

COMPETITION RULES (IN PERSON)

1. GENERAL

1.1. Applicability. These rules shall apply to all MYLAW Mock Trial competitions. Participants are cautioned that the absence of enforcement of any rule within the local circuit competition does not mean the rule will not be enforced at the Regional, Semi-Final, and/or State competition.

1.2. Diversity and inclusion. MYLAW has a policy of inclusion, and welcomes all participants regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, ancestry, genetic information, or any other category protected by federal, state or local law.

1.3. Expectation of participants, coaches, hosts and volunteers. Ethical and professional behavior is expected at all times during all phases of the MYLAW Mock Trial Competition. MYLAW prohibits discrimination, retaliation, or harassment in all its forms, by any individual or team. Inappropriate behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Discriminatory comments based upon any ground listed in 1.2;
- Failure to show respect;
- Violating any of the rules outlined within the casebook;
- Adhering strictly to the “No Coaching” rule;
- Engaging in irresponsible behavior that puts oneself or others at risk, including intoxication at any time during competitions;
- Illegal conduct of any sort.

1.4. Ideals of MYLAW Mock Trial. To further understanding and appreciation of the rule of law, court procedures, and the legal system; to increase proficiency in basic life skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and critical thinking; to promote better communication and cooperation between the school system, the legal profession, and the community at large; and to heighten enthusiasm for academic studies as well as career consciousness of law-related professions.

1.5. Integrity. Individuals, teams, coaches and volunteers shall at all times demonstrate the highest standard of ethical conduct, courtesy, legal professionalism, competence and integrity.

1.6. Damage to property. No participant shall intentionally take, move, or cause damage to any property of any school, courthouse, or facility hosting any part of a MYLAW Mock Trial competition.

2. ROLES

2.1. Teacher Coach. The team’s teacher coach is considered the primary contact for each school. The Coach’s primary responsibility is to demonstrate that winning is secondary to learning.

a. Coaching goals. The Teacher Coach shall coach and mentor students about the “real world” aspects of judging in competitions; including but not limited to competition rules, sportsmanship, team etiquette, procedures, and courtroom decorum.

b. Coaches’ responsibilities. The Teacher Coach shall recruit students for the team; arrange practice sessions and scrimmages; coordinate transportation to and from competitions; supervise the team during practices and competitions; work within the school and greater community to recruit an attorney advisor; communicate with opposing teams prior to competition regarding any relevant issues including the identification of witnesses; and ensure that the team arrives at all scheduled mock trial competitions. Every coach has an obligation to instill by example in every student, respect for Judges, officials and other members of the MYLAW Mock Trial community.

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2.2. Circuit Coordinator. Maryland is divided into eight judicial circuits. For the purpose of the Maryland Mock Trial Competition, local competitions will be divided and organized according to the eight judicial circuits. Each circuit shall have a Circuit Coordinator, who will serve as the primary contact for coaches and advisors. Circuit Coordinator contact information is listed on the inside front cover of this book.

MYLAW will send official communication to the Circuit Coordinator who is then responsible for disseminating the information to all Teacher Coaches within their respective circuit. The Circuit Coordinator shall make decisions or mediate at the local level when problems or questions arise; establish the circuit competition calendar; arrange for courtrooms, Judges, and attorneys for local competitions; and arrange general training circuit-wide or county-wide sessions if necessary.

2.3. Local and State Bar Associations. The Bar Associations shall advocate involvement of local attorneys in advising teams and hearing/scoring trials.

2.4. Attorney Advisors. It is the role of the Attorney Advisor to teach basic court processes and procedures, to review and explain modified rules of evidence and their application to the case at hand, and most importantly, to exemplify fairness, professionalism, integrity, and the ideals of the American justice system. In the absence of an Attorney Advisor, these responsibilities become that of the Teacher Coach.

2.5. MYLaw. MYLaw shall provide Mock Trial Guides and rules for the State competition; disseminate information to each circuit; provide technical assistance to Circuit Coordinators; provide certificates to all registered participants who compete for the season; assist in recruitment of schools; and act as liaison in finding legal professionals to assist teams.

3: REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

3.1. Registration information. Registration information is available on the MYLAW.org website. Registration may be completed online or by mail.

