



## 2022 Mississippi High School Mock Trial Competition

### *Virtual Tips & Suggestions*

#### **Rule Clarifications**

1. Rule 12(i), Virtual Addendum – Devices: There must be only one student ***per Zoom screen***. It is not necessary for every student to have an individual device. At a minimum, there must be at least three separate Zoom screens: one for the timekeeper, one for the speaking attorney, and one for the testifying witness.
2. Rule 12(i), Virtual Addendum – Students’ Screen Names: Each student must Rename themselves on Zoom in the following manner. (If one device is used for multiple students, they must Rename themselves each time a new student uses the device.)
  - a. *Attorneys: Team Letter – Student Name*
  - b. *Witnesses: Team Letter – Name of Witness Character*
  - c. *Timekeepers: Team Letter – Student’s First Initial, Last Name*
3. Rule 9, Virtual Addendum: Devices may not be switched out while in use during the competition. If one device fails during an attorney’s questioning, the witness’s presentation, or for the timekeeper, the team should request a brief recess per Rule 9 of the Addendum.

#### **Appearance on Screen**

1. Keep eye contact with the web camera instead of the people on screen. This will keep your eye contact with the audience instead of being turned to the side or looking down.
2. Be mindful that excessive movement on camera can be distracting (especially if you’re not the speaker).
3. Try to eliminate distracting backgrounds (i.e., pictures on the wall, open windows that cause glare, etc.).
4. There is a virtual background available for download in your Google Drive folder. This is the only virtual background approved for use during the competition.

#### **Time Keeper**

1. Video must be on at all times, and the microphone must be muted.
2. Hold up Time Remaining cards to the camera.
3. Time should be paused during any technical difficulty.

## **Sound / Audio**

1. Annunciate and speak slowly when performing. If you are further from the microphone, be sure to project your voice.
2. Account for internet lag when each witness or attorney is speaking in order to prevent interrupting one another.
3. All microphones should be muted when a student is not speaking. During witness examinations, only the microphones of the witness, the attorney on direct, and the attorney that will cross-examine the witness should be on.
4. Feedback
  - a. **\* If your team is able, we suggest that teams separate the witnesses and attorneys in different rooms to prevent audio issues.**
  - b. Audio feedback has occurred when multiple devices are unmuted and located in the same room.
  - c. Be mindful of distance between devices in one room and the volume level of each device (i.e., audible echoing).

## **Entering Exhibits**

1. While the virtual addendum allows for students to “share screen” on Zoom to introduce exhibits, it is not required. The judges, witnesses, and opposing counsel will already have copies of the exhibits. Therefore, we suggest using the language below to direct attention to the exhibits:
  - a. Your honor, may I direct the witness’s attention to what has been marked as Exhibit XYZ? Opposing counsel already has a copy.
  - b. [Lay the foundation]
  - c. [Offer exhibit into evidence]