



January 7, 2022

Dear Mock Trial teachers, coaches and participants

Our plan at the beginning of this Mock Trial season was to offer a live competition experience for our hard-working students this year. In October, and even early November, we felt confident we could provide that. Unfortunately, as we have seen with the pandemic from its beginning days, things do change quickly from month to month, week to week, and day to day. In response to Liz Jones' inquiry this week, a large majority of you expressed concern with going forward with a live format while, on the other hand, some felt comfortable with doing so. With the exponential contagiousness and rapid spread of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus, and with forecasts from NCDHHS and the CDC of infections peaking in North Carolina in and around early to mid-February, the NCMTP Board unanimously decided this morning to pivot to remote regional competitions across North Carolina on Saturday, February 5.

This decision to go remote is made not only to protect the health and well-being of our participants and many volunteers, it is just as importantly based upon the practicality and reality that should we move forward with a live competition in this setting it would be at our peril with participants and volunteers potentially withdrawing in weeks leading up to and in the days and hours before the competition due to exposures and illness, and, potentially, losing courthouse facilities as we move closer to the event. Going remote for our regional competitions is the only way to ensure that all of the hard work our students have put in comes to fruition with an actual competition without the risk of last-minute cancellation. The NCMTP Board will determine the format for State Finals scheduled for March 18 and 19 after regionals has been completed, when we can determine the status of infection rates and confirm the continued availability of facilities.

Our schedule for remote Regionals will remain a one-day schedule (rather than the two-day schedule utilized last year). The schedule has been posted on the NCMTP website at [ncmocktrial.org](http://ncmocktrial.org). Further details and information with regard to the remote format, including online competition rules and courtroom artist competition details, will be updated online in the coming days.

The NCMTP Board understands this change in format must be considered and evaluated by all teams and has thus extended the last day to withdraw without penalty to Friday, January 14. It is our hope that all of you will continue forward and reap the benefit of this program. We understand and similarly feel your disappointment in not being able to compete live in a courtroom setting, but the work and dedication you have committed to this program deserves to shine at competition – regardless of it being live or remote.

Thank you for your dedication to this program and thank you for your support of this decision which we feel best protects our students and volunteers while assuring the competition can go forward without the risk of cancellation.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Britton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Britton  
President  
North Carolina Mock Trial Program