3.2. Team Payment. Payment is expected by the registration deadline. Payments may be made by check or submitted through the PayPal link found on the MYLAW.org website. An invoice is available on the MYLAW.org website for your convenience.

3.3. Primary Contact/Teacher Coach. Each school must have a primary contact person, in most cases the Teacher Coach, in order to register. The Teacher Coach shall be the person MYLAW and/or the Circuit Coordinator communicates with when applicable. All primary contact persons' information shall be current, and shall be listed on the registration form at the time of registration. If a teacher is not available to serve as the primary contact, a parent, administrator or other school affiliate may do so with the permission of the school principal.

4. TEAMS

4.1. Team make-up. A team must be comprised of no fewer than eight (8) but a maximum of twelve (12) student members from the same high school, with the exception of high schools with a Maryland State Department of Education inter-scholastic athletics designation of Class 2A or Class 1A, which may combine with any other schools in the LEA in those classifications to field a team.

- a. Two "alternate" students are permitted during the local competition only. If a coach wishes to carry those two alternates forward to state competitions, any related expenses are the responsibility of the school.
- b. If a team advances beyond the local competition, an official roster must be submitted not to exceed twelve (12) students.

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4.2. Team Roles. Teams may use its members to play different roles in different competitions.

- a. For any single competition, all teams are to consist of three attorneys and three witnesses, for a total of six (6) different students.
- b. Note: In Circuits 1 and 2, where teams typically participate in two competitions per evening – once as the prosecution and once as the defense – students may change roles for the second competition.

4.3. Fielding teams. High schools that field two or more teams shall not, under any circumstances, allow students from Team A to compete for Team B or vice-versa.

- a. Each team must have its own Teacher Coach and Attorney Advisor, separate and apart from the other team.
- b. If a high school has multiple teams, then those teams must compete against one another during the local competition.

4.4. Team Information. Teacher Coaches of competing teams are to exchange information regarding the names and gender of their witnesses at least 24 hours prior to any given round.

- a. Teacher Coach for the plaintiff/prosecution should assume responsibility for informing the defense Teacher Coach.
- b. A physical identification of all team members must be made in the courtroom immediately preceding the trial.

4.5. Attorney Advisor. Every effort should be made for teams to work with an Attorney Advisor to effectively prepare for competition.

4.6. Attendance of an opponent's competition is prohibited. Members of a school team entered in the competition, including Teacher Coaches, back-up witnesses, attorneys, and others directly associated with the team's preparation, shall not attend the enactments of any possible future opponent in the contest.

5. COMPETITION

5.1. Forfeits are prohibited. All registered teams agree to attend all scheduled competitions.

- a. Team with inadequate number of students (i.e. due to illness, athletics, or other conflicts), are expected to attend and participate in the competition, regardless.
- b. In these instances, a team will "borrow" students from the opposing team, in order to maintain the integrity of the competition, and respect for the Court, Presiding Judge, attorneys and the other team that has prepared for, and traveled to, the competition.
- c. The competition will be treated as an automatic win for the opposition.
- d. Coaches should make every effort to notify the local coordinator and the other coach in advance of the competition if there are an inadequate number of team members.
- e. When an opposing team does not have enough students to assist the other team, students may depict two or more of the roles (i.e. they may depict 2 witnesses or play the part of 2 attorneys).

5.2. Local competitions. Local competitions must consist of enough matches that each participating high school presents both sides of the Mock Trial case at least once.

5.3. Areas of competition. Areas of competition coincide with the eight Judicial Circuits of Maryland.

Circuit #1: Worcester Wicomico, Somerset Dorchester	Circuit #2: Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot	Circuit #3: Baltimore Co., Harford	Circuit #4: Allegany, Garrett, Washington
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Circuit #5: Anne Arundel, Carroll, Howard	Circuit #6: Frederick, Montgomery	Circuit #7: Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, St. Mary's	Circuit #8: Baltimore City
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5.4. "Unofficial" Circuit.

