

RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS

UPDATED October 20, 2020

COMPETITION MISSION

The competition introduces law student participants to the challenges of representing clients in mediation. The judging criteria reward those participants who use an effective combination of (i) advocacy and (ii) problem-solving. Advocacy in mediation means that lawyers should advocate for their client's interests with the mediator. Problem-solving in mediation means that the negotiating attorneys must learn about each other's clients' interests and BATNA (Best Alternative To A Negotiated Agreement), use objective standards, brainstorm options, and select and shape a solution that meets their interests. Participants must balance their clients' interests with the goal of achieving an effective settlement.

INTRODUCTION

As alternative dispute resolution processes, including mediation have been integrated in courts and pre-trial procedure, attorneys have many cases referred to these processes. Thus, it is important that attorneys can adequately represent clients in this environment.

Rule 1. Overall Schedule and Format of Regional and National Competitions

Each round of the Competition will run three hours:

10 minute check-in, sound and audio check for each mediation session

90 minute mediation session

10 minutes for teams to prepare for self-analysis

A 20 minute self-analysis segment (10 minutes per team)

10 minutes for the judges to complete and submit their score sheets

Up to a 30-minute critique segment during which the judges provide comments and feedback to the teams (15 minutes per each team)

Regional Competition Structure

The Regional Competition consists of two preliminary rounds and a final round. Each team will participate in the two preliminary rounds, with the top two teams advancing to the final round.

Advancing to the National Competition

The first-place team at each Regional Competition automatically advances to the National Competition. If any first-place team cannot participate in the National Competition, that team must notify the national coordinators within a week after the regional competition.

If there is an odd number of regional competitions, then the regional with the largest number of teams participating in the regional competition will be asked to send both 1st and 2nd place teams from that region to compete at the national competition.

For the 2020-2021 Online Competition, the Coordinating committee may invite the top two teams from each to participate in the National Competition. This decision will be made in late January 2021, after the competition registration deadline, and will depend on the number of regional host sites and total number of schools and teams registered.

The ABA will present a trophy to the school of the team that wins the National Finals. All other national participants and regional winners will receive a certificate.

National Competition Structure

The National Competition will consist of two preliminary rounds, a semi-final round and a championship round. Each team will participate in two preliminary rounds, with the top four teams advancing to the semi-final round. For the semi-final round, teams will be paired according to their rankings from the preliminary rounds. Team #1 will be paired with Team #4. Team #2 will be paired with Team #3. For the semi-final and final rounds, the top seeded team in each pairing will choose which side they will represent. The winner of each of the semi-final rounds advances to the championship round.

Rule 2. Registration

Schools may enter one or two teams for the competition, however, schools that have met their obligation to host a regional or national representation in mediation competition within the past five years will have priority placement for a second team.

Schools will have the opportunity to indicate their regional competition host site preference on the competition registration form. If an uneven number of teams are registered for the competition as of the registration deadline, the ABA may invite the host school to enter an additional team or may request another school in the region to send an additional team.

A school must send the number of teams they have registered as of the entry deadline at their assigned Regional Competition. This competition requires an even number of teams in each regional competition. A late withdrawal has a negative impact on all teams as any team that withdraws must be replaced. If an unforeseen circumstance arises, the school must contact the host school and the ABA Staff immediately upon learning about their inability to participate. If participants fail to provide a reasonable excuse for withdrawal, the participant's school will be banned from entering the Representation in Mediation Competition the following year.

Registered schools and teams will be placed in regionals in order of the following priority:

- (1) Whether the registering school has hosted a regional or national competition within the last five years;
- (2) Date the registration form is received by the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution;
- (3) The registering school's priority regional site as indicated on the registration form.

Preliminary registration deadline

All schools and teams registered as of the preliminary registration deadline of December 14, 2020 will be placed into regionals according to the priority placement guidance listed above. The regional assignments will be confirmed by January 8, 2020.

