



How the College Panhellenic Can Support COB

Continuous open bidding (COB) in the era of COVID-19 requires College Panhellenics to be intentional about how they support the continued growth of chapters, outside of the primary recruitment process. While it would be easy to create systems, processes, forms and other requirements to manage COB from a council level, these actually create more barriers to membership. **The College Panhellenic should make every effort to eliminate as many barriers to joining as possible.** Processes that create barriers or unnecessary burdens on the part of the individual chapters or potential members should be removed in the spirit of allowing women to join sororities as easily and as rapidly as possible.

Many chapters will engage in COB after the primary recruitment process. The role of the College Panhellenic is to provide resources to the chapters, market the sorority experience on their campus and share information with potential new members about the Panhellenic chapters. College Panhellenics should not regulate the individual processes that chapters use to recruit those women during COB. The chapters will work with their inter/national organizations to determine the best timing and method for recruiting potential new members in a COB process.

Unanimous Agreement VI College Panhellenic Association Agreement 2.B.

Each NPC sorority chapter has the right to use continuous open bidding (COB) to reach quota or its total allowable chapter size during the regular school year as defined by the school calendar. COB begins on Bid Day for chapters who did not achieve quota or as soon as the College Panhellenic has determined total. To accommodate a newly establishing chapter or to allow a chapter to build its membership, the College Panhellenic Council may vote to suspend COB for a period not to exceed three weeks. The start and end dates for the COB moratorium must be set by a vote of the College Panhellenic, preferably during the academic term prior to implementing the moratorium. The College Panhellenic should consider the need for chapters not at quota or total to have up to one week to fill vacant spaces through COB before the moratorium begins.

If a College Panhellenic is utilizing a virtual continuous recruitment as its primary method of recruitment, a chapter may offer an invitation of membership (a bid) to a woman upon her completion of high school and when she is an undergraduate regularly matriculated at the institution. If the College Panhellenic delays primary recruitment (fully structured or partially structured) until later than Oct. 1, 2020, or defers primary recruitment until spring 2021, chapters may begin continuous open bidding of all women starting on the first day of the originally scheduled primary recruitment to recruit up to total.

Proviso: The addition of the second paragraph in this section takes effect July 1, 2020, and expires Dec. 31, 2020.

Continuous Open Bidding (2017, 2020) – Best Practice:

COB is not intended to precede or take the place of the primary membership recruitment period, nor should there be a COB process prior to the start of fall primary membership recruitment. Likewise, no COB process should occur during the period at the start of the term in which primary recruitment does not take place while rosters are confirmed for the reset of total (not to exceed seven days).



The purpose of COB is to enable those chapters that did not pledge to quota or pledged quota but did not reach total, to recruit additional new members immediately following the primary membership recruitment period. The intent of COB is to provide maximum opportunities for membership to the greatest number of chapters possible.

On campuses with deferred (second term) membership recruitment, any COB prior to the scheduled membership recruitment period should be limited to upperclass and transfer women. First-year women should not attend these recruitment functions. COB would not be open to first-year women until after the primary membership recruitment period.

Exceptions to this COB best practice will be made in cases where the College Panhellenic determines that they will be delaying or deferring their primary recruitment process due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With this exception, chapters may use continuous open bidding to reach total allowable chapter size.

Proviso: Last full paragraph of this best practice is in effect July 1, 2020, and expires Dec. 31, 2020.

How Can The Panhellenic Help Support Growth?

- **Set total in a timely manner!** This fall, total should already be set using the fall 2019 total. All chapters should be aware of what total is and the number of spots they have available. It is critical that chapters submit an accurate roster of returning members so open spaces may be calculated. This will allow fall primary recruitment campuses to start COB activities immediately after bid distribution. It will also allow spring primary recruitment campuses the ability to start COB activities at the start of the academic term.
- Have an officer within your Panhellenic assigned to monitor and promote year-round joining opportunities, like COB, to unaffiliated women on your campus. This is usually the recruitment officer, but she can have an assistant assigned to this task if it helps.
- Keep tabs on chapter sizes. As soon as you become aware of a chapter that is eligible for COB, reach out to the chapter to inform them of eligibility and how many bids the chapter is allowed to give out. The chapter may not even realize it has room for new members. Also, remember there is no limit on the number of times a chapter may conduct recruitment. A chapter may welcome new members every time it is below total, even if that is more than once a term!
- Keep any necessary documents on hand and make them available to the chapters. Some campuses have grade releases for potential new members to sign so that chapters can check grades. Make sure to put these in the hands of chapters below total, even before they ask for them. **The College Panhellenic should not require grade checks for potential new members.** Make sure each chapter has copies of the COB MRABA. The updated COB MRABA can be found in the NPC Manual of Information [here](#). Once they are signed, the chapter submits a copy to the Panhellenic office to be kept for one year. The chapter may consider keeping a copy on file for themselves.



- Maintain a database of interested women for chapters to contact when conducting COB. Make sure the information in the database is readily available to the chapter recruitment officers, as needed. Remember that a woman **does not have to be in the database to receive a bid; College Panhellenics should NOT require potential new members to “register” with the Panhellenic to participate in COB being conducted by individual chapters.** The database should just be a place that chapters can go to for ideas of women they may want to reach out to. Promote COB by promoting this database and inviting women to sign up. When a woman expresses interest in COB, she should be told that her name will be shared with chapters who are participating. Each chapter will decide whether to contact the interested woman. **Additionally, the College Panhellenic should maintain a list of ineligible women on your campus, including women who are initiated members of an NPC organization already but are no longer affiliated, and women who have signed MRABAs since the last primary recruitment.**
- Stay in touch with chapters as they host COB. Remember a chapter does not have to hold an event to host COB. **Again, women who are participating in continuous open bidding should not have to register with the Panhellenic.**
- **Do not regulate how chapters conduct COB.** Some organizations want to meet lots of women through COB and will have events that anyone can come to. In those cases, help them get the word out if they want you to. In other cases, a sorority may only have room for two people and may quietly selecting their two new members. Some people will only be interested in COB if the “right” chapters are participating. If this is their approach, COB is probably not for them. Be mindful that chapter membership numbers, which chapters are eligible for COB, and which ones might host it are not to be shared with anyone.
- While a College Panhellenic may ask chapters to share COB events with the Panhellenic to share on a common calendar or promote on social media, a College Panhellenic should not be asking or requiring chapters to register COB events.
- During COB, some chapters will want to meet many women and will have events anyone can attend. If requested by the host chapter, the College Panhellenic should help get the word out by sharing the host chapter’s event information on the College Panhellenic’s marketing channels.

Remember, whatever a College Panhellenic does during COB, should be in support of the chapters and PNMs finding each other!