# Presiding Judge Check List - *1st Morning Round*

SOUTH CAROLINA BAR MOCK TRIAL

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

**Middle School:** No longer than 2 hours tops from entering & exiting courtroom
**High School:** No longer than 2:15 hours from entering & exiting courtroom

## At Assigned Courtroom with Judging Team:

- ❒ **Call Prosecution/Plaintiff's Bailiff into Hallway and Provide Card to Bailiff**
- ❒ **Bailiff Opens Court & Introduces Presiding Judge**
- ❒ **Confirm Team Codes: Plaintiff/Prosecution is ☐☐ and Defense is ☐☐**
- ❒ **Welcome Everyone** **If a judge recognizes anyone affiliated with the team, call a quick recess and meet with regional coordinator.

## Quick General Housekeeping Items to Review Before Trial:

- ❒ **Collect Practice Scoresheets & Distribute** (if not ready, proceed with list and collect before trial begins)
- ❒ **All Observers, Coaches & Students Wear Badges** (only 2 team codes in the courtroom)
- ❒ 3rd Round Only: **Artists & Journalists and Their Visitors Sit in Jury Box** (hot pink badges – HS ONLY)
- ❒ **Limited Seating Available** If limited seats, observers with no students performing in the round are asked to step out.
- ❒ **Sharing of Gallery Seating** Guests sit on opposing side with permission of their teacher coach. No dominating space.
- ❒ **No Standing Permitted or Obstructing Aisles & Doorways**
- ❒ **Limit Courtroom Entrance/Exit Movement to Only During Transitions**
- ❒ **No Communication with Scoring or Presiding Judges at Competition**
- ❒ **No Communication Over the Bar** ** Only exception is with coaches after the trial to discuss any possible disputes.
- ❒ **Do Teams Object to Photography and/or Videotaping?** ***skip if in Chas. or Fed. Courthouse*** It is possible someone enters after your ruling on this. If it was ruled NOT to film, you may at a break instruct guests of the ruling. **If a team objects to filming of any kind, no explanation is required.** If filming is permitted, it is done with no flash and from the seated position.
- ❒ **No Moving Furniture Especially Podiums** Teams are responsible for damages.
- ❒ **Timekeeper Placement** Identify timekeeper(s) in the jury box (off to the side or in front of judges to prevent seeing scores.)
- ❒ **Timekeepers Working Silently & Simultaneously (no waiving or voicing "STOP")** Timekeepers silently/simultaneously display timecards provided with highest amount of time remaining.
- ❒ **Time Limits Should Not be Abused** Attorneys may ask for more time (not encouraged) & inquire about remaining time.
- ❒ **Time Discrepancy Verification Throughout Trial** Before the trial moves to the next segment, timekeepers check for time overages for that segment. Less than 15 seconds is not reported.
- ❒ **Cell Phones Off / Teachers' Are on Vibrate** ****skip if in Chas. or Fed. Courthouse ****
- ❒ **No Costuming– No Wigs, Uniforms Or Fake Scars/Injuries** ***(Accents are NOT costuming.)***
- ❒ **Temperature – If Too Hot, Students May Take Off Their Jackets**
- ❒ **No Bench Conferences or Pre-Trial Issues**
- ❒ **Exhibits & Case--Provided by SC Bar** Bailiffs verify in neutral location, in order, & no team has possession of them.
- ❒ **Report Emergencies Immediately** Communication should be minimal with none across the bar.
- ❒ **Remind that A Code of Ethical Conduct Form Was Signed By All Participants** (Refers to conduct, sportsmanship, not harming courthouse, etc.) Any violation can bring harsh penalties up to and including immediate disbarment from the competition.
- ❒ **Practice Scoresheets – Cannot Proceed Without Them** (Presiding (1), Scoring Judges (3), Ea. Team (1)
- ❒ **Introductions - Scoring Judges Introduce Themselves to the Teams**
- ❒ **Introductions – Both Teams Introduce Themselves to the Judges** Ask each team member to stand and SLOWLY provide their name and role in the round without identifying their school. Team members should introduce themselves in the order stated on the practice scoresheet.
- ❒ **Ask -- Are Both Teams Ready to Proceed?**

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## STARTING THE TRIAL:

- ❒ **Opening Statements – Plaintiff/Pros. 1st** (5 minutes per side) No objections allowed.
- ❒ **Ask -- Any Time Violations 15 Seconds or More?** (If yes, handle the discrepancy then & clear stopwatches.)
- ❒ **Prosecution / Plaintiff Bailiff Swears in All Witnesses at Once**
- ❒ **Plaintiff / Prosecution's Case in Chief – (re-direct & re-cross are permitted)**
  (TIME LIMITS: Plaintiff / Prosecution (25 minutes for directs) and Defense (20 minutes for crosses)
  **NEW –** If time runs out before 3rd witness is called, the team will be allotted three minutes for direct examination of its third witness and will receive a time penalty of ten points.
- ❒ **Ask -- Any Time Violations 15 Seconds or More?** (If yes, handle the discrepancy then & clear stopwatches.)
- ❒ **Defense's Case in Chief - – (re-direct & re-cross are permitted)**
  (TIME LIMITS: Defense (25 minutes for directs) and Plaintiff / Prosecution (20 minutes for crosses)
  - ❒ **NEW –** If time runs out before 3rd witness is called, the team will be allotted three minutes for direct examination of its third witness and will receive a time penalty of ten points.
- ❒ **Ask -- Any Time Violations 15 Seconds or More?** (If yes, handle the discrepancy then & clear stopwatches.)
- ❒ **Recess** (Ask Timekeepers to time a 5 minute recess) **Students in front of bar stay in courtroom.** Gallery may leave, but must be back within 5 minutes. Guests are not allowed back in if closings have started back. Everyone in courtroom must be quiet. Team in front of bar may converse with one another, but NOT across the bar. All judges should remain where seated, but should not be talking.
- ❒ **Closing Arguments – Plaintiff/Pros. 1st** (5 minutes per side) No objections allowed. Allow for rebuttal, if asked.
- ❒ **Ask -- Any Time Violations 15 Seconds or More?** (If yes, handle the discrepancy then & clear stopwatches.)
- ❒ **Jury Charges Are NOT Read to the Students**

## ENDING THE TRIAL:

- ❒ **Slow Re-Introductions of All Team Members** (in same order as listed on practice scoresheet)
- ❒ **Excuse Scoring Judges to Scoring Room to Complete Scoresheets**
- ❒ **Teams Check for Rules Violations by Meeting with Coaches** **You have green dispute forms to give teams. (Coaches may NOT complete form for students.)** If there were time discrepancies, they would be raised here.
  (TIME LIMITS: Prepare w/ Coaches: 2 Minutes, Prepare Response to Dispute Against Them w/ Coaches: 2 Minutes)
- ❒ **Handle Any Dispute Raised by Either Team** Follow the dispute procedure on the back of the dispute form. The filing team does not meet with coaches after dispute is filed.) ONLY team members may argue violations – not coaches or spectators. New FOR 2012 – **ANNOUNCE YOUR DECISION** on the rules violation. Bring dispute form(s) to scoring judges to discuss and sign.
- ❒ **Most Effective Nominations by Teams ** NEW *****
  1) Announce: These nominations do not replace nominations made by judges & the teams' nominations will not be shared with scoring judges.
  2) Hand each team two certificates (Most Effective Witness and Attorney)
  3) Ask teams to refer to the practice scoresheet and nominate a recipient for each award from the opposing team. .
  4) Teams announce the recipients in the courtroom followed by applause.
  5) Teams present the recipients with the completed certificates.
- ❒ **Congratulate Both Teams** (1 minute Max.) ** NEW ***Do not provide comments, just congratulate both teams.
- ❒ **Collect Timesheets** Ask the timekeepers for their timesheets and turn them into the Mock Trial Coordinator.
- ❒ **Congratulations / Applause** Congratulate attorneys, witnesses, bailiffs, timekeepers, teachers, attorney coaches, & parents.
- ❒ **LAST Round of Competition ONLY-** Ask each team's bailiff to stand at courtroom doors & collect all VISITOR badges.
- ❒ **Teams Exit into Hallways Quietly As Trials May Still be In Progress**
- ❒ **Return to Scoring Room Leaving Remaining Check Lists on the Bench**
  Gather together the two timesheets, the judge's materials, any dispute forms, and the most effective student nomination ballot from judges.
- ❒ **Discuss Dispute(s) with Scoring Judges --** If a penalty is required, scoring judges will refer to ranges noted on back of dispute form. Presiding and ALL scoring judges MUST sign the dispute form(s) even if none were reported.
- ❒ **Collect Paperwork** Collect and give all three completed official scoresheets, both timesheets, dispute form(s), and most effective nomination ballot completed by the scoring judges to the Coordinator before proceeding to next round.
- ❒ **Ask Judging Team to Stay Until All Scores Are Confirmed by Coordinator**

*Thank you for judging the competition!*