Schools that register after December 14, 2020 will be placed into regionals as space is available, according to the regional placement guidance. Depending on the number of teams registered, the regional slots available, and whether the registering team has hosted within the past five years, it is possible that only one team per school will be confirmed to have a regional placement.

All teams must register by January 18, 2021. The ABA will try to confirm the schools and teams in the available regional slots by January 25, 2021.

Registration costs

The registration costs for the 2020-2021 Competition are as follows:

One team: \$300.00

Two teams: \$550.00

Rule 3. Eligibility

The competition is open to all full-time and part-time law students enrolled in ABA approved (or Canadian LSAC-member) law schools during the semester the competition is held. Students enrolled in joint degree programs (JD/MA, JD/MBA, etc.) who have not graduated from law school and are enrolled in the joint program for the semester are eligible. LLM, MJ, or other non-JD students are eligible for the competition, provided their initial law degree graduation date was no longer than twelve months before the competition registration deadline.

All student competitors must be ABA Law Student Division Premium members for the 2020-21 bar year to be eligible to compete. Premium membership is \$25. Join Now at abaforlawstudents.com.

To be eligible to register teams in the competition, the law school must have hosted within the last five (5) years or have formally agreed with the ABA in writing to host within the next two (2) years.

Rule 4. Team Composition

Each team will consist of two students, with one student acting as the lawyer and the other acting as the client for the first round. The students on each team are to determine between themselves who will first act in which role. Roles must be reversed for the second round. There will be no changing of partners during the competition. Teams will be judged based upon the performance of both the attorney and client, not just the

attorney. For all semi-final and the final rounds, the team members shall decide for themselves who will act as the client and who will act as the attorney.

The ABA staff will randomly match opposing teams in advance for each regional competition round. The ABA staff will also designate in advance which team in each pairing is to assume the role of which adversary (plaintiff or defendant) in the problem for that round. Teams who represent plaintiffs in round one will represent defendants in round two. No two teams will compete against each other in both of the preliminary rounds. For purposes of administration and anonymous scoring, each team will be assigned an identifying letter prior to the competition.

Rule 5. The Problems

Each round will involve a new problem. All teams in each round will use the same problem.

The ABA staff will distribute the general information for the problems no later than two weeks prior to the competition. Each problem will consist of (1) general information for all participants and (2) confidential information for each party and their counsel.

Judges will receive all general and confidential information provided to the teams.

Mediators will receive the general information only.

If the mediator also serves as a judge, the mediator will receive the confidential information but should not read the confidential information until after the conclusion of the mediation session.

The general information for the semi-final (at the national level only) and the final rounds will be distributed prior to the competition. The confidential information will be distributed at the competition as soon as the semi-finalists and finalists are announced, and each team has chosen or been assigned a side to represent.

The problems will be drafted in a gender-neutral format, meaning that law students of any gender identity can play in the role of the party on either side of the problem.

Teams will have the opportunity to submit a request for clarification of the problems to ABA Competition Problem Drafting Committee. The Committee will address questions and clarifications limited to matters that would appear to have legal significance in the context of the problem as presented.

A request for clarification must include a short explanation of the expected significance of the clarification. If a request does not include an explanation, the Committee may ignore the request.

The Committee will provide clarifications to all teams if the clarification arises from the general information, and to the teams assigned to the appropriate side if arising within the confidential information.

The timeline for the clarification process will be determined when the problems are delivered and the deadline will be strictly enforced. Clarifications issued become part of the problem.

Each team is allowed to submit no more than 5 clarification questions for the general information and 5 clarification questions for the confidential information for each problem assigned in advance of the competition.

The Committee reserves the right not to address questions that it deems are irrelevant, outside the scope of the problem, or counter to the purpose of this rule.

Teams may draw reasonable inferences from the facts provided, but are constrained to the facts contained within the four corners of the record. Failure to stay within the record may result in up to a 5-point penalty. Students are encouraged to do outside research to become more familiar with the subject matter as well as the legal issues. However, when presenting "facts" in the role-play, the students should be limited to facts as written in the problem. While the participants may not make up facts, the facts are subject to reasonable interpretation. Whether a team's interpretation is reasonable is a matter entirely within the discretion of the judges and is not reviewable.

