

Policies for In-Person State Championship Competition

Vaccination and Testing

TEACH DEMOCRACY supports vaccination of all participants for all communicable diseases for which an FDA-approved vaccine exists, including COVID-19 and its variants, and urges all participants to be vaccinated and to keep current with any recommended boosters.

Testing requirements will be dependent on CDC, California Department of Health, and Los Angeles County Department of Health guidelines. TEACH DEMOCRACY requires frequent testing of symptomatic individuals and supports appropriate systematic testing of asymptomatic individuals. Ideally, such testing would occur before every large-scale gathering or trial day of competition.

However, TEACH DEMOCRACY understands that procuring a large amount of tests might be cost-prohibitive for schools. Accordingly, TEACH DEMOCRACY may require a limited testing protocol, as follows:

1. All team participants (students, teacher coaches, attorney coaches, and spectators) should be tested before traveling and may be required to test on-site before the first formal event in the State Finals schedule in which they will participate.
 - a. This specific protocol for testing before the competition date may be subject to change dependent on CDC, California Department of Health, and Los Angeles County Department of Health guidelines.
 - b. Teams may be required to travel with a sufficient number of tests to meet this requirement, at team cost.
 - c. Coaches may be required to report through a system established by the TEACH DEMOCRACY that all members of the team are negative before they may attend the first formal event of the competition.
2. All teams are required immediately to test any team members who display symptoms of infection and to report to TEACH DEMOCRACY any positive test.
3. All attendees may be required to test at their own cost before the day on which their participation begins.
4. Any individual who experiences a positive test will be treated as infected until that individual tests negative consistent with contemporaneous guidance from health authorities.
5. Attendees who test positive after activities or contact with others on site shall inform TEACH DEMOCRACY and should expect to be isolated from further in-person competition activities. To the best of our ability, TEACH DEMOCRACY will notify those in close contact about the possibility of exposure.

Isolation of Infected Individuals and Effect on Their Teams

Quarantine and Its Costs

If an individual tests positive for an infectious disease requiring quarantine (e.g., COVID-19 or its variants), the infected individual should be quarantined at the earliest possible time. Members of that individual's team should re-test as promptly as possible. Teams participating in State Finals will be required to accept at the time of registration the possibility of bearing the additional expense of hotel rooms for any infected student or coach.

Travel and Its Costs

Depending on contemporaneous health guidance, infected students or coaches may not be able to travel home as scheduled. If contemporaneous health guidance forbids such students or coaches from traveling, teams participating in the State Finals will be required to accept at the time of registration the possibility of the additional cost of housing and feeding such individuals – and any chaperones required because the individuals are minors – and of changing travel plans.

Isolation of Teams

If one or more members of a team test positive before traveling to the competition site and that individual has been in close contact with other members of the team, the entire team shall remain at home and forfeit the competition.

Likewise, because mock trial teams travel and are housed in close personal contact, if a team has an individual who is infected, that team cannot safely participate in in-person trial rounds.

Depending on local health guidance, TEACH DEMOCRACY may, in its sole discretion, permit such teams to participate in in-person rounds of competition if (a) each member of the team attending the trial round has tested negative for the disease before the round beginning; (b) the team can legally compete under the competition rules without the infected team member who is quarantining (i.e. there is an alternate who can step in); and (c) informed consent to in-person competition is given by the other team and each judge and volunteer in the round.

The eligibility of team members who test negative to participate in large-scale events will be determined on a case-by-case basis by TEACH DEMOCRACY, in consultation with the team's coaches, and following local health authority guidelines. Team members who test negative may be excluded from such events or required to undertake additional precautions or limit their participation in order to be allowed to attend, and teams will be required to accept at registration the risk that they might not be allowed to attend these events in case of infection.

Masking or Protective Gear

If the spread of the infection contemporaneously in the community is mitigated by masking, TEACH DEMOCRACY may require that participants wear masks and may require that those masks meet an appropriate standard (e.g., N95, KN95). Similarly, if the infectious disease in question is spread by touch, the TEACH DEMOCRACY may require that participants wear other protective gear, such as gloves.

Likewise, TEACH DEMOCRACY may require that participants take other routine health measures, such as using sanitizing wipes on courtroom surfaces or using hand sanitizer before and after competition

rounds. TEACH DEMOCRACY may provide appropriate materials for such protective efforts, or teams may be required to provide materials their own at their own expense. Teams will be required to accept this possibility at the time of registration.

TEACH DEMOCRACY may require masking during large-scale events, or it may require that everyone participating in a trial be masked, or it may except the presenting attorney and the presenting witness from being masked. Again, contemporaneous local realities and appropriate guidance will govern this question, and teams will be required to accept the possibility that supplemental protective measures will be required at registration.

If State Finals occurs during a pandemic, TEACH DEMOCRACY will have masks and hand sanitizer on site. However, teams may be required to bring enough masks or other protective gear to use in case masking becomes required during the event. This may even occur between rounds, if circumstances dictate. Regardless of whether masking is required for any event, during a pandemic, any participant who wishes may wear a mask or other protective gear for whatever events – including trials – that student wishes. Presiding and Scoring Judges will be instructed that they cannot require students to remove protective gear and that they are to take no account of it in completing their scoring ballots.

Limitations on Spectators

The court is providing the courtrooms for use during the competition. Each courtroom is unique, with some allowing for larger spectator seating and others allowing for very little spectator seating. Additionally, the Courthouse or TEACH DEMOCRACY may limit the number of spectators in each room. Teams should be aware that spectator seating cannot be guaranteed and adjust the number of spectators accordingly. Every effort will be made to make this decision well in advance, but TEACH DEMOCRACY reserves the right to respond to changing epidemiological circumstances by making this decision even in the days or weeks before the competition.

Teams will be reminded of this fact at registration, and all spectators will be encouraged to make all travel plans refundable or to obtain travel insurance that will mitigate the impact of a late decision by TEACH DEMOCRACY to limit the number of attendees. Teams may be required to certify during registration that they have informed spectators of this policy and its possible impact on their travel.