

Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Band Leaders Association (ACCBA)



PARADE OF BANDS 2026

ACCBA STATEMENT OF MAS BAND STANDARDS, RULES & REGULATIONS.

The enclosed information describes in detail the guidelines, rules and regulations governing the Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Parade of Bands. Please thoroughly read this information and complete the registration application.

The Registration is open to a minimum of 75 Carnival Masquerade Bands and Steel Orchestras that register with ACCBA for the current Carnival season. ACCBA reserves the right to refuse the participation of any band, group or individual. Any band that does not participate as an individual band (a band with its own music truck, unless otherwise approved by ACCBA) in the 2026 Atlanta Caribbean Carnival, will not be allowed to register in future Atlanta Caribbean Carnival parades. Any band that has less than the minimum required as an individual band in 2026 will not be allowed to have a registered band. ACCBA has the right to add bands associated with promotion of other cultures to enhance the carnival and sponsorship.

Mas Bands that register or participate in any event that is in direct conflict with Atlanta Caribbean Carnival will not be allowed to register to participate in the 2026 Atlanta Caribbean parade.

Introduction to Atlanta Caribbean Carnival

Atlanta Caribbean Carnival is a festive celebration of Caribbean culture including a variety of cultural events embodying the key elements of Carnival culture: Mas, Steelband and musical presentations. Hosted by ACCBA Carnival Committee. ACCBA is a non-profit organization based in Atlanta GA. Atlanta Caribbean Carnival leads up to a parade of the bands every year during Memorial Day Weekend (the "Parade of the Bands"). Atlanta Caribbean Carnival is produced with public resources including sponsors and in collaboration with a few important community stakeholders, including the Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Band Leaders Association ("**ACCBA**" or "**Association**"), a Georgia not-for-profit organization.

The ACCBA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote educational, cultural, social, and recreational activities related to Atlanta Caribbean Carnival. The ACCBA promotes respect and shared understanding among diverse ethnicities in Atlanta, Georgia. The ACCBA also establishes standards and protocols to help ensure that promoters and other entities do not exploit carnival Mas bands and masqueraders.

Mas bands are private entities funded solely by their owners, committee members, silent investors, and sponsors. Mas bands consist of sections by the band or other entities/individuals known as private sections. They are the heart and soul of a carnival parade and consist of masqueraders (you), who wear king, queen, individual, or group costumes. Masqueraders contract directly with the Mas band (or affiliated private section) of their choice to purchase costumes and other Atlanta Caribbean Carnival related event access and accommodations. Band owners/band leaders are responsible for executing their costume designs, music trucks, food/drinks on the route, and an enjoyable experience for their masqueraders.

Sections are segments of a Mas band owned, controlled, and managed by the band or other private entities. The bandleader holds the house sections. Mas bands and their section leaders coordinate costumes that match a theme to tell a story for a particular year. They design and create a coordinated look, so no costume in a band has the same colors or looks similar.

Depending on the respective Mas band, outside entities/individuals may contract to operate private sections within a Mas band. In this regard, they pay a fee to the Mas Band for every individual in their section to cover all the ancillaries (food, drinks, cups, bags, tickets, wristbands, et al.). The private sections are responsible for designing, selling, producing, and marketing their costumes in coordination with the band's theme for the year. Private sections do not control or have ownership interests with the respective Mas band.

Though section leaders are most often responsible for the production and distribution of costumes, the bandleader's responsibility is to supervise proper execution, customer service, and experience for the masqueraders. All correspondence regarding costume issues (such as production and distribution)

will come from the section leader of a private section or the house section. The band leader still must coordinate deadlines, enforce them, and provide information to the private section leader to ensure a cohesive process with the band's operations

Masqueraders Expectations

As a masquerader, you should expect the following consumer amenities in all phases of your registration and participation in Atlanta Caribbean Carnival with your registered ACCBA Mas Band:

Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Showcase (Band Launch) In Person or Virtual – Registration.