Rule 6. Team Self-Analysis

Following the 10-minute preparation for self-analysis, each team will have 10 minutes to orally analyze its own performance in the mediation in front of the judges. This will take place outside the presence of the opposing team. Students will use this 10-minute period to answer the following questions:

- (1) In reflecting upon the entire mediation, what specific problem-solving strategies did your team use effectively?
- (2) In what areas did you experience difficulties and what would you do differently next time when facing a similar situation?
- (3) How well did the outcome advance your client's interests as presented in the written representation plan?

Judges are only allowed to ask questions about the team's self-analysis or the team's performance during this time. During the self-analysis, Judges shall not provide critique or feedback about the self-analysis or any other element of the team's performance.

Teams should plan for speaking uninterrupted for the first seven (7) minutes of their self-evaluation. For the remaining three (3) minutes, the judges may ask questions with the parameters described above. If judges' questions and the students' answers leave some of the three (3) minutes unused, the students may use the rest of the time to make further comment.

The team should be prepared to respond to questions from the judges concerning the team's performance. In addition, the team may use this time as an opportunity to explain why it chose a particular approach or even a specific tactic. For scoring purposes, the judges may take into consideration anything said during this session. Judges should make a point of evaluating evidence that the team identified errors and areas needing improvement. Specific and concrete ideas for remediation and improvement should be reflected positively in the team's overall score.

Rule 7. Orientation

The regional and national competition hosts will provide an orientation for judges and mediators and an orientation for law student participants and coaches/faculty.

Each orientation will be held 1 to 10 days in advance of the competition. A recording of each orientation will be provided to participants.

It is a requirement that all judges and mediators participate in or view the recording of the orientation. The orientation for judges and mediators will cover:

- Overview and explanation of the Rules
- The mechanics of the virtual competition (platform being used, how to access and use the platform, etc.)
- Description of the problems
- The scoring criteria and the scoring sheets
- Expectations of the judges

At the orientation session, all participants will be afforded the opportunity to ask questions. The Competition Coordinator will have complete discretion in answering questions related to the problem and rules. However, no new facts will be added to the problems. Any portion of the judge and mediator orientation that discusses confidential portions of the problems must be omitted from any recording.

Rule 8. Permissible Assistance

The team coach or faculty advisor may advise the team in its planning and preparation for the competition, including the semi-final and championship rounds. No one, including team coaches and faculty advisers, however, may give advice or instructions to, or attempt to communicate, in any way, with any of the participants between the commencement of the participants' mediation session and completion of the self-analysis and final scoring period for that mediation session. Coaches may provide advice to their team in advance of the individual rounds, including the semi-final and championship rounds, but may not provide any such assistance once the mediation round has commenced.

Competitors may attend only their own scheduled mediation sessions. No person associated with any competitor, such as a coach, family member, or friend, may attend a mediation session other than one in which that school's teams are involved.

No person associated with any competitor team, including a coach, family member, friend, or any member of a team participating in the competition, may provide any form of advice or assistance to any competitor from another school in the competition. "Scouting" in any form is also strictly prohibited. Scouting is the observation and sharing of information with a competitor from another school about a team in the competition, during the competition, whether intentional or inadvertent. Teams from the same school (if a school has more than one team entered) are not prohibited from sharing information about other teams that they have faced. The responsibility ultimately rests on each competitor to refuse any prohibited advice or information.

The mere act of communication, receipt of information, or attendance proscribed by this rule will constitute a violation, regardless of the substance thereof, and regardless of whether initiated by a participant or by any other person. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification. Harmless error will not be a defense to a complaint based on violation of this rule, because of the appearance of impropriety occasioned even by casual exchanges unrelated to the substance of the mediation.

