

Constitutional Rights Foundation's Monterey County Mock Trial Program

Courtroom Journalist Contest Official Rules

- All contestants must be affiliated with a participating Monterey County Mock Trial team and be enrolled at the team's school. Schools may enter a maximum of four (4) journalists. These participants may not have any other role on their Mock Trial team.
- All contestants must complete the entry form.
- All contestants must sign both a code of ethics, promising to work independently on the contest entry, and a release form authorizing the publication or reprinting of their entry without financial compensation.
- Contestants may, if they wish, watch their team's trial during Round 1, and shall sit in the courtroom spectator seating section. They may take notes and write a practice story – but such stories will not be submitted for judging.
- When attending Rounds 1 and/or 2, contestants must wear a "Press Badge," provided at check-in.
- Contestants must write their news stories based on their team's Round 2 trial.
- During Round 2 contestants shall sit in the jury box in a row separate from the scorers, if possible. If a scorer or the presider asks journalists not to sit in the jury box, they may sit in the front row of spectator seating, away from witnesses.
- Journalists should introduce themselves to the scorers (they will be sitting in the jury box) and the presider (she/he will be sitting on the bench).
- Once seated, journalists **MAY NOT HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH ANYONE FROM THEIR SCHOOL** (including parents, teachers, or fellow students). News stories must be written independently.
- Contestants must submit their finished news story by 7 p.m. on the day following the Round 2 trial they cover. Submissions may be made by FAX or e-mail to the address provided at check-in. Any contestant requiring other delivery options must have such arrangements approved prior to the start of Round 2 trials.
- News stories must be typed in a 12-point Times New Roman, with one-inch margins, double-spaced. Stories must not exceed 500 words.
- Journalists may use dictionaries, thesauruses and spell-check programs. They may refer to the Mock Trial case materials and Journalism Contest judging criteria.
- Awards will be given out after the Final Mock Trial Round. Individuals may win a Journalism award regardless of their schools' final ranking.
- The First Place and Second Place Journalist winners will represent Monterey County in the state competition. If either winner is unable to participate at the state level, then the Third Place Journalist winner will be invited to the state event.