. Level 2 - National approval (3 days)
    - 3. Level 3 - National and/or Section approval (3 days)
    - 4. Level 4 - Section and/or District approval (3 days)
    - 5. Level 5 - Section and/or District approval (1 day)
  - ii. USTA Divisions to be Offered
    - 1. A Division - Singles, Doubles (various draw formats)
    - 2. B Division - Singles, Doubles (various draw formats)



3. C Division - Singles, Doubles (various draw formats)
  4. D Division - Singles, Doubles (various draw formats)
  5. 18 and Under (Juniors) - Singles, Doubles (various draw formats)
- iii. Complete application for sanctioning through the USTA platform Serve Tennis. The TD must be affiliated with a member organization - **See Part 9, ["Serve Tennis Application Form"](#)**
  - iv. Submit the bid application via the USTA approved form to the Wheelchair Tennis Committee - **See Part 9, ["Bid Application for USTA National Events"](#)**
  - v. Sanction approval is considered final when the applicant:
    1. Completes and returns the tournament contract
    2. Pays the USTA sanction fee - not to exceed \$100
- b. USTA Important Dates (Note that these dates are typical timeframes and may vary from year to year)
- i. **August 1:** USTA Letter Division Application Form and Bid Applications are due for the following year's events for tournaments bidding National Levels 1, 2 or 3
  - ii. **October:** USTA Tournament calendar is published for sanctioned National Level 1, 2 and 3 events
  - iii. **Varying Dates:** Level 3 (Section closed events only), 4 and 5 tournaments are sanctioned by the Section and/or District - consult with local Sections and Districts for deadlines
- c. Budget
- i. Sponsorship/Fundraising - The Tournament Committee is responsible for obtaining all funding associated with the event
    1. It is a good idea to have a designated Sponsorship Subcommittee whose duties include:
      - a. Soliciting in-kind and cash donations



- b. Distributing sponsorship packet to potential donors - **See Part 10, "Sponsorship Packet"**
    - c. Ideas for fundraising/soliciting sponsors - **See Part 10, ["Sponsorship Ideas"](#)**
  - ii. Sample Budgets - Each level of USTA tournaments has varying requirements that incrementally increase. Sample budgets are provided for each level
- d. Entry Fees
  - i. It is customary to charge an entry fee for all players and these amounts can be found on the Serve Tennis tournament page
  - ii. Tournaments may offer an entry fee that is inclusive or exclusive of tournament accommodation
  - iii. Entry fees should be based on tournament level and amenities provided
- e. Tournament Planning Timeline (Note that these are suggested timeframes and may vary)
  - i. **6-12 months before event:**
    1. Hold Tournament Board/Committee meetings to start planning
    2. Secure sponsorship
    3. Create budget
    4. Reserve courts
    5. Reserve hotel block
    6. Hire Referee
    7. Confirm insurance policies
    8. Reserve vans for transporting players
    9. Organize repair station
    10. Secure all medical personnel
    11. Discuss and plan for player amenities
  - ii. **3-6 months before event:**
    1. Post event information on social media and Serve Tennis



2. Confirm meals
3. Order balls
4. Arrange tournament desk volunteers
5. Coordinate ball people
- iii. **1-2 months before event:**
  1. Order trophies and player gifts
  2. Recruit general volunteers
  3. Publicize/promote event
  4. Receive and officially confirm player entry via email and provide necessary tournament information
- iv. **2-12 weeks before event (depending on USTA Level):**
  1. Enter players into Serve Tennis
  2. Work with Referee on preliminary match schedules
  3. Confirm all aspects of event
  4. Confirm tournament personnel and volunteer schedules

### **3. ORGANIZATION**

- a. Player Registration
  - i. Typically held on the day prior to the start of play, to be noted on the Fact Sheet
  - ii. Players may register up until their first match
  - iii. Confirm player entry, ensure that the waiver is signed by each player, distribute credentials and receive payment
  - iv. During the player check-in process, verify players' cell phone numbers, email addresses and hotel information including room numbers
- b. Marketing/Promotion
  - i. The following platforms are useful to provide information to the general public, sponsors, volunteers and players:
    1. Tournament Website



2. Social media
  3. Tournament flyers, banners, and programs
  4. Television/radio spots
- c. Meals
- i. Tournaments are encouraged to include three free meals per day whenever possible
    1. Tournaments that do not provide free food for players must be able to offer food on site for a reasonable cost
    2. Tournaments should list on the fact sheet which meals will be provided, including location and times
    3. Events should provide food that:
      - a. Is varied and nutritious
      - b. Is suitable for athletes
      - c. Includes a vegetarian and gluten free alternative upon request
    4. Fruit should be available at all times
    5. Tournaments should collect dietary restrictions on the entry form and ensure the meals are correctly allocated
  - ii. Tournaments should provide adequate sanitation and follow local regulations for food safety
- d. Drinks
- i. Water (preferably bottled) must be available for players on and off court at all times
  - ii. Additional drinks should be offered (i.e. sport drinks, coffee, tea, soft drinks, hot water, etc.)
- e. Trophies/Awards
- i. Trophies are recommended for champions, finalists and/or consolation champions
  - ii. Sportsmanship or other trophies/awards may be offered