Although any communication between teams and their coaches (and others associated with a team) has always been prohibited during rounds, this rule is particularly crucial during a virtual competition as all involved are permitted to use cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other technology, which could make such communication undetectable by judges and/or administrators. Therefore, all competitors, coaches, faculty

advisors, and all others associated with a team are “on their honor” to refrain from any communication with the team using any form of technology or otherwise, during a round, which begins when the first team conducts its pre-negotiation analysis through the completion of the judges’ oral feedback to the teams.

Rule 9. Technological Devices and Supplies

Permissible Team Supplies During Rounds:

During a mediation session, competitors may use the following:

- any handwritten or typed notes, including charts or graphs, only for their own reference;
- calculators or stopwatches; and
- cell phones, tablets, computers, and/or other technology for the purpose of joining the competition via the online platform; and texting, emailing, and/or chatting between partners to simulate writing notes or whispering to each other during an in-person round.

During a mediation round, competitors are NOT allowed to use the following:

- electronic white boards;
- blank flip charts or black/white boards to write on during the round;
- teleprompters or other script-scrolling apps/devices;
- cell phones, tablets, computers, and/or other technology to communicate with coaches, faculty advisors, friends, or family during the round; or to conduct any internet research during the round, including during the 3-minute breaks taken by either team.

Rule 10. Mediators and Judges

In each mediation round, an experienced mediator will serve in the role of a **facilitative** mediator. Two or three judges will observe and score the quality of representation by the student teams. Judges will also give feedback directly to the students at the end of the competition. If only two judges are available, the mediator will act as the third judge and participate in evaluation and scoring. The judges will evaluate the performance of the student-participants according to the standards and criteria provided in the Judge’s Score Sheet. Every attempt will be made for the teams to have a different mediator and different judges in subsequent rounds to the extent possible.

After the judges have completed and turned in their scoring they will have the opportunity to critique both teams. Total team critique will be limited to 30 minutes. The teams can be critiqued together or separately. If one team wishes to be critiqued separately, both teams will be critiqued separately. Coaches may remain in the “room” through the critique of both teams.

The Competition Coordinator is responsible for recruiting judges who are experienced and knowledgeable in problem-solving negotiation and mediation.

A judge may be disqualified before a round begins by any team if the judge has any prior relationship with a team or team member. For instance, a judge may be disqualified if he or she knows any member of a team through academic, professional or social contact. The judge may also be requested to be disqualified by a team in the current round of the competition if the judge has acted as a judge in a prior round when one of the teams has participated in both rounds and could therefore be judged twice by the same judge. However, the judge may still serve in the second round if: (1) the other mediation sessions in that round of competition have started at the time the team moves to disqualify a judge for this reason, thereby creating the possibility

that another judge cannot substitute without disrupting the other mediation sessions; or (2) an insufficient number of judges exists to allow a substitution; or (3) at the discretion of the competition committee if the committee determines this will not result in a conflict. A judge may also disqualify himself or herself if he or she feels his or her participation in the round of competition will create an appearance of impropriety.

A mediator who is not also acting as a judge in the round may not be disqualified for any reason. The mediator does not make any decisions on behalf of the parties and, as long as he or she is not also acting as a judge, has no influence on the outcome.

Mediators and judges are required to read the Instructions for Mediators and Judges, the competition problems, the representation plans, and any exhibits offered by the teams.

Rule 11. Observers in the Mediation Session

For the 2020-2021 online competition each team may have one coach join the mediation session as an observer. No other observers are allowed. The coaches/observers must have webcams turned off and must remain muted for the entirety of the round and feedback.

Observers may not communicate with team members at any time during the mediation session, including during the self-analysis and critique periods. If a team member is seen communicating with an observer during the session they will be disqualified. If a coach or faculty advisor is in violation of this rule, it will result in disqualification of their team.

