

Frequently Asked Teacher/Attorney Coach Questions

Please make sure to review before the competition.

Courthouse and Parking Logistics

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

All trials will take place at the Stanley Mosk Courthouse - 110 North Grand Avenue.

2. Where do I enter the courthouse?

- The main courthouse entrance is on Grand Avenue - this entrance will remain open during the competition.
- Two other entrances are located on 1st Street and Olive Street, and the other is on Spring Street and 1st Street, but **these two entrances close at 4:30 pm.**
- Everyone must go through metal detectors and security checks. Expect long lines to enter the courthouse. You can help minimize waiting time by limiting what you bring. Leave all unnecessary items at home or in the car/bus. We also highly recommend that the team put items such as keys, phones, etc., into one backpack.

3. Where do I park?

Parking will not be provided. There are several public parking lots surrounding the courthouse. The closest parking lot is **Lot 14 - Music Center** (135 N. Grand Avenue, across from the courthouse/Grand Park). Carpooling is highly recommended.

4. 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 in front of the courthouse on Olive and 1st Street or on Grand Avenue between 1st Street and Temple Boulevard.

Check-in Information

5. 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 only (there is no need to bring the entire team to the check-in area) must check in and:
 - submit a copy of the Team Roster Form prior to each trial using their team code
 - collect a packet with 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, see **Rule 2.1 B.**

6. What is the Most Valuable Participant certificate for?

At the end of each trial, the presider instructs each team to have a couple of minutes to determine the opposing team's MVP. The MVP should go to an opposing team member who displayed a commendable performance. The presider then allows one team member to present the certificate to the opposing team's selected student.

7. What is the blank TEACH DEMOCRACY thank you card for?

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

Forms for Competition

8. What forms do I need to bring to each trial?

- Observer Form – 1 per team for the designated adult
- Timesheet – 1 per clerk (and 1 per any unofficial timer- optional)
- Team Roster Forms – each team must bring six completed forms
 - one copy submitted to TEACH DEMOCRACY at check-in
 - before the trial begins, the clerk and bailiff will provide one copy to:
 - the presider
 - each attorney scorer
 - the opposing team
- All forms can be found on the website.

9. What is the observer form for?

Each team (both prosecution and defense) is required to designate an adult to serve as an official Courtroom Observer/Chaperone. No one should enter the courtroom until the observers have entered and completed a survey of the room. The general rule is that nothing in the courtroom should be touched or moved by Mock Trial participants and spectators. The official Courtroom Observer/Chaperone must make sure the team leaves the courtroom exactly as it was. The observer form must be turned in at the end of the trial.

Team Logistics

10. 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.

11. What side provides the bailiff?

The defense team provides the bailiff. The bailiff must bring a copy of the 2026 Team Rulebook and case packet, along with errata.

12. What side provides the clerk?

The prosecution provides the clerk (official timer). Clerk must bring a timesheet, pen/pencil, and stopwatch/timer (no cell phones, tablets, or other digital devices). Calculators are allowed. You may borrow a TEACH DEMOCRACY stopwatch at check-in. The presider will provide TEACH DEMOCRACY laminated time remaining cards, but must return them to the presider after each trial.

Optional - The defense team provides the unofficial timer. The unofficial timer must sit next to the official timer to compare timesheets.

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

No phones, tablets, or other electronic devices allowed at all during the competition. A clerk and an unofficial timer can only use a stopwatch to keep time.

14. What side provides the exhibits?

The prosecution team must bring the physical evidence listed under the heading "Physical Evidence" in the case materials to each trial. All reproductions can be as small as the original size of the exhibits found in the case material but no larger than 22 x 28 inches. Teams will not be penalized if they choose not to reproduce and enlarge the exhibit as found in the case material. If the prosecution team fails to bring the physical evidence to court, it may be reflected in the team's presentation/participation score.

Rounds and Score Logistics

15. How many rounds does each team participate in?

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

16. How long are rounds?

Rounds last about 2 to 2 ½ hours.

17. Where do I find Round 2 side assignments?

All teams will do the opposite from Round 1. For example, if your team was prosecution for Round 1, you will present the defense for Round 2.

18. How are teams matched up after R1?

After Round 1, teams are power-matched (see Rule 4.4 for more details).

19. When will team pairings be posted?

All pairings will be posted after all teams have checked in via the team's Tabroom account. The pairings will also be posted publicly on Tabroom. Most courtrooms will still be in session. Please have your team wait quietly outside their assigned courtroom until 5:00 p.m.

20. Courtroom Artists and Journalists Information

- Artists may sit in the jury box when available.
- Artists and journalists must bring their own supplies – no laptops or tablets allowed.
- Artists:
 - Round 1 – Practice with option to submit for People's Choice Contest
 - Round 2 – official round
 - Artwork must be submitted to the presider at the end of Round 2 with the artist's label (picked up during team check-in) on the back of the drawing.
 - See complete rules on website
- Journalists:
 - Round 1 - Practice with option to submit for People's Choice Contest
 - Round 2 – official round
 - Article must be typed and emailed to daisy@teachdemocracy.org by 6:00p.m. on Nov. 11th (Senior Division) and Nov. 13th (Junior Division)
 - See complete rules on website.

General Questions

1. Can you clarify Count One?

The charge remains the same – Nova Martz is charged with illegal contest of speed. The California Vehicle Code was updated and slightly reordered in 2011 so that contest of speed is addressed in subsection (a), but the CALCRIM jury instructions have not been updated since 2007, so they still indicate contest of speed as subsection (c). This discrepancy does not affect the fact that Nova Martz was charged with illegal contest of speed, and the fact that subsection (c) appears in the jury instructions is immaterial to this case.

2. Can a pretrial attorney play a trial attorney in the same trial?

No, a pretrial attorney cannot play a trial attorney in the same trial, see Rule 2.2 - A.

3. Is it okay to share the case packet with an AI agent in order to quiz herself on its content?

No participant may upload any portion of the case material to any generative AI tool. For avoidance of doubt, this includes uploading the case or any part of the case, such as the fictional logos in the exhibits.

4. Will jury instruction for Count Two be provided?

No, jury instructions for Count Two will not be provided. Refer to the elements outlined in the code to prove the charge.

5. **Can our team use Johnson v. U.S. in the pretrial since it's referenced in the Beckles v. U.S. case?**

Yes, pretrial attorneys may refer to the Johnson v. U.S. case but only insofar as it is discussed in the Beckles case. In other words, pretrial attorneys are still limited to discuss what's in the "four corners" of the case packet and may not use any other information about Johnson v. U.S.

6. **Under Vehicle Code, 23109, subdivision (a) and that violation proximately causes bodily injury to a person other than the driver..." What does a "person other than the driver" mean?**

A "person other than the driver" means a person other than the defendant."