- iii. Consider a trophy and/or gift that is unique to the tournament locale
- iv. Consider “ease” of packing and safe transport for any trophies/awards provided
- f. Player Gifts
  - i. Player gifts are recommended. Examples include towels, T-shirts, hats, grips, wrist bands, etc
  - ii. If T-shirts are provided, tournaments may request T-shirt sizes on the entry form
  - iii. Tournaments may contact their state or section USTA office or other sponsors for promotional items
  - iv. Drawings/raffles/door prizes may be offered
  - v. Consider “ease” of packing and safe transport for any gifts provided
- g. Volunteers
  - i. Volunteers are the key to success and should be recruited well in advance of the event
  - ii. Tournaments are responsible for determining the number of volunteers required as well as the recruiting and coordinating of volunteers
  - iii. Recommended volunteer positions include:
    1. Volunteer Coordinator - present on site to assign duties and oversee all volunteers
    2. Tournament Desk Coordinator - supports tournament desk duties as assigned
    3. Transportation Coordinator - coordinates shuttle drivers and transportation schedules
    4. Hospitality Coordinator - organizes daily catering, food presentation and service
    5. On-Court Coordinator - ensures courts have adequate water, sport drinks, towels, etc
    6. Ball Person Coordinator - recruits, organizes, trains, and assigns ball people to match courts
- h. Ball Persons



- i. It is recommended to have ball persons during all matches when possible, prioritized by round being played and availability and experience of ball persons
- ii. Tournaments should offer training for ball persons prior to the event before they are permitted on court
- iii. Should be provided water, snacks, and ample rest off court in a shaded area
- i. Repair Station
  - i. It is required to have a repair station and technician on site any time a player is practicing and during all matches
  - ii. Tools should include, but are not limited to:
    - 1. Air compressor/pump
    - 2. Spare air compressor/pump
    - 3. Common tools (allen wrenches, socket wrenches, zip ties, etc.)
  - iii. Tournaments are recommended to offer the following supplies on site for purchase:
    - 1. Tires 24"-27"
    - 2. Tubes 24"-27"
    - 3. Casters
    - 4. Axles
    - 5. Bearings
    - 6. Straps
- j. Tournament Desk
  - i. There must be a tournament desk on site that is staffed at all times
  - ii. The following items must be posted:
    - 1. Latest Wheelchair Tennis Ranking Lists
    - 2. Phone numbers of important tournament personnel
  - iii. Supplies
    - 1. Printer with extra ink



2. Paper (letter and/or legal size)
3. Basic office supplies
- iv. Internet Access
  1. Must be available for official use at the tournament desk
  2. Recommended for players and guests with username and password clearly posted
- v. Walkie Talkies
  1. It is strongly recommended that tournaments provide walkies to key personnel for on-site communication:
    - a. Tournament Referee
    - b. Tournament Director
    - c. Repair Station
    - d. All Officials
    - e. Tournament Desk
    - f. Volunteer Coordinator
    - g. Hospitality Coordinator
    - h. On Court Coordinator
    - i. Ball Person Coordinator
  2. Tournaments should verify that all walkies are operational prior to start of play each day and that extra batteries are available
  3. Cell phones/mobile applications are not acceptable in place of walkie talkies for on court communication
- k. Player Communication
  - i. Email is the preferred method of communication between players and tournament personnel
  - ii. Avoid social media platforms for official tournament communication

#### **4. VENUE**

- a. Courts

- i. Accessibility
  1. All match and practice court entrances must be level with the outside sidewalk, or a ramp must be provided
  2. Court entrance gates must be wide enough for everyday wheelchairs (30"); however, it is ideal if court entrance gates are wide enough for tennis wheelchairs (45")
- ii. Match Courts
  1. Tournament Director and Referee should create a match schedule plan prior to the event to estimate the number of courts needed for the event - **See Part 10, "Match Schedule Plan"**
  2. Number of match courts required should take into consideration:
    - a. Number of USTA events to be played
    - b. Number of entries in each event
    - c. Draw and scoring formats
    - d. Time constraints with facility
    - e. Duration of tournament (number of days)
- iii. Practice Courts
  1. When possible, tournaments should provide practice courts free of charge to players from at least one (1) day before the start of the event until the completion of the event
  2. A practice court schedule and sign-up sheet should be managed by the Referee and Tournament Director
- iv. Scoreboards
  1. Recommended on each match court, should be easily visible to all spectators, and accessible to players
- v. Preparation/Lay-Out
  1. Courts should be free of debris