Rule 12. Timekeeping

Responsibility rests with the student participants for timekeeping and adherence to the allotted time periods for mediation sessions, caucus, breaks, and self-analysis. Competition Coordinators will make every effort to provide a bailiff/timekeeper in each mediation session room. However, no individual identified with a participant may act as a timekeeper in a mediation involving that participant. If there is no timekeeper, one of the judges should be designated to keep track of time (20 minutes of caucus/break per side and 90 minutes total) but should not provide the participants with updates or countdowns. At the end of time (20 minutes of caucus/break per side and 90 minutes total), the judges should announce that time is up and end the segment. Decisions by the judges with respect to elapsed times are final and non-reviewable. The judges or timekeeper should time the caucuses to ensure that they last no longer than 10 minutes each. The judges or timekeeper should ensure that there are no caucuses or breaks taken in the last five minutes of the round.

Rule 13. Scoring

The criteria on which the teams will be judged are set out in ABA Representation in Mediation Judge's Scoring Criteria and Score Sheet.

Judges must independently score each team and are not allowed to confer with the other judges about their scores. Before the judges hear the self-analysis of either team they should give each team a preliminary score. After the self-analysis period, judges will score each team on their self-analysis and may revise other scoring categories based on each team's self-analysis.

Each judge must total his or her own scores for each team. The judge must then circle the word "Win" at the bottom of the score sheet for the team he or she gives the most points to and should circle the word "Lose" at the bottom of the score sheet for the team that received fewer points. If the judge has given both teams the

same number of points, the judge must adjust the scores for the teams to give one team more points than the other. The Score Sheets must be completed and submitted to the Competition Coordinator before the critique segment of the round.

Rule 14. Winning a Round

The team winning the most number of individual judge's ballots per round will be the winner of that round.

Consequently, ballots (score sheets designating a "Win") will be the primary scoring factor. A team wins with either all three judges casting ballots in their favor or on a 2-1 decision. For example, in a situation in which the total team points versus the number of winning ballots per round would result in two different overall round winners, the team with the most winning ballots will win the round.

Rule 15. Ranking of Teams

Teams will be ranked for the post-preliminary rounds in the following order:

1. Win/Loss Record;
2. Total Number of Ballots;
3. Total Number of Overall Points;
4. Total Number of Points Earned in the Self-Analysis Category.

Rule 16. Controlling Law

Although the mediation exercises may refer to actual places, assume there is no controlling state law, and the jurisdiction applies general principles of Anglo-American common law. (Any exceptions will be explicitly stated in the common facts).

Rule 17. Boards, Exhibits, and Props

The competition host will make virtual white board available in the platform. The white board will be available for **mediator use only. Competitors may ask for the mediator's help in presenting information.** Competitors interested in sharing pre-planned proposals or agendas may, as an alternative to asking the mediator to write on the white board, ask the mediator to share the exhibit the competitors prepared in advance for these purposes.

Teams are not expected to use exhibits in the mediation sessions. However, a team may use one exhibit, limited to one 8 ½ x 11 single sided page with print in 12 point font for each round. Exhibits must not in any way contradict or impermissibly expand upon the facts as written in the competition problem. If the Competition Coordinator finds an exhibit to contradict or impermissibly expand upon the facts as written in the competition problem, or otherwise to be non-compliant with Rule 5 or Rule 17, the competition coordinator may impose a penalty of up to five points. Moreover, if the Competition Coordinator finds that the exhibit improperly affected the round, they may overrule the scoring of the judges in extreme cases.

The Competition Coordinator will provide the students with a mechanism for securely sharing the exhibit with the mediators and the judges. The Competition Coordinator will provide specific instructions and deadlines for submission of exhibits.

Teams may choose when during the 90-minute round to ask the mediator to share their exhibit with the opposing side. Teams may choose not to share their exhibit with the other side.

Teams are prohibited from bringing props and wearing costumes to the mediation session. A violation of Rule 17 will result in a 5 point penalty. Anything disseminated with the fact patterns (e.g., a photo included with the problem does not count as a prop unless the competitors alter it before the mediation session).

