



APDA Registration (“Reg”) Break Guide

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide a basis on which teams may negotiate reg breaks at APDA tournaments throughout the year. One of the most persistent problems on APDA is the high cost of debate. Traveling to and paying for tournaments are incredibly expensive (averaging in the range of \$300 per weekend for a school that sends two teams to compete), presenting a barrier to the activity for many schools without a large funding base. This guide provides a baseline estimate of what sort of reg break different teams might need and is meant to serve as a guide for negotiations.

DISCLAIMER: These guidelines are in no way binding. Tournaments are free to give reg breaks of any size (or not give any at all). However, this guide represents the APDA Board’s judgment that, in general and where possible, tournaments should attempt to give reg breaks to schools that need them.

Assumptions and Estimates

Our estimates are based on the following assumptions:

- \$120 registration fee per team
- \$60 of average transportation costs per weekend

Under these assumptions, a typical weekend of debate in which a school sends the APDA average of 2 teams costs \$300. At this rate, it would cost the average APDA team \$7,500 to compete at 25 tournaments (that is, taking 3 weekends off out of a possible 28) throughout the season.

Note: average teams sent is defined as (number of teams sent)/(number of tournaments attended). Teams calculating their average teams sent should NOT average their attendance over all APDA tournaments (e.g. ones they did not attend).

Four Types of Teams

For the purposes of this guide, we group APDA teams into three types (when it comes to reg breaks):

Group 1

-Those who do not need a reg break under any circumstances (we classify any team with an annual budget of \$25,000 or greater as part of this group). Note that a team with a budget of \$25,000 could afford to send an average of 6.6 teams to all 28 APDA tournaments during the season assuming transportation costs of \$100 per weekend. If your team falls into this category, we do not endorse any reg break.*

Group 2

-Those who need a reg break due to team size (we classify any team that sends an average of 7 teams or more to each tournament and has an annual budget of under \$25,000 as part of this group)

Group 3

-Those who need a reg break due to budget size (we classify any team with a budget of less than \$6,000 and sending an average of 3 teams per weekend or less as part of this group)

Group 4

-Those who do not fall into any clear numerical category (we classify all remaining teams as part of this group)

*This is true in general but may be disregarded in extenuating circumstance (e.g. for schools that are not allowed to deny anyone the ability to debate on any weekend and thus send many teams each weekend or schools from distant geographies who fly every weekend).

Recommended Reg Break for Each Group

Group 1

No reg break recommended, except in extenuating circumstances.

Group 2

We recommend that teams in Group 2 ask for a reg break (per team) estimated by the following formula:

$$\frac{(B) - (\text{annual budget})}{(A) \times (W)}$$

Where:

A = average teams sent per weekend

W = weekends competing

T = average travel cost

$B = (A) \times (W) \times (\$120) + (W \times T)$

However, if this formula yields a result greater than \$30 per team, they may want to negotiate an alternative form of reg break (to be discussed in the alternatives section). For teams with a budget greater than the value of B, please do not ask for a reg break.

Group 3

We recommend that teams in Group 3 negotiate for a reg break on a percentage basis. Although the same calculation as Group 2 may be used to calculate the level of reg break needed to reach a balanced budget, teams in this group may expect a greater level of generosity from tournament for two reasons:

- 1) A greater per team reg break results in a lower absolute loss of revenue because of the smaller volume of teams
- 2) These teams often have less secure funding, so allowing them to save money by running a budget surplus is in the league's interest

We recommend that teams in Group 3 ask for a reg break of 30%, 40%, or 50% based on the following issues: budget size, team size, funding security, and age of team. While we leave it up to the discretion of teams, we would encourage first and second year teams with low or insecure funding to ask for reg breaks of 40% or 50% per team. Given the low cost to tournaments (\$180 maximum for a school sending 3 teams with a 50% reg break) relative to the benefits to financially struggling teams, we believe this sort of generosity is in the league's interest.

In addition, we recommend that teams in this group request that reg be waived for their first team (i.e. a "first team free policy" for schools in this group). This can be requested instead of or in addition to the above recommendations and administered at the tournament's discretion.

Note that we set the cap for this group at only \$6,000 because we do not expect teams in this group to attend every weekend. For those attending more often, this should be taken into account.

Group 4

For teams in this group, we recommend asking for a reg break by calculating your break even level of reg break (similar to Group 2). However, we recommend that teams in this group also

take into account their age and other mitigating factors, similar to Group 3. Because so many different types of teams fall into this category (and cannot be easily segmented), we advise teams asking for reg breaks and tournaments granting them to use their discretion.

Alternatives to Cash Reg Breaks

The main alternative to a discount on your reg is what is called a “reg swap.” A reg swap generally means that two teams agree to compete at each other’s tournaments free of charge (that is, neither pays reg at the other). This arrangement is beneficial to larger teams, as they pay more to compete than their smaller counterparts. Teams with large budgets should be cognizant of this need and be willing to entertain the idea of a reg swap. Reg swaps hold the advantages of logistical and mathematical simplicity (no money changes hands and no calculations are needed). We recommend that small schools with low budgets AVOID reg swaps, as the later income from a large team’s reg at their tournament will be far more beneficial than a reg swap now.