

# Timekeeping Guide





Welcome to the State Bar of Nevada High School Mock Trial Program! This Guide is provided to timekeepers as they prepare for the regional and state competitions held in Las Vegas and Reno.

Each competing team must supply one or more team members to perform the duties of a timekeeper in accordance with the timekeeping rules of the competition.

## Timekeeping Rules

While all mock trial team members should review all mock trial rules and handbooks, there are several rules in the *Nevada High School Mock Trial Competition Rules* that apply to timekeeping and must be reviewed carefully by timekeepers. These rules include:

- Rule 3.2
- Rule 4.5
- Rule 4.6
- Rule 4.7
- Rule 4.12
- Rule 4.24

## Timekeeping Supplies

### Timekeeper Supplies

Please note that no stopwatches, pencils, or clipboards will be available during the competition, so it's important to make sure you bring all supplies listed with you to all rounds of competition.

- **Two stopwatches:** Each timekeeper must use one stopwatch for keeping time for the Plaintiff/Prosecution side and one for the Defense side, regardless of what side the timekeeper's team is presenting in a given round. Teams **MUST** use stopwatches and not phones for keeping time.
- **Two pencils:** Each timekeeper will use a pencil to fill out their timesheets and must have an extra pencil available as a back-up. We recommend using mechanical pencils.
- **Clipboards (optional):** It is often the case that timekeepers will be seated in the jury box without a hard surface to write on. The use of clipboards for holding *Timekeeping Sheets* is often a helpful tool.

### Supplies Provided

Please note that teams must use the materials listed below, provided to them online. These items must be used as provided and cannot not be altered in any way.

- **One set of Time Remaining Cards:** All teams must use the same *Time Remaining Cards* during competition. Students are not permitted to use any other method of timekeeping.
- **Time Card Use Table:** The *Time Card Use Table* tells timekeepers which *Time Remaining Card* to hold up at defined intervals for each part of the trial.
- **Timekeeping Sheets for each round of competition:** Each timekeeper must sign his/her own *Timekeeping Sheet*. Both *Timekeeping Sheets* must be returned to the Presiding Judge at the end of a round of competition, before the judges leave the courtroom to fill out their score sheets.

## Timekeeper Responsibilities

Each team is responsible for training each team member who may serve as the team's Timekeeper. The timekeeper from the Plaintiff/Prosecution side and the timekeeper from the Defense side will work together as a neutral timekeeping team to ensure that accurate and fair time has been kept for both teams, showing the *Time Remaining Cards* simultaneously to both teams, and notifying the Presiding Judge when time has expired for any given portion of a trial by showing the STOP time card to the teams as well as the Presiding Judge.

Teams and their Timekeeper(s) are responsible for being proficient with the information in the *Nevada High School Mock Trial Competition Rules* and this *Timekeeping Guide*. The team's Timekeeper(s) should be familiar with the trial sequence chart and have practiced filling out the *Timekeeping Sheet* before the competition begins. The person(s) serving as the Timekeeper(s) need to be noted on the team's Roster for each trial.

## Timekeeping Duties

### Before the Trial

1. Include the name of the timekeeper(s) on the team's Roster.
2. Gather timekeeping materials as outlined in the *Timekeeping Supplies* section of this guide.  
**TIP:** Label your stopwatches with a "P" for the Plaintiff and a "D" for the Defense. Keep the "P" stopwatch in your left hand and the "D" stopwatch in your right hand.
3. Enter the courtroom and sit together at the end of the jury box closest to the Presiding Judge (or other appropriate place). Both timekeepers should sit in a place where they are easily seen by team attorneys and the Presiding Judge.
4. Enter the round number and team codes in the space provided on the top portion of the *Timekeeping Sheet*.
5. Arrange stopwatches, *Time Remaining Cards*, and *Time Card Use Table*.
6. Rise when the Presiding and Scoring Judges enter the courtroom and be seated when the Presiding Judge grants permission.