During the 90-minute round, a challenge to an exhibit's acceptability under this rule can be made by judges, the mediator, or the opposing team. The round will be delayed until the Competition Coordinator can review the exhibit and make a determination of the exhibit's acceptability. From the time that the challenge is made until the Competition Coordinator has ruled on the exhibit's appropriateness, the 90-minute clock will be stopped and restarted only upon resuming the round. Outside of the 90-minute round, judges and mediators may challenge an exhibit before the round begins and or after the 90-minute round up until the judges have turned in their final scores. If a challenge is made during the self-evaluation period of either team, time will be suspended until the challenge is determined by the Competition Coordinator. Once a determination is made by the Competition Coordinator, there is no appeal.

Rule 18. Caucuses and Breaks

Each team may caucus with the mediator or break outside of the mediation session "room" for a total of 20 minutes. To do so, a team must affirmatively request to break or caucus (the mediator will grant such a request).

The teams may take a maximum of two (2) caucuses and each may last no longer than 10 minutes.

When one team is caucusing with the mediator, the mediator, with the support of the bailiff as needed, will place the non-caucusing team in a break-out room.

When one team calls a break, both teams shall be moved to break-out rooms and time will run against the team that called the break.

When one team is caucusing, the other team is not using their caucus/break time.

If one team first calls for the break, and the other team responds by asking for a caucus, the caucus will be granted and the time counts against the team caucusing. For example, if Team A calls for the break and Team B responds that they would like to caucus with the mediator, the time counts against Team B's 20 minutes.

Once both teams have left the room for the break, it is not possible for either team to caucus with the mediator until the break is over.

No caucus or break may be taken or continue into the last 5 minutes of the round.

Taking a break or a caucus does not suspend time on the 90-minute mediation session.

Teams may not conduct their "break" in front of the mediator.

Rule 19. Anonymity

Participants may not identify the school they represent until after the end of the final round of the competition. Participants must therefore refrain from wearing or having anything in view with the school name, logo, or other identifying symbol, including school name or e-mail address. Teams may only refer to themselves by name or by the team letter they have been assigned. Team members will be identified by their team letter and role in the virtual mediation room. Even if asked by the judges for their school affiliation, participants should politely decline, citing this rule. This rule applies to all events associated with the competition.

Rule 20. Representation Plans

Each team shall prepare a Representation Plan setting out the team's negotiation strategy based on the parties' respective interests presented in the problem. The Representation Plan shall be limited to two single-sided 8 ½ by 11 sheets of paper in Times, 12 point font, 1 inch margins.

The plan should consist of an outline with a brief description under each of the following headings: (1) "Responsibility Sharing" – explain how you plan to share responsibilities between the attorney and the client in the mediation session; (2) "Allocation Strategy" – explain why your team chose the particular allocation strategy; (3) "Interests" – describe the interests that your side plans to advance in the mediation session, and the likely interests of other side; (4) Your Team's BATNA analysis as well as the likely BATNA analysis of the other side; (5) Potential Collaborative solutions meeting everyone's interests; (6) Key Questions/Information you will seek or anticipate; (7) "Negotiating Strategy" – your negotiation strategy in light of the preceding factors, also potentially including bargaining chips; (8) preparation for introductory remarks after the mediator's introduction; and (9) Potential Agenda items of topics you would like to discuss.

In keeping with the anonymity instruction, the school name or any other identifying mark or symbol should not appear on the Representation Plan. Instead, Teams should use the role assigned and/or your team letter designation to identify your plan.

The Competition Coordinator will provide the students with a mechanism for securely sharing the exhibit with the mediators and the judges. The Competition Coordinator will provide specific instructions and deadlines for submission of exhibits.

Rule 21. Recording

The competition host will record each mediation session and will provide the recording to the participating teams as soon as possible after the session. No video or audio recording is allowed by any teams, competitors, judges, coaches, faculty advisors, or others associated with a team during any of the rounds. All participants will be asked to sign a video release as part of the registration process.