- a. Each circuit must have a minimum of four teams. Circuits that have less than four teams must abide by the following:
 1. If a circuit has up to three teams but less than the required minimum of four participating teams, the teams may compete in a "Round Robin" that advances the winner to the competition that determines circuit representative. The runner-up team from another circuit would then compete with the circuit representative in a playoff prior to the Regional Competition (see chart in 5.4).
 2. Or, when a circuit has less than four registered team, MYLAW may designate another circuit in which these teams will compete. Geographic location will be the primary factor in making this determination.
 3. Or, under the discretion of a circuit coordinator and MYLAW, if a circuit chooses, it may combine with the "un-official" circuit to increase the number of opportunities to compete.
- b. When a "circuit opening" arises, it will be filled by a sequential rotation of circuits. The second-place team from the specified circuit will advance to the regional competitions to fill the opening. If the team is unable to advance, the opportunity will move to the next circuit, and so on, until the opening is filled. In the event that all circuits are officially comprised of a minimum of four teams, the designated circuit will remain the next in-line to advance in future years.

2021-2022	Circuit 3	2025-2026	Circuit 7
2022-2023	Circuit 4	2026-2027	Circuit 8
2023-2024	Circuit 5	2027-2028	Circuit 1
2024-2025	Circuit 6	2028-2029	Circuit 2

5.5. Circuit Competition. Each competing circuit shall declare one team as Circuit Champion by holding a local Mock Trial playoff competition. The Circuit Champion shall be declared by the date set forth in this casebook. It is at the discretion of the Circuit Coordinator(s) and MYLaw as to the process by which the champion is declared, particularly if there is more than one county in the circuit.

5.6. Rendered decisions. Attorneys and Judges may preside over, and render decisions, for all matches. If possible, a Judge from the Court of Appeals or Court of Special Appeals will preside over, and render a decision at the State Finals.

5.7. Regional/ Quarterfinal Competitions. Each Circuit Champion will compete against another Circuit Champion in a single competition, in order to determine which team advances to the Final Four. For the 2021-22 competition season, MYLaw will likely create virtual and in-person playoff competitions.

5.8. Dates for MYLAW Final Competitions. Dates for the Regionals, Semi-Finals, and Final competitions will be set by MYLAW and notice will be given to all known participating high schools. Teams that enter into the current year's competition agree to participate on all scheduled dates of the competition as set forth on the MYLaw website or their local Coordinator.

5.9. Declared winner of the Regional Competition must agree to participate on the scheduled dates for the remainder of the competition or be eliminated. Any team that is declared a Regional Representative must agree to participate on the dates set forth for the remainder of the competition.

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Failure to do so will result in the team's elimination from the competition and the first runner-up in that circuit will then be the Regional Representative under the stipulations.

6. JUDGING AND SCORING

6.1. Reserved, with information to be provided at a later date.

6.2. Reserved, with information to be provided at a later date.

6.2. All Judges' decisions are final. Appeals are not allowed. MYLaw retains the right to declare a mistrial in the event of a gross transgression of the organizational rules and/or egregious attempt to undermine the intent and integrity of the Mock Trial Competition.

7. DIRECTLY PROHIBITED

7.1. No coaching. There shall be no coaching of any kind during the enactment of a mock trial:

- a. Student Attorneys may not coach their witnesses during the other team's cross examination;
- b. Teacher and Attorney Coaches may not coach team members during any part of the competition;
- c. Members of the audience, including members of the team who are not participating that particular day, may not coach team members who are competing;
- d. Except for the express purpose of keeping time, team members must have their cell phones and all other electronic devices turned off during competition as texting may be construed as coaching.
- e. Teacher and Attorney Coaches shall not sit directly behind their team during competition as any movements or conversations may be construed as coaching.

7.2. Notice of team demographic information is prohibited. Team members or other affiliated parties, shall not, before or during the trial, notify the Judge of the students' ages, grades, school name or length of time the team has competed.

7.3. Attendance of an opponent's competition is prohibited. Members of a school team entered in the competition, including Teacher Coaches, back-up witnesses, attorneys, and any others directly associated with the team's preparation, shall not attend the enactments of any possible future opponent in the contest.

7.4. Use of Electronics. Except for the express purpose of keeping time, the use of electronics (phone, laptop, iPad, etc.) is completely prohibited.

