

Hello Mock Trial Teams,

The 2021-22 'online' competition rules have been posted online on the ncmocktrial.org website; also linked here: [RULES BOOK](#). Below is a summary of online competition processes for your convenience, but please read the rules book also.

(If there are any changes/updates to event processes in the coming weeks, I will update this document using **red text**.)

ZOOM LINK + TEAM ROSTERS + ROUND PAIRINGS

Your site assignment email will include a link to a **google folder** which will include a "master document". This is where you will find team pairing/breakout room information (for both rounds) and your Zoom link. You will also be able to access a "folder" of team rosters. Click on your opposing counsel's team roster to learn student names/roles/pronouns.

TEAM PRIVATE ROOM BEFORE ROUND I & II

After attending a brief group welcome ceremony, students and coaches and observers if applicable (*6 observers max per team*) will be invited to go to their team's private breakout room to finalize preparations for about 40 minutes before Round I. Schedule. The same will be offered after lunch, before Round II.

5 MINUTE WARNING + THEN MOVED INTO TRIAL ROOM

Your team/group will notice a Zoom-wide "announcement" 5 minutes before everyone will automatically be moved into trials rooms before reach round. Your team/group will be moved into the trial room 10 minutes before trial starts. Everyone should feel free to turn video and audio OFF during those 10 minutes before the judge and jurors arrive for the start of trial.

COURTROOM LIAISON + RECORDING OF TRIAL

A courtroom liaison (paralegal volunteer) will be in the breakout room to address any concerns or relay issues back to regional competition administrators; the liaison will have recording privileges to record the trial; I'll share trial videos with teams' teacher coaches after

competition. (*Teams/schools participating in State Finals will receive their videos after the March event.*)

TIMEKEEPER PACKET

Please note that we provide a link to a 'timekeeper packet' on the NCMTTP case materials webpage. That packet (with printable time cards, please print) is LINKED HERE. Timekeepers (as per Rule 4.3) must keep their video ON throughout the trial to show the printed timecards. The timekeepers, similar to a standard in-person trial, would be silent when holding up the cards, however we do suggest they **say the word "STOP" when holding the "STOP" card.**

PRE-TRIAL MATTERS

- a. Your presiding judge has been asked to ask each student to **introduce** themselves and their role. Please prepare your team to do this. (Rule 2.3.c) Please note that we ask your team student leader to introduce/announce your team's **courtroom artist**, if applicable.
- b. Your presiding judge has been asked to task the student bailiff with swearing in all witnesses at trial. The judge will ask all witnesses to turn their video ON. The student bailiff may then swear all witnesses together en masse by following the script in Rule 4.5.

NAMING ON ZOOM (use only first 3 letters for region please)

Students: See Rule 4.3 for complete details on the re-naming protocol.

Attorney AND Teacher Coaches:

Team Letter + Region + Coach + Name

Observers:

Team Letter + Region + Observer + Name

Example: coach for team G in Salisbury: **G Sal Coach Jane Doe**

Example: observer for team B in Hickory: **B Hic Observer Jim Doe**

Example student atty for team B in Hickory: **B Hic Atty (P) Jane Doe**

NEW! Defendant Donna O'Grady: **B (Fay) Defendant Donna O'Grady**

NEW! Courtroom artists:

B (Fay) Artist Jane Doe

Students/coaches should rename themselves before joining the call if they have a Zoom account (by editing their Zoom account profile). See Rule 4.3, end of page 9. If students or coaches don't have a Zoom account, they are welcome to rename themselves immediately upon joining the call.

AUDIO AND VIDEO ON ZOOM

Coaches and Observers: MUST have their video and audio OFF

Defendant Donna: Video can be ON throughout trial. Keep audio OFF.

Courtroom artists: Audio and video OFF throughout trial.

All students: For much of the trial, student videos will be OFF (and only ON when they have a role, like an opening or direct or they are the crossing attorney objecting during a direct exam*)

One instance where a judge may ask ALL students to be visible is at the beginning or end of trial for a round of applause. If not all your student will be have access to an individual laptop, it might be wise to prepare your team leaders to explain this to the judge. In other words, preparing your students on video to say "Your honor, my colleagues ___ are watching this from a computer without video capability but are able to hear your comments" or similar.

*See the last line of Rule 1.2.c -- the crossing attorney should have their **video on** when they are observing the direct examination of the witness they will cross. During this time, they can turn audio on when they have an objection to make.

GENERAL ZOOMING

Judges and Jurors should only see 1 student per screen with the correct zoom name/role. IF your students are in the same physical space, please note that computers should be a good distance apart to avoid 'feedback' -- please test this before competition to ensure your students won't have technological issues.

Therefore, if your team is meeting in the same location during competition: please have enough laptops/computers (very well-spaced to avoid feedback!!) to ensure you can achieve the audio/video requirements listed in Rule 1.2.c. Examples:

- timekeeper has their own computer with video on throughout trial
- during Direct and Cross, the witness, direct examining attorney and cross-examining attorney must have their cameras turned on for the entire witness examination.

- All 3 witnesses should be able to get on video for their simultaneous swearing in, IF possible.

We strongly recommend all participants, judges and jurors use **GALLERY VIEW** on Zoom to be able to consistently observe the timekeeper (and time remaining) during trial and to observe all others (including judge/jurors) who have video on.

MOVEMENT DURING TRIAL

Rule 4.8 gives attorneys the choice to either remain seated OR stand during opening and closing. Please help them ensure they remain in view of the jury and judge through their laptop computer camera (excessive movement would likely bring them off camera...). Students are seated during the other segments of trial including direct/cross and objections.

EXHIBITS AND AFFIDAVITS

Students have the option to use Zoom's screen share to publish an exhibit (after laying proper foundation) *but they can also assume (if they prefer) that judge/jury have the exhibits in front of them (which they will)* and simply reference that assumption, as you suggest in your question. See Rule 3.3, last para.

AFTER TRIAL

The Judge will ask all students to **stay** in the breakout room after the trial. The judge/jurors will turn their video/audio OFF to complete/submit their respective online ballot. Students are likewise invited to turn their video/audio off at this time for a short break. Within **10 minutes**, the judge and jurors will turn their video/audio back ON to provide their oral critique to the students before the judge dismisses the trial.

SCORING

Here's a sample of their online ballot as [pdf](#) Jurors will be invited to complete another comment form after the verbal critique has been completed to share additional feedback; this will be sent to teams' teacher coaches after the competition.

VIRTUAL BACKGROUND

Use of a virtual background is not required and not recommended (because of the bandwidth it takes). However, students that are more comfortable with a background must stick to either a black or white background.

FAIRNESS

Please try to replicate the regular physical courtroom experience; speaking to or prompting one of your witness-colleagues during their direct or cross does NOT reflect 'typical court' and violates the spirit of the competition. In typical court, attorneys can share notes at counsel table; students are welcome to replicate this via cell phone texts (on silent).