2. Courts must be even (without severe bumps or low spots)
  3. Should include a player bench/chair for tennis bag and personal belongings
  4. Cooler for drinks
  5. Chair Umpire and Line Umpire chairs as needed
- vi. Sun Protection
1. There must be adequate shade on court for players and officials via permanent shade structures or umbrellas
- b. Facility
- i. Facilities must have an accessible path of travel to all pertinent areas, including but not limited to:
    1. Match and practice courts
    2. Locker rooms and restrooms
    3. Player lounge
    4. Food service and dining areas
    5. Match viewing areas
    6. Wheelchair storage and repair station
    7. Tournament and Referee's desks
  - ii. Locker Rooms/Restrooms
    1. Adequate accessible changing rooms and shower facilities shall be available on site
    2. It is recommended that there is a sufficient number of ADA bathroom stalls based on the number of players participating in the event. Ensure that the sinks, soap and towels are at an accessible height
    3. All restrooms should be cleaned regularly
    4. Garbage cans should be included in every bathroom stall and emptied regularly
    5. If there are not a sufficient number of permanent and accessible toilets, portable facilities may

be used provided they are hygienic and cleaned regularly

iii. Wheelchair Storage

1. Wheelchairs must be stored in a secure location overnight that is dry and protected from weather
2. This area should be indoors whenever possible
3. When not indoors, this area (or tournament facility itself) must either be locked or monitored by security when tournament staff is not present

iv. Player Lounge

1. Recommended amenities include:
  - a. Climate-controlled area - air conditioned/heated
  - b. Table and chairs, couches and/or floor mats
  - c. WiFi access and electrical outlets
  - d. Television or other leisure activities

v. Stringer

1. When possible a stringer should be on-site or available to players (either nearby or have a drop-off point)

vi. Food Service and Dining Areas

1. Tables and moveable chairs must be provided for players

## **5. TRANSPORTATION**

a. General Guidelines

- i. Each tournament should have a designated Transportation Coordinator who has responsibility for:
  1. Ensuring all transportation procedures abide by local law, insurance policies and rental agreements
  2. Communicating directly with all players, coaches and guests concerning travel arrangements, accessibility and equipment/luggage considerations



3. Providing a list of taxi and rental car companies which offer accessible transportation for players who elect to not use tournament transportation
  4. Arrival and departure schedules should be posted on site and at the tournament host hotel and sent via email to all players, coaches and guests
  5. Creating a daily transportation schedule which coordinates drivers, vehicles, pick-up times and locations to be posted on site and at the tournament host hotel
- b. To/From the Airport
- i. Tournaments should provide complimentary transportation to and from the designated tournament airport(s) between the hours of 9 a.m. and 11 p.m., one day prior to and one day following the event
  - ii. However, tournaments are encouraged to offer transportation to and from the airport at other times if possible
  - iii. Players are expected to arrange their own transportation outside of the hours listed above, and notify the event of any changes in travel plans
  - iv. Travel details should be provided by the player at least two weeks prior to the tournament start date. Otherwise, tournament transportation is not guaranteed
  - v. It is recommended that a tournament volunteer is present at the airport on the day prior to the event to assist players as they arrive
  - vi. Tournaments should communicate arrival procedures with players prior to the event and have signage on tournament vehicles and credentialed personnel at the airport
- c. To/From Tournament Host Hotel(s) and Site

- i. Complimentary transportation should run between the tournament hotel(s) and site on a regular basis from the day before play begins
- ii. Coordinate transportation times with Tournament Director and Referee based on the daily order of play
- iii. The first transportation of the day should arrive at the tournament site a minimum of:
  1. 30 minutes before the first practice session or;
  2. 60 minutes before the first scheduled match
- iv. Transportation must be available between the tournament site and tournament host hotel upon completion of the last match each day

## **6. HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS**

### a. General Guidelines

- i. Tournament host hotels must provide accessible accommodation at a reasonable cost near the tournament site
- ii. If possible, tournaments should offer a choice of two host hotels for players on different budgets, both of which include breakfast
- iii. Tournaments may choose to offer an all-inclusive registration, which includes cost of hotel accommodation, and entry fee or allow players to arrange their own accommodation. With an inclusive entry fee, the tournament will pay the hotel directly
- iv. A discounted block of rooms should be reserved at the tournament host hotel(s) for players and guests
- v. Tournaments should list hotel rates for all room options available to players on the fact sheet (i.e. king, double-queen, suite, etc.)
- vi. Tournaments should include the following hotel information on the fact sheet:
  1. Nightly rate, taxes and fees
  2. Deadline by which to make reservations