1. Masqueraders have the right to see the costume for sale in its actual color.
2. Masqueraders have the right to be informed of all options if not displayed at the band launch.
3. Masqueraders will not be denied registration in any band or section due to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, physical appearance, or expression of gender.
4. Masqueraders have the right to be informed of the section leader or designer.
5. Masqueraders have the right to review registration and payment details, whether online or through other means.
6. Masqueraders have the right to know the band's policy on registration changes or cancellations.
7. Masqueraders have the right to be informed of a clear payment schedule.
8. Mas bands have the right to accept payment in any form of their choosing.
9. Masqueraders have the right to clear and timely communication with their section leader or band leadership for any concerns or questions about their registration.
10. Masqueraders have the right to be informed of their amenities via the Mas band website before registration.

Costume Distribution by ACCBA Bandleaders

1. Masqueraders have the right to clear and consistent communication regarding costume distribution schedules and any changes.
2. Masqueraders can review costume distribution schedules and changes through Mas band (or affiliated private section) social media main feed posts, stories, and email.
3. Bands or section leaders will not resell costumes paid in full if the masquerader advises them; they will not attend and want their costume mailed to them. The band/section leader will contact masqueraders to arrange shipment of the costume at the masquerader's expense within thirty (30) days after the event.

5. Masqueraders have the right to reasonable compensation for any distribution delays that would require the masquerader to incur transportation expenses, unreasonable delays of four (4) hours or more waiting for their costumes, or paid costume pick-up services. Transportation expenses include (Uber, Lyft, Taxi, and Public Transportation) but not auto rental, limo service, or private automobiles. Loss of use of event/fete tickets due to returning to collect costumes, (must include proof of purchase, date purchased, time purchased, purchase price) physical or digital tickets. The cost of paid costume delivery service must provide a paid receipt. These reimbursements can be no greater than 20% of costume cost.

6. Unless informed in advance, masqueraders have the right to receive their COMPLETE costume in a reasonable likeness of what was displayed at registration. Masqueraders have the right to receive compensation for any changes to the costumes if materials are used to decrease by more than 5% (Feathers & Gems).

7. Masqueraders should expect to be informed of any changes to the costume prior to distribution (as materials may become unavailable or discontinued before or during production).

8. The masquerader does not have the right to refund their order due to changes in materials.

9. The masquerader has the right to request reasonable provisions (i.e. substitution of equivalent costume, credit towards future event participation, etc.) If bands or section leaders do not provide their order in full at distribution.

10. The masquerader has the right to request reasonable provisions (i.e. repair or substitution of equivalent bodywear, feather work, etc.) if provided defective bodywear or feather work at distribution.

The Road Experience by ACCBA Bandleaders

A. The masquerader has the right to request and receive the minimum on-road amenities as promoted and committed as part of the registration, including, unlimited drinks, truck, music, selected food choice(s), and snacks), except alcohol declined due to visible intoxication.

B. The masquerader has the right to a full cup when requesting water, coconut water, or any other hydrating substances provided by the truck.

C. Bands have the right to refuse bar service of alcoholic beverages without the band's custom cup.

D. The masquerader should expect servers to refuse alcoholic beverages if they appear heavily intoxicated. Masqueraders may also face refusal if they share drinks with minors and non-masqueraders at the parade venue.

E. The masquerader should expect a clearly defined meet up/starting point.

F. The masquerader has a right to a safe and enjoyable road experience. The Mas band will provide security to ensure safety for masqueraders around the moving vehicles during the parade.

Masqueraders filing a complaint or request for Mediation with ACCBA regarding ACCBA Bandleaders.

A. Pursuant to alternative dispute resolution provisions in their Mas Band registration agreement, masqueraders dissatisfied with their Atlanta Caribbean Carnival experience based on an alleged violation of the standards set forth above, may initiate a complaint or request mediation with the ACCBA after first attempting good faith negotiation with the respective Mas band (or affiliated private section) as provided for in the registration agreement.

B. The ACCBA will only consider complaints and requests for mediation of claims related to the standards set herein and categorized in specific Complaint and Request for Mediations. Request must be emailed to atlantacarnival@gmail.com. Complaint and Request for Mediation submitted to the ACCBA should be accompanied by all supporting documentation and proof of the alleged violation.

