

Summary Of Major US Chess Rules Updates In the Seventh Edition 2026

1. **Blitz rule 18 changed to:**

Subject to the right of appeal to US Chess, the decision of the chief tournament director is final.

2. **Blitz rule 18 TD Tip** was eliminated due to the Blitz rule 18 change.

3. **Replaced TDCC with TDAC.** The Tournament Director Certification Committee changed their name to Tournament Director Arbiter Committee to also deal with National Arbiter Certification and Arbiter player complaints (Chapter 7).

4. **New and revised rules added to TD Certification:**

International Arbiter (IA), FIDE Arbiter (FA) and National Arbiter (NA)

42. Title and Licenses

- a. The titles of international arbiter and FIDE arbiter are awarded by the World Chess Federation (FIDE).
- b. Licenses for arbiters are paid for by the applicant via US Chess to FIDE

43. Qualifications.

US Chess will submit a title application for the International arbiter and FIDE arbiter titles for current US Chess members who are certified at the Senior, ANTD, or NTD level and meet all the following requirements. FIDE requires that an IA applicant must already hold the title of FA. Applicants will pay all fees regarding this process:

- a. Thorough knowledge of the *Laws of Chess* and the FIDE Regulations for chess competitions;
- b. Absolute objectivity, demonstrated at all times during his or her activity as an arbiter;
- c. Sufficient knowledge of at least one official FIDE language for FA and obligatory knowledge of the English language, minimum at conversation level, and of chess terms in other official FIDE languages, for IA.
- d. Experience: US Chess Senior TD or higher and receiving as arbiter the appropriate title norm certificates required by FIDE.
- e. FIDE allows member federations to determine eligibility for National Arbiter (NA) licenses. Senior TDs and higher that have no fide title or license can contact US Chess to take a test to become an NA. A TD passing the test can then remit the cost of the license fee to US Chess and US Chess will forward it to FIDE.

TD TIP: All applications for titles and licenses must meet FIDE requirements and go through (be submitted by) US Chess.

44. Testing Requirement.

Contact US Chess.

45. Limitations.

International Arbiters may direct all Category I tournaments. In order to submit the tournament as a US Chess rated tournament, the IA must also have a level of US Chess TD certification appropriate to the US Chess Category into which the tournament fits.

TD TIP: *Contact the US Chess office BEFORE any FIDE tournament is run to make sure all US Chess/FIDE current requirements for both the tournament and TD qualifications (experience requirements, fees,...) are met. Category I tournaments have arbiter limitations and qualifications set by FIDE that must be met before they can be submitted to FIDE.*

46. Expiration.

The expiration of IA certification is determined by FIDE. Currently (as of the adoption of these standards), International arbiters are certified for life.

5. Housekeeping:

Various Links, See also references, and TD Tips were updated.