### During the Trial

1. Timekeepers work together as a neutral timekeeping team to ensure that time is kept accurately and fairly for both sides during a round.
2. RESET a stopwatch to zero ONLY at the following times:
  - At the beginning of each side's opening statement;
  - At the beginning of each side's direct examination;
  - At the beginning of each side's cross examination; and,
  - At the beginning of each side's closing argumentDO NOT reset stopwatch to zero at any other time.

3. START timing only when each attorney starts to speak (i.e. when the attorney actually speaks the first word of his or her opening, closing, or examination question (including any resumption of questioning following the ruling by the Presiding Judge on any objection).
4. STOP timing during objections, responses to objections, questioning by the judge, and when the attorney says his or her last word on completion of a given task.
5. Remember: DO NOT RUN THE STOPWATCH
  - When an attorney responds to a Presiding Judge's inquiry as to whether or not the side is ready to proceed, asks for permission to reserve time for a rebuttal, asks for permission to use/move a podium;
  - From the time the witness is called until he or she takes the witness stand;
  - From the time an objection is raised until after the ruling by the Presiding Judge and the examining attorney says the first word to continue the examination; or
  - During the time a judge may raise questions to a team or the judging panel.
6. DO NOT STOP THE WATCH for the introduction of exhibits or other evidence.
7. Display time cards simultaneously throughout the round to both teams (attorneys and witnesses) and the Presiding Judge only at the intervals set out in the *Time Card Use Table*.
8. Display the STOP card to both teams, the Presiding Judge, and the other Scoring Judges.
9. At the end of each segment of the trial, each timekeeper should record the cumulative time used on the *Timekeeping Sheet*.
10. At the end of each segment of the trial, timekeepers should check to make sure both stopwatches for that segment are within 15 seconds of each other. If the stop watches show a discrepancy of more than 15 seconds, inform the Presiding Judge and follow the procedures outlined in the *Timekeeping Discrepancies* section of this guide.
11. At the conclusion of the trial, if either side informs the court that it wishes to file a dispute and a dispute hearing is granted, both timekeepers must time the additional three-minute argument per side.

### **After the Trial**

1. Add your name and signature to the *Timekeeping Sheet* and turn it into the Presiding Judge before s/he leaves the courtroom.
2. Reset your stop watches to zero in preparation to time the debriefing.

When court is adjourned, timekeepers should help their teams straighten up the courtroom and make sure they have collected all their *Timekeeping Materials* in preparation for subsequent rounds.

## **Timekeeping Discrepancies**

At the end of each segment of the trial (i.e., at the end of each opening statement, at the end of each direct examination or cross examination of a witness, and at the end of each closing argument), if there is a timing discrepancy of **more than 15 seconds** between the Plaintiff/Prosecution and Defense timekeepers, the following rules will apply.

- Any timing discrepancies between timekeepers of 15 seconds or less WILL NOT be considered a timing discrepancy.
- If a timing discrepancy more than 15 seconds has occurred, timekeepers are to notify the Presiding Judge that a timing discrepancy has occurred.
- Timekeepers may raise timing discrepancies ONLY at the end of each phase of the trial presentation as outlined above.
- The Presiding Judge will rule on any timing discrepancy before the trial continues. Timekeepers will synchronize stop watches to match the Presiding Judge's ruling. For example, if Plaintiff stop watch indicates 2 minutes left for Plaintiff's case and the Defense stop watch indicates time is expired, the Presiding Judge might decide to split the difference in the timing variation and give Plaintiff 1 minute to conclude. Defense would adjust timing to allow for the 1-minute timing decision.
- No time disputes will be entertained after the trial concludes.
- The decision of the Presiding Judge regarding the resolution of timing disputes is final.