C. Masquerader shall submit the Complaint or Request for Mediation within forty-five (45) days after the date of the Parade of Bands for the subject year. Complaints or Requests for Mediation first submitted more than forty-five days after the Parade of Bands will not be considered by the ACCBA.

D. In response to Complaints, after review and investigation the ACCBA, by and through its Compliance and ACCBA Executive Committee, may take any of the following actions against Mas bands found to be in violation of the above standards:

1. Impose penalties and monetary sanctions or fines up to \$2,000 per violation.
2. Recommend Mediation or Arbitration.
4. Recommend suspension or expulsion from future Atlanta Carnival participation.

E. After a Complaint is submitted, the masquerader shall expect a written response of the underlying claim within sixty (60) days from the receipt of the Complaint.

F. After a Request for Mediation is submitted, the masquerader and Mas band shall expect a written response and/or proposed mediation date within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the Request for Mediation.

G. Pursuant to alternative dispute resolution provisions in their Mas Band registration agreement, the parties (Mas Band, or affiliated private section, and masquerader), shall submit to binding arbitration if the dispute is not resolved after mediation. Arbitration shall be conducted by a professional neutral pursuant to terms and procedures set forth in the registration agreement.

4. Contract Terms

The ACCBA is a volunteer-based not-for-profit organization. The ACCBA does not enter contractual relationships with masqueraders. To understand all rights and responsibilities, the ACCBA encourages all masqueraders to carefully review the Mas band registration agreement ("Contract") with their respective Bandleaders

before purchasing costumes. The masquerader should confirm that the Mas band (or private section) has agreed to comply with the standards set forth in this document. In addition to the standards set forth above, Mas band Contracts typically include provisions for payment deadlines, costume delivery, remedies and accommodations for breach, alternative dispute resolution (i.e. mediation and arbitration), exceptions for force majeure, and disclaimers for handmade products. Masqueraders should review all such provisions carefully and consult with their own attorneys where necessary.

5. Penalties and Fines

To enforce the standards set forth in this document, the ACCBA has empowered the BOD to oversee compliance and dispute resolution. The Compliance and Dispute Resolution Committee shall be comprised of:

BOD, Secretary of ACCBA Vice President of the ACCBA President of ACCBA and Legal Counsel for ACCBA.

The Compliance and Dispute Resolution Committee (the “Committee”) shall review Complaints and Requests for Mediation submitted by masqueraders and alleging violations of the standards set forth in this document. The Committee may also consider allegations of violations of Association Bylaws submitted by members of the Association. As noted above, the Committee has the power to determine whether penalties, fines, and/or sanctions (including recommended suspension or expulsion from participating in Atlanta Carnival) shall be imposed. Monetary fines imposed by the Committee will range from \$200 - \$2,000 per violation from first-time violation to repeat offenders.

The Committee’s decision with respect to penalties and fines shall be binding. In the event the Committee recommends and appoints a mediator to help resolve a dispute between a Mas band (or private section) and masquerader, the mediator’s recommendation shall be non-binding. However, if the dispute is escalated to arbitration, the arbitrator’s decision shall be binding pursuant to the terms of the Contract. All fines and penalties assessed by the Committee or imposed in arbitration must be satisfied prior to future participation in Atlanta Carnival.

Parade of Bands

All Mas Bands must submit a completed registration application by August 15th,

2025, to be considered as a registered band.

A. Band Registration Fees

To be eligible to participate in the Parade of Bands, each masquerade band must:

- **Be officially registered by fully completing the enclosed registration form by August 15th, 2025, and submitting the band registration fee of \$1,500 no later than February 13, 2026.**
- The fees help to cover the cost of Assembly Permit, Police, EMS, Toilets and Sanitation to manage the parade.
- All payments must be made payable to ACCBA and can be submitted by invoice, credit card, debit or Zelle to treasurer.atlantacarnival@gmail.com

