

2024 Teacher/Attorney Coach Questions

The Coaches' Orientation and the Team Rulebook contain much of the information provided below and more. Please ensure that you review both before the competition.

1. Do all teams present a Pretrial argument?

The pretrial argument is mandatory for the high school teams. Middle schools do not present a pretrial argument.

2. How many rounds does each team participate in?

Each team is guaranteed to present Round 1 and Round 2. After Round 2, only undefeated teams advance to the next round.

3. How long are rounds?

Rounds last about 2 to 2 ½ hours.

4. Can a clerk (or unofficial timer) use a phone or tablet to keep time?

Phones, tablets, or other electronic devices are prohibited during the competition. The clerk and unofficial timer can only use a stopwatch to keep time.

5. What side provides the exhibits?

The prosecution team must bring the exhibits.

6. How big can the exhibits be enlarged, and do the exhibits have to be in color?

The exhibits can be enlarged up to 22 x 28 inches and do not need to be in color.

Reminder: Exhibits cannot be altered. If enlarged, they must be the same as in the case packet, including not separating Exhibits C and D or Exhibits E and F.

7. Can the pretrial attorney be a witness, clerk, or bailiff?

A pretrial attorney may be a witness, clerk, or bailiff. However, the attorney **may not serve as a trial attorney** during the same round.

8. Can an artist/journalist be a witness?

An artist or journalist may be a witness. As long as it is not disruptive and follows all the rules and procedures – no modifications will be provided.

9. Is Exhibit E a potential hearsay issue since we do not have the content or witnesses to validate it as an official business record?

Stipulations 11 and 12 together authenticate the exhibits. Hearsay exception (d) on page 80 also clarifies that the custodian of records is not needed to testify to authenticate a business record.

10. Does the Junior Division include questions about the pre-trial issues in their direct or cross-examinations?

The Junior Division does not have a pretrial, but they can use the bracketed information (in the fact situation and statements) during the trial.

11. Are teams limited to the number of spectators (non-participating students, parents, etc.) that can attend?

While there's no strict limit on the number of attendees, we urge teams to keep in mind that the courtroom spaces available for spectators vary, with some being quite limited. The spectator space in a courtroom will be shared by both teams assigned to that courtroom. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated!"

12. Where will the LA County Mock Trials take place?

All trials will take at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse in downtown LA (110 N. Grand Avenue).

13. Where do I enter the courthouse?

- The courthouse entrance on Grand Avenue is the only entrance that will remain open during the competition.
- Two other entrances are located on 1st Street, and the other is on Hill Street, but these two entrances close at 4:30 pm.

14. Where do I park?

Several public parking lots surround the courthouse with \$20 or less rates. Carpooling is highly recommended.

15. Where do buses park or drop off students?

There is no bus parking, only pick-up and drop-off areas. Students may be dropped off at the courthouse on Olive and 1st Street or Grand Avenue between 1st Street and Temple Boulevard.

16. What time does my team need to be at the courthouse?

Team Check-in is on the 2nd Floor from 4:00 pm-4:30 pm. The teacher/attorney coach must check in and submit a copy of the Team Roster form (based on your team's side assignment) before each trial with their team code. There is no need to bring the entire team to the check-in area. You will receive a Most Valuable Participant certificate, a blank Teach Democracy thank you card (Round 1 only), and other information.

Reminder: the teacher/attorney coach must stay with the team for the entire trial.

17. Where and when do I find the courtroom assignments?

The courtroom assignments will not be posted until all teams have checked in. Once all teams have checked in, the assignments will be posted on Tabroom at losangelesmt.tabroom.com (you do not need to have a Tabroom account). When sharing this link with spectators, please ensure you also share the team's code, as assignments will be listed with team codes only.

18. What is the Most Valuable Participant certificate for?

At the end of each trial, the presider instructs each team that they have a couple of minutes to determine the opposing team's MVP certificate winner. Then, one member from each team presents the certificate.

19. What is the blank Teach Democracy thank you card for?

During Round 1, each team member must sign and leave the card on the bench to thank the presider (who might not be the same person presiding over your trial) for allowing us to use their courtroom.

20. What forms do I need to bring?

- Observer Form – 1 per team
- Timesheet – prosecution team 1 per clerk (and 1 per any unofficial timer – defense team)
- Team Roster Form – each team must bring six completed forms based on their side assignment
 - one copy submitted to Teach Democracy staff at check-in
 - before the trial begins, the clerk and bailiff will provide one copy to the presider, each attorney scorer, and the opposing team

All forms can be found at <https://teachdemocracy.org/programs/mock-trial-los-angeles/download-forms>.

21. What is the observer form for?

Each team (prosecution and defense) must designate an adult to serve as the official Courtroom Observer/Chaperone. No one should enter the courtroom until the observers have entered and completed a room survey. The general rule is that Mock Trial participants and spectators should touch or move nothing in the courtroom. The official Courtroom Observer/Chaperone must ensure the team leaves the courtroom exactly as it was. The completed observer form must be returned to the presider at the end.

22. Can you reference exhibits during the closing argument?

As long as the exhibits were officially admitted into evidence during the trial.

23. Can you motion to exclude a witness?

The only motions allowed are pretrial motions, motions to enter exhibits into evidence, and motions to strike testimony.

24. I noticed that the pronouns "they" and "them" are used for both electoral candidates and Logan Gold. Should the students use these pronouns when referring to these three people?

Every year, the names on the case are gender-neutral so that any gender can play any role. It is up to the students to address themselves as they prefer. The students can include their pronouns for each role on the roster forms, which will be distributed to the presider, scoring panel, and opposing team.

25. When is the official round for the Courtroom Artists and Journalists?

The official round for both contests is Round 2. Please review all the information for the respective contests available in the Team Rulebook and on the website - [Courtroom Artists](#) or [Courtroom Journalists](#).

26. Will parking be provided for teams?

Parking is not provided. Several public parking lots surround the courthouse, and the rates are \$20 or less. Carpooling is highly recommended.

27. What is dress attire?

All participants are required to wear appropriate courtroom attire. Spectators are prohibited from wearing clothing that identifies the student's school.