8. General Trial Procedures

8.1 Time limits. Each team must complete its presentation within forty-two (42) minutes.

- a. Each side has a combined total time of forty-two (42) minutes for direct examination, cross examination, re-cross/re-direct and voir dire (if permitted);
- b. Opening statements and closing arguments are five (5) and seven (7) minutes respectfully and are not included in the forty-two (42) minutes permitted under 8.1a.
- c. The "clock" will be stopped during objections (including any arguments related to those objections), bench conferences, the setting up of demonstrative exhibits prior to the examination of a witness (where such activity is permitted by the presiding Judge) and court recesses;
- d. There is no objection permitted by any party based on the expiration of time.

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8.2 Use of a Bailiff. Each team is mandated to have a non-competing Mock Trial team member serve as a Bailiff during the course of each competition.

- a. Each Bailiff will keep time for the opposing counsel. The two Bailiffs will sit together in a place designated by the presiding Judge separate from the contending teams. Bailiffs from the two teams will work together collaboratively to ensure the accuracy of their records;
- b. The Bailiff(s) will also announce the Judge, call the case, and swear in each witness;
- c. Each Bailiff shall have two stopwatches, cellphones, or other timing devices.
The second timepiece is intended to serve as a backup device. *Note - cellphones should be employed for the purposes of timekeeping only, with the expressed consent of courthouse officials.*
- d. Each Bailiff shall have visual displays (e.g. cards or pieces of paper) of numbers counting down from 42 in 10-minute intervals, (for example, 40, 30, 20, 10, etc.). At the final 3-minute mark, the Bailiff will begin counting down on the minute (3, 2, 1, 0). As each interval elapses in a team's presentation, the Bailiff will quietly display to both teams and to the presiding Judge, the time-card corresponding to the number of minutes remaining. When the number zero is displayed, the presiding Judge will announce that the team's presentation is concluded. Teams may ask the presiding Judge for courtesy time to complete a presentation, but the extension of courtesy time is intended to permit a team to complete a sentence or thought. It should not extend beyond 15 seconds.

8.3 Student Attorneys.

- a. Roles. The Student Attorney who directly examines a witness is the only attorney who may raise objections when that same witness is being cross-examined. The student attorney who raises objections on direct examination must be the same attorney who then cross-examines that same witness. This same principle applies if a Student Attorney calls for a bench conference; i.e., it must be the attorney currently addressing the Court. The student attorney who handles the opening statement may not perform the closing argument. Each student attorney may conduct only one direct examination and one cross examination.
- b. Addressing the Court. When addressing the Judge, always stand.
- c. Attire. Professional attire should always be worn during competition.

8.4 Evidentiary Materials. Any materials that have been modified for use during trial (e.g., enlarged), must be made available during the trial for the opposing team's use. During witness identification exchanges, please alert the other team if you plan to use modified materials.

9. Invention of Fact. This rule shall govern the testimony of all witnesses. Mock Trial competitors shall advocate as persuasively as possible based on the facts contained in the casebook. Teams must rely on the facts as stated in the case rather than creating new facts or denying existing facts in order to benefit their parties.

9.1. Judges' scoring. If a team demonstrates through impeachment that its opponent has made an Improper Invention, Judges should reflect that violation in the scores by penalizing the violating team, rewarding the impeaching team, or both.

9.2. Improper Invention. There are two types of Improper Invention: 1) Any instance in which a witness introduces testimony that contradicts



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the witness's affidavit and/or 2) Any instance on direct or redirect in which an attorney offers, via the testimony of a witness, material facts not included in or reasonably inferred from the witness' affidavit.

Facts are material if they affect the merits of the case. Facts are not material if they serve only to provide background information or develop the character of a witness.

A reasonable inference must be a conclusion that a reasonable person would draw from a particular fact or set of facts contained in the affidavit. An answer does not qualify as a "reasonable inference" just because it is consistent with the witness affidavit.

For the purposes of Rule 9, an affidavit includes the witness's sworn statement, as well as any document in which the witness has stated his or her beliefs, knowledge, opinions or conclusions.

9.3. Trial Remedy for Violations. If the cross-examining attorney believes the witness has made an Improper Invention, the only available remedy is to impeach the witness using the witness's affidavit. Impeachment may take the form of demonstrating either (1) an inconsistency between the witness's affidavit and trial testimony ("impeachment by contradiction") or (ii) that the witness introduced material facts on direct or redirect that are not stated in or reasonably inferred from the witness's affidavit (impeachment by omission"). The cross-examiner is not permitted to raise an objection to the Judge on the basis of "invention of fact."

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