Parade of Bands

- Portray a theme that contributes to the spirit of Carnival.
- Be accompanied by a live music band or a DJ.
- Have a minimum of seventy-five (75) costumed masqueraders.
- Start assembling at the starting point on Saturday, May 23rd, 2026, by 9:00 a.m. Bands not properly assembled by 10:45 a.m. will be relocated. Any band not properly assembled at 10:45 will not be allowed in the parade.
- All bands must have their truck or music vehicle and support vehicles at the parade route no later than 9:00 AM. Roads will be blocked off at 9:00 AM.
- All bands must have identifiable Band Marshal(s), one for every twenty (20) masqueraders, to ensure an orderly process along the parade route. If there are more than 200 masqueraders per band, you will be required to have additional security for your band.
- **All bands will be charged \$30.00 per wristband for their masqueraders. Please include in your costume cost.** This fee also assists with the cost of the parade. Payments must be made on or before May 8th, 2026, send payment to treasurer.atlantacarnival@gmail.com.

C. Masquerader Directions at the Venue

- **Law enforcement may ask bands to turn the music off if there are complaints from residents or businesses. All bands are asked to comply with law enforcement.**
- **The Band Marshals and Security officers will be required to remove all non-masqueraders out of the parade procession and direct those patrons to the sidewalk. Trucks are not allowed to turn or park in front of the entrance, or they will be towed. All illegally parked vehicles will be towed by a Tow truck by law enforcement.**

D. Parade Route – See Attached

9am - 4pm Parade Assembly:

Parade Route:

- **Bandleaders and Marshals must ensure that non-costumed people do not enter the parade unless they are clearly identified as officials assisting in the overall conduct of the parade. All non-costumed people will be required to enter through the main gate and will be required to pay the appropriate entry fee.**
- **Bandleaders must notify Atlanta Caribbean Carnival officials of the number of armbands needed for registered masqueraders by April 24th, 2026. Only people wearing an official 2026 Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Parade of Bands armband will be allowed through the participant entrance, Parade Marshals, and Atlanta Caribbean Carnival officials will strictly enforce this policy. Atlanta Caribbean Carnival officials reserve the right to deny entry to anyone not following the rules and regulations of the organization. Any band caught selling or distributing official armbands will be disqualified and will be subject to disciplinary actions by the organization. Once you purchased the wristband it is yours, we do ACCEPT any unused wristband.**
- **Bandleaders and Band Marshals agree to cooperate with the Parade Marshals to ensure the unimpeded progress of the parade. Failure to do so can result in possible removal from the parade by law enforcement.**

E. Bands on the Road

- **Each band will draw for a position in the parade on April 24th 2026 at the park.**
- **The numbers drawn will be used to identify the band in the parade along with their accompanying trailer, music truck, and support vehicle.**
- **Each band will be allowed one music truck or trailer and one support vehicle.**
- **Official number placards will be distributed to all groups.**
- **The numbers drawn must be visible in the front window of all the vehicles and attached to the group's banner.**
- **Any vehicles seen in the parade that are not registered or are not displaying their official number approved by the Carnival committee will be removed by the City of Atlanta Police at the request of Atlanta Caribbean Carnival officials.**

F. Crowd Control

- **Bandleaders, Band Marshals, and Masqueraders will ensure that no one is solicited on the day of the Carnival to join the parade.**

- **Bandleaders, Band Marshals, and Masqueraders will cooperate with the Carnival officials, security, City of Atlanta Police, and any other designated official to ensure a successful parade.**
- **Spectators are not allowed to join with the Masqueraders entering the festival village. Non-costumed individuals seen among the Masqueraders, other than Marshals and Officials, will cause a Masquerade Band to be held back from entering the festival village.**
- **Bandleaders caught giving away official wristbands will be removed from the parade and A fine will be imposed to all bandleaders that violate this rule.**
- **Any band leader not adhering to all ACCBA rules will be charged a fine of \$5,000 and will not be allowed to participate in the parade unless the fine is paid - no exceptions.**
- **Any Band that is involved in any fight along the parade route will be fined \$5,000 and will not be allowed to take part in the Atlanta Carnival parade for a period of two years.**



