

August 26, 2020

We will be moving forward with a virtual competition. This decision was not made lightly. I've met numerous times with the other State coordinators and the National Board to discuss the issues we are facing. We would love to hold in person competitions this upcoming Season, however, many factors were against that decision. Based on this, the majority of States will be hosting virtual competitions and the National Board will be ready for a virtual competition in the event we are unable to meet in person next May.

What will virtual competitions look like for Minnesota? Based on the feedback from other State coordinators, I envision the following format:

- Zoom will be the software used; each round will be in a breakout room.
- Students and coaches will have the option to meet together or separately. Each student/team must have a camera, microphone, and computer; it can be shared also. You will be allowed to meet at school, home, friend's house, etc.
- The background for team members will be the same; judges will have a neutral background too. We will provide it or give the specifications in advance.
- Only those speaking will be allowed to have their camera on; all others should turn off the video and mute their microphone.
- Timekeepers can have their camera on and are the only one allowed to use the Chat box function.
- Attorneys and Judges should use another way to communicate during the competition (phone, email, etc.).
- If a student drops off, there will be a time limit to allow them to get back on. Coaches will be asked to have an alternate if a student doesn't reconnect.
- Coaches are not allowed to communicate with the team during competitions.
- Judges will be given an electronic scoresheet and results will be given to teams within 48 hours.
- Parents and spectators will not be allowed to join virtual competitions for the first several rounds. We want to make sure competitions are running smoothly.
- We will offer the same schedule for rounds. One a week. State Tournament is TBD.
- Regions 7-16 may be spread out in the evenings each week instead of one night a week.
- Regions 1-6 will have rounds during the day, and we will be able to assign judges that you've never seen before (from the TC or other areas of the State). Regions may be combined based on registration numbers.

More to come; this is just a snapshot of what we're thinking about and working towards.

BONUS: No more snowstorm cancellations and missed school time for travelling! You'll also experience new judges with different views and a whole new way to compete!

The Mock Trial Committee has been busy working on writing the Civil case, amending the Rules, and putting together a virtual team workshop and judges training. We will be testing the format this Fall and will offer teams a quick test run in December too.

Hopefully this will give you a better idea to share with your students and volunteer attorney coaches as you plan the upcoming year. Registration information can be found [online](#). **Deadline to register a team is October 23rd.**

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

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