3. Discount/booking code (if applicable)
  4. Method of booking - direct link (online), email or phone
  5. Hotel contact information
  6. Cancellation/change policy
- b. Accessibility
- i. Number of accessible rooms available at a hotel should be considered
  - ii. It is recommended that door widths be wheelchair accessible (30" or more). It is recommended to state the size of the bathroom doors on the Tournament Fact Sheet
- c. Tournament Information at Hotel
- i. If possible, it is recommended that a tournament volunteer be present at the hotel on the day of arrivals and departures
  - ii. There must be a tournament information point at the the official tournament host hotel(s) with the following information posted:
    1. Tournament fact sheet
    2. Tournament personnel contact information
    3. Transportation schedule
    4. Updated draws
    5. Daily order of play
  - iii. If multiple tournament host hotels are used, then the information listed above should be posted at alllocations

## **7. OFFICIATING**

- a. General Guidelines
- i. Officials are required at all events to ensure fair play and fulfill USTA regulations

- ii. Tournaments are responsible for all officiating costs, which may include hotel accommodation and umpire travel
- iii. The Tournament Director is responsible for hiring a Referee knowledgeable in the rules of wheelchair tennis. It is recommended that a TD hire a Referee up to one (1) year prior to the event or as soon as tournament dates are confirmed. Consult with USTA National Wheelchair Tennis Committee and/or staff for suggestions of qualified Referees
- iv. The Referee is responsible for hiring an officiating team based on:
  - 1. USTA level of event
  - 2. Number of participants
  - 3. Draw sizes
  - 4. Tournament Director requests to chair and/or line additional matches not specifically required by the current regulations
- v. If multiple umpires are used at an event, then it is recommended that there be an area provided on site for umpires only
- vi. The national USTA uniform will be worn by all officials unless the tournament provides an alternative uniform

## 8. ADDITIONAL ITF/USTA REQUIREMENTS

- a. Tournament Player Entry
  - i. Serve Tennis - Tournaments are required to use the USTA online registration system for all players
  - ii. Tournament Entry - In addition to USTA online registration, it is recommended that a tournament create an entry form to capture information needed for the specific event - transportation needs, division(s) entered, dietary restrictions, shirt size, etc. - **See Part 10, ["Tournament Entry Form"](#)**
- b. Media and Signage Requirements



- i. USTA National Level 1-3 sanctioned tournaments are required to display USTA-approved banners. USTA banners are available upon request

## 9. HELPFUL LINKS

### a. USTA Links

- i. [\*\*USTA Wheelchair Tournament, Ranking and Sanctioning Regulations Document\*\*](#)
  - 1. This document governs all Wheelchair Tennis Divisions at all tournaments sanctioned by the USTA
- ii. [\*\*USTA 12-Month Rolling Wheelchair Ranking Lists\*\*](#)
  - 1. The USTA 12-Month Rolling Wheelchair Ranking Lists are used to seed players in Letter Divisions at all events
- iii. [\*\*USTA Letter Division Eligibility List\*\*](#)
  - 1. The USTA Letter Division Eligibility List is used to determine which players may participate in which Letter Divisions
- iv. [\*\*Serve Tennis Application Form\*\*](#)
  - 1. This is the sanction form that must be completed by each tournament and submitted for approval
- v. [\*\*Bid Application for USTA National Events\*\*](#)
  - 1. The official USTA bid application is a new form required for all National Level 1-3 events. This will be submitted to the USTA National Wheelchair Tennis Committee and staff for approval
- vi. [\*\*Safe Play Registration\*\*](#)
  - 1. All Tournament Directors are required to be Safe Play certified



## 10. SAMPLE DOCUMENTS

### a. [Meeting Agendas](#)

- i. It is helpful to have a meeting with the various areas of organization at the start of the event:
  1. Tournament Desk
  2. Wheelchair Repair Staff
  3. Referee Staff
  4. Umpire Staff
  5. Additional TD Discussion Items

### b. [Match Schedule Plan](#)

- i. Form that the Tournament Referee can use to help plan the overall event

### c. [Fundraising Ideas](#)

- i. Gives various ideas of how and where to look for funds to run an event

### d. [Sponsorship Packet](#)

- i. This packet is an example of what can be sent to potential donors, which highlights various aspects of the event and breaks down the sponsorship structure

### e. [Tournament Fact Sheet](#)

- i. Various examples of tournament-specific information sheets that are sent to the players participating in an event