BAND REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete all the information requested.
If some information is not applicable, please indicate by entering N/A.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Band _____

Contact Name(s) _____

Signature Bandleader _____

Signature ACCBA President _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone # _____

BAND INFORMATION

Number of Participants: _____

Registration Fee \$1500: _Date Paid: _____ / _____ / _____

**** ALL FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE ****

Band Theme/Portrayal: _____

Sections: 1: _____ 2: _____ 3: _____

4: _____ 5: _____

Music on the Road: DJ _____

Musicians: _____

2026 Masquerade Band Theme:

2026 Costume Descriptions:

Section 1: _____

Section 2: _____

Section 3: _____

Section 4: _____

Section 5: _____

A. General Regulations

The rules and regulations that follow will serve as a guideline to assist you in your participation in the 2026 Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Parade of the Bands.

B. Design

Floats and Music trucks will be accepted based on:

- Aesthetic quality
- Originality
- Quality of construction
- Classification for awards
- Creativity in the design

C. Sponsor's Name and Band Theme

- The float or music truck shall bear the name of the community, organization, or sponsor on the side aprons.
- All signs must be high quality and legible.
- Commercial symbols or logos are permitted to the extent that the creativity of design dominates over the promotional aspects of the symbols or logos used.
- All band themes must be submitted on the application form.

D. Dimensions

- Floats and music trucks must not exceed 20 feet in width.
- Floats must not be taller than 12 or 13 feet high
- Floats with parts that are taller than the 13 ft height requirement must be lowered in a quick and efficient manner.
- The maximum float length is 55 ft.

E. Decorations

The Atlanta Caribbean Carnival requires that all floats be covered with materials that will hold up under adverse weather conditions. These materials may include:

- Natural growth, flowers, plants, grass, and moss
- Vinyl floral sheeting
- Enamel paint
- Webbing or rubberized materials

F. Symmetry

- Floats and music trucks shall be constructed and decorated so that views from either side are equally appealing to the eye.

G. Lettering

- Letters on the floats should not exceed 18 inches in height.
- Logo work should be uniform with lettering.

H. Riders

- Builders or float sponsors are responsible for obtaining written consent or release from every rider on their float.
- A maximum of seven (7) people, exceeding the vehicle driver, are allowed on the float or music truck except for steel bands.
- All riders, including the driver, must have a safety belt or safety railing incorporated into the float and or music truck.

I. Distribution of Materials

- Samples or other materials of any kind may NOT be thrown or otherwise distributed from the float, music truck, or other vehicles on the parade route.

J. Towing and Trash Liability

- If the breakdown of your float or music truck prevents the forward movements of the parade, the vehicle will be removed from the parade route at the nearest intersection at the Masquerade Bands expense.
- Atlanta Caribbean Bandleaders Association will not pay any liability for the cost of towing units after breakdown. All costs incurred will be paid directly by the float builder, vehicle owner, sponsor, or band responsible for the group.
- Any liability for the cost of removing costumes and or floating items left on the streets along the parade route will not be paid by the Atlanta Caribbean Carnival Bandleaders Association. These costs will be billed directly to the float builder, vehicle owner, sponsor, or band responsible for the group.

K. Vehicle Safety

- To ensure the safety of participants and spectators, floats and music trucks are **required** to have plywood/wood covering over the wheel wells.
- Band Marshals should be positioned at the wheel when trucks/floats are on the parade route.



FLOAT/MUSIC TRUCK REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete all the information requested.
If some information is not applicable, please indicate by entering N/A.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Band _____

Contact Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone # _____

SPONSOR INFORMATION

Number of Your Sponsor(s) _____

Band Theme/Portrayal: _____

Music on the Road: DJ _____ Musicians: _____

Please give a brief description of your 2026 float design and construction:

For Additional Information

www.atlantacarnival.org
accbasecretary2@gmail.com

Payment plan for Bandleaders for 75 Masqueraders: All payments are due at the end of each month.

- September 2025: \$375
- October 2025: \$375
- November 2025: \$375
- December 2025: \$375
- January 2026: \$375
- February 2026: \$375