

**Nevada Mock Trial  
Guidelines for Coaches  
Attorneys and Teachers**

1. Always remember this is an educational activity with the focus on student learning.
2. All speeches and questions should be written by the students. Coaches (attorneys/teachers) guidance is strongly encouraged, but the actual product should be student generated.
3. Never should a coach (attorney/teacher) view another trial while their team is still in the competition.
4. Coaches (attorney/teacher) should have no contact with their team once the trial begins. This includes during any breaks or recesses until the trial is completed. (See: Dispute Outside The Bar, rule 33)
5. Please remember these students depend on your help to be competitive. Please keep this commitment or let the Board know they will need to assign another teacher or attorney.
6. Teacher coaches are responsible for all paperwork required by your respective school districts and for obtaining all the signed permission slips before each competition. When the teacher signs the team in at the beginning of the tournament, they are assuring the tournament host that all the paperwork is accurate and complete.
7. Coaches (attorney/teacher) are at all times role models for the students. The goal of the mock trial program should always be to create an experience of honesty and integrity from a fair competition.

## GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER COACHES

### A. ROLE OF THE TEACHER COACH

The teacher coach is expected to help the team members decide which students will play which parts in the mock trial and to assist the students in playing these roles. As part of the sizable community of acting as team coaches, teachers are responsible for the following areas:

**1. Rules of the Program.** All teachers and teams are expected to adhere to the rules, facts and all other materials provided. Therefore, please make sure you are familiar with the tournament rules.

**2. Registration.** Teachers need to remind their principals to return their school's registration letters. These letters will indicate the school's intent to participate and designate the official teacher coach. **Letters need to be returned by the due date.**

Teachers must also **arrange for the registration fee to be paid by the due date.**

**3. Team Formulation.** Teachers will be responsible for selecting the official Mock Trial Team to represent their respective schools. Although the school team may have many students alternating participation in practice tournaments, the official team for the regional and state tournaments will consist of the same 6 to 8 students members, the attorney coach, and the teacher coach. (Six is the minimum number of students requires; up to two alternates may be registered).

Suggestion: Teachers should use the official alternates at least once in a competition as a part of the total education experience.

Either the teacher coach or the attorney coach must be in attendance at all tournaments.

**4. Role Assignments.** Team members should be strongly encouraged to select roles based on their interests and abilities, and not on the basis of any gender or cultural stereotypes which might be drawn from the characterizations in the fact pattern.

**5. Team Preparation.** Attorneys will also help coach each team. Teams should prepare both sides of the case and are strongly urged to arrange and conduct preliminary mock trials with other teams prior to competing in the regional tournaments.

**6. Attire.** Teachers will discuss appropriate courtroom attire with the teams. The formality of the court setting should be reflected in the students' dress, but costumes will not be allowed.

**7. Exhibits, Displays.** No exhibit or display outside the case materials are permitted. No enlargements of the case materials is allowed.

**8. Education.** Education of students is the primary goal of the Nevada High School Mock Trial program. Healthy competition helps to achieve this goal, but teachers are reminded of their responsibility to keep the

competitive spirit at a reasonable level. The reality of the adversarial system is that one party wins and the other loses, and teachers should be sure to prepare their teams to be ready to accept either outcome in a mature manner. Teachers can help prepare students for the outcome by placing the highest value on excellent preparation and presentation, rather than on winning or losing the trial.

**9. Arrival Times.** Teachers are responsible for getting their teams to the assigned courtroom 15 minutes prior to the starting time for each trial.

**10. Rosters.** Teachers are responsible for their teams' rosters. Twenty-five copies of the official rosters should be available at each tournament (1 for the judge, 1 for each of the scorers, and 1 for the opposing team times 5 round = 25).

**11. Observers.** Other classes, parents and friends of the participants are welcome to attend the trials if the trial teams do not object. The observers need to adhere to courtroom dress codes (i.e. no shorts, tank tops, etc.)

Taping is allowed only if both teams agree.

**12. Team Control.** The decorum for the teams is the responsibility of the teacher coach. Teams should be instructed to behave in a manner that represents their school in a positive manner.

**13. Scripting.** The teacher coach should conduct the practice sessions to assure that the teams are not being scripted in their presentations and that the work being done by the teams is the student's work.