Rule 22. Team Cancellation or Late Arrival

A team withdrawing from the competition for any reason (including illness or emergency) must give notice to the Competition Coordinator as soon as possible. The Competition Coordinator with help from the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution staff shall endeavor to identify an additional team to replace the cancelling team from the host school or from another participating school. Only schools representing the side of the team that canceled will be eligible as replacements. If more than one school volunteers to furnish a replacement team, the host school will be given the right of first refusal if the host school represents the same side as the team that cancelled. Otherwise, the replacement team will be chosen by lottery from among those that volunteered.

Teams must arrive timely for the competition. If a team arrives more than 10 minutes after the end of the check-in period for any round, the judges will be instructed to impose a penalty of two points from that team's total score for the session on each judge's scoring sheet.

Rule 23. Responsibility for Hosting Regional Competitions

The responsibility for hosting the regional competition should be shared amongst schools participating in the competition. It is expected that each participating school will host the regional competition within a five-year time period. Schools who do not volunteer to host the regional competition within a five-year period, will not be confirmed to participate in a regional competition until they have a written agreement with the ABA to host within the next two (2) years. In cases where a participating school would like to host, but has limited resources of funds or available volunteers, two schools may co-host. For the planning convenience of the schools, the ABA will schedule regional hosts up to five years in advance.

Rule 24. Virtual Platform Expectations

- The Competition Coordinator will make every effort to assign one bailiff/timekeeper to serve as a technical support person for each mediation session "room."
- The Competition Coordinator will have a virtual meeting room available to all participants during the competition events as a help desk. The room will be staff with a person dedicated to trouble shooting technical issues and hearing challenges from competitors and coaches.
- If technical issues preclude a competitor or a team from entering the mediation session meeting on time, the competitor must contact tournament officials that are responsible for trouble shooting technical issues. The competition director will have discretion to add up to 15 minutes to the competition round to adjust for the technology delay.

- The Competition Coordinators will do their best to record each mediation session and will provide the recording to the student participants as soon as possible after the conclusion of the session.

Rule 25. Complaints and Decision-Making Authority

Coaches and competitors will have 10 minutes, after the end of mediation round to bring any challenges about the conduct of the round to the attention of the Competition Coordinator.

For the regional competitions, the regional host school shall decide all issues relating to the regional competition. For the national competition, the Competition Coordinating Committee shall decide all issues relating to the national competition.

Any disputes or issues arising from the administration of these rules or the determination of eligibility to participate in the competition will be brought to the Representation in Mediation Competition Coordinating Committee, whose decision is final.

Legal Considerations:

LAWS AND REGULATIONS: This competition is governed by U.S. law and all relevant federal, state, and local laws and regulations apply. By entering, all participants agree that the competition shall be governed by the laws of the State of Illinois, that the courts of Illinois shall have exclusive jurisdiction, and that Cook County, Illinois shall be the venue for any dispute or litigation relating to or arising from the competition. **Void where prohibited by law.**

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION: By participating, each entrant agrees to these Official Rules and the decisions of the Sponsor, and releases and discharges the ABA, subsidiary and affiliated entities, and each of their respective officers, directors, members, employees, independent contractors, agents, representatives, successors and assigns (collectively "Sponsor") from any and all liability whatsoever in connection with this promotion, including without limitation legal claims, costs, injuries, losses or damages, demands or actions of any kind (including without limitation personal injuries, death, damage to, loss or destruction of property, rights of publicity or privacy, defamation, or portrayal in a false light) (collectively "Claims"). Except where prohibited, acceptance of a prize constitutes a release by any winner of the Sponsor of any and all Claims in connection with the administration of this promotion and the use, misuse or possession of any prize. All entries become the property of Sponsor and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsor is not responsible for errors or for lost, late, or misdirected mail or email, or telecommunication or hardware or software failures, including by reason of any bug or computer virus or other failure. Sponsor may cancel, modify or terminate the promotion if it is not capable of completion as planned, including by reason of infection by computer virus, tampering, unauthorized intervention, force majeure or technical difficulties of any kind.

PRIVACY POLICY/DATA COLLECTION: Information provided by participants in connection with this competition is subject to Sponsor's privacy policy, available at <http://www.americanbar.org/utility/privacy.html>

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