## Timekeeping Forms

This section includes the following forms:

- Blank Timekeeping Sheet
- Time Card Use Table
- Time Cards

# mock trial ...trial timesheet

Round: 1 2 3 4 Final  
Plaintiff Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Opening Statements (3 minutes each)**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant \_\_\_\_\_

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**Direct/Redirect Examination of Three Plaintiff Witnesses (20 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 20 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cross/Re-cross Examination of Three Plaintiff Witnesses (15 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 15 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Direct/Redirect Examination of Three Defense Witnesses (20 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 20 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cross/Re-cross Examination of Three Defense Witnesses (15 total minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 15 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Closing Arguments (4 minutes each)**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
Defense \_\_\_\_\_

Timekeeper's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_

# mock trial ...trial timesheet

Round: 1 2 3 4 Final  
Plaintiff Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Opening Statements (3 minutes each)**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant \_\_\_\_\_

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**Direct/Redirect Examination of Three Plaintiff Witnesses (20 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 20 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cross/Re-cross Examination of Three Plaintiff Witnesses (15 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 15 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Direct/Redirect Examination of Three Defense Witnesses (20 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 20 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cross/Re-cross Examination of Three Defense Witnesses (15 total minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 15 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Closing Arguments (4 minutes each)**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
Defense \_\_\_\_\_

Timekeeper's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_

# mock trial ...trial timesheet

Round: 1 2 3 4 Final  
Plaintiff Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**Opening Statements (3 minutes each)**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant \_\_\_\_\_

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**Direct/Redirect Examination of Three Plaintiff Witnesses (20 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 20 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cross/Re-cross Examination of Three Plaintiff Witnesses (15 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 15 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Direct/Redirect Examination of Three Defense Witnesses (20 minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 20 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cross/Re-cross Examination of Three Defense Witnesses (15 total minutes)**

FIRST WITNESS (ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
SECOND WITNESS (cumulative ending time) \_\_\_\_\_  
THIRD WITNESS (cumulative ending time: > 15 = time violation) \_\_\_\_\_

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**Closing Arguments (4 minutes each)**

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_  
Defense \_\_\_\_\_

Timekeeper's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Team Code: \_\_\_\_\_



# mock trial SBN ...timecard use table

Each side is allotted a total of 42 minutes to try their case. After each segment of the trial, stopwatches must be set to zero.

For Opening Statements	
<i>When the stopwatch says:</i>	<i>Hold up the card that says:</i>
<b>1:00</b>	<b>2:00</b>
<b>2:00</b>	<b>1:00</b>
<b>2:20</b>	<b>:40</b>
<b>2:40</b>	<b>:20</b>
<b>3:00</b>	<b>STOP</b>

For Closing Statements	
<i>When the stopwatch says:</i>	<i>Hold up the card that says:</i>
<b>1:00</b>	<b>3:00</b>
<b>2:00</b>	<b>2:00</b>
<b>3:00</b>	<b>1:00</b>
<b>3:20</b>	<b>:40</b>
<b>3:40</b>	<b>:20</b>
<b>4:00</b>	<b>STOP</b>

For Direct Examinations (20 minutes)	
<i>When the stopwatch says:</i>	<i>Hold up the card that says:</i>
<b>5:00</b>	<b>15:00</b>
<b>10:00</b>	<b>10:00</b>
<b>15:00</b>	<b>5:00</b>
<b>16:00</b>	<b>4:00</b>
<b>17:00</b>	<b>3:00</b>
<b>18:00</b>	<b>2:00</b>
<b>19:00</b>	<b>1:00</b>
<b>19:20</b>	<b>:40</b>
<b>19:40</b>	<b>:20</b>
<b>20:00</b>	<b>STOP</b>

For Cross Examinations (15 minutes)	
<i>When the stopwatch says:</i>	<i>Hold up the card that says:</i>
<b>5:00</b>	<b>10:00</b>
<b>10:00</b>	<b>5:00</b>
<b>11:00</b>	<b>4:00</b>
<b>12:00</b>	<b>3:00</b>
<b>13:00</b>	<b>2:00</b>
<b>14:00</b>	<b>1:00</b>
<b>14:20</b>	<b>:40</b>
<b>14:40</b>	<b>:20</b>
<b>15:00</b>	<b>STOP</b>

**15:00**

**10:00**

**5:00**

**4:00**

**3:00**

**2:00**

**1:00**

**:40**

**:20**

**STOP**