

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TIMEKEEPERS

Under the Rules of the Georgia High School Mock Trial Competition, all timekeepers are expected to follow these instructions when keeping time during a competition round.

Thank you for your diligence in this matter.

Before Competition Day

1. Timekeepers play an essential role during a mock trial competition round. At least two reliable students should be recruited to fill these critical positions on the mock trial team.
2. The role of timekeeper is a required role in a competition round. Trial coordinators do not provide additional volunteer personnel to act as timekeepers. -Rule 18
3. Each team may use up to three unique individuals to keep time throughout each level of competition. -Rule 7(j)
4. **NOTE:** If a team does not provide their own student timekeepers, that team must submit to the time kept by their opponent's timekeeper in the trial round. -Rule 7(j)
5. Rule 17 defines the time blocks allocated to each portion of the trial. Rule 18 describes the duties of a timekeeper. Timekeepers must review the rules for timekeeping and these instructions thoroughly before competition day.
6. Timekeepers must understand how to recognize each part of the trial before competition date. If there are any questions during a trial about whether or not time has stopped, politely ask the presiding judge for clarification.
7. It is suggested that to keep track of which stopwatch is for which side, label the stopwatches "P" and "D" and keep the "P" stopwatch on your left and the "D" stopwatch on your right.
8. Time will not be counted for: objections, extensive questioning from the presiding judge or administration of the oath. **Time DOES NOT stop for the introduction of evidence.** -Rule 18(d)
9. Practice timekeeping duties during team rehearsals before competition day.
10. Make copies of the time cards on yellow paper or card stock using the time card template found in the Coaches Manual. Time intervals may not be altered.

Before the Trial Round

1. On competition day, be sure each timekeeper has:
 - a. At least one timesheet for each round of the competition
 - b. Two stopwatches per team—**NOTE:** Some cell phones include a stopwatch function, but it is strongly preferred, because of issues related to team communication inside the bar & the use of electronic equipment by competing team members during a competition round (Rule 24), that timekeepers use traditional stopwatches for this task unless an unexpected battery or similar emergency related to a stopwatch arises on site and on competition day.
 - c. One set of "Time Remaining" cards printed on yellow paper or card stock
 - d. One "Time Card Use" sheet
 - e. Two pencils
2. Enter the round number and team codes in the appropriate space on the time sheet.
3. Enter the courtroom and take your position at the end of the jury box, away from any judging panel member. Arrange stopwatches, time cards and Time Card Use sheet.
4. Rise when the judge and jury enter the courtroom and then be seated when the presiding judge grants permission.

During the Trial Round

1. Timekeepers for both teams in a competition round will work together as a neutral “timekeeping team” to insure that time is kept accurately and fairly for both sides in the round.
2. For each task in a trial round, time **starts** when each attorney starts to speak. (i.e. when the attorney actually speaks the first word of his/her opening, closing or examination question—examples include but are not limited to, “May It Please the Court...”, or “Your Honor, ladies/gentlemen of the jury...” (for openings/closing) or “Please state your name for the court...” (for examination questions)—NOT when an attorney responds to a presiding judge’s inquiry as to whether that side is ready to proceed, asks for permission to reserve time for a rebuttal, asks for permission to use/move a podium, or to swear a witness, etc.).
3. Time **stops** when the attorney makes the last statement on completion of a given task.
4. Occasions when time is **not counted**:
 - a. From time witness is called until s/he finishes taking the stand (including the administration of the oath)
 - b. From time an objection is raised until the attorney resumes the task/examination that the objection interrupted
 - c. During the time a judge may raise questions to a team, the panel or the trial coordinator
5. **NOTE:** Time **stops** for **OBJECTIONS**. Timekeepers will stop time when an attorney says, “Objection, Your Honor...”. Timekeepers will re-start time, after the presiding judge’s ruling, when the student attorney says the first word to continue the interrupted task/examination.
6. Time **DOES NOT STOP** for the introduction of evidence.
7. Reset a stopwatch to zero **only** at the following times:
 - a. At the beginning of each side’s opening statement
 - b. At the beginning of each side’s direct examination time block
 - c. At the beginning of each side’s cross examination time block
 - d. At the beginning of each side’s closing argument
8. Do **NOT** reset a stopwatch to zero at any other time.
 - a. Do not reset stopwatch to zero at the end of a direct or cross examination of a particular witness, since the timekeeper may need to resume direct examination timing for redirect questioning, and cross examination timing for re-cross questioning.
 - b. Do not reset stopwatch to zero at the end of the P’s closing argument, since the timekeeper may need to resume the P’s closing argument timing IF the P side gives a portion of their closing before the D side and then must make a rebuttal after the D side has concluded their closing argument.
9. Timekeepers should display time cards simultaneously throughout the round and the cards must be displayed to **both teams** (attorneys and witnesses) and the presiding judge only at the intervals set out in the Time Card Use table. The STOP card must be displayed to both teams, the presiding judge and to the scoring judges, as well.
10. Timekeepers may not display any additional increments of time (not outlined on the time card use table) to their own team independently of the opposing team’s timekeeper at any time during the trial.

Discrepancies in Time Between Team Timekeepers During a Trial Round

1. If timing variations of 15 seconds or more occur at the completion of any task of the trial, the timekeepers are to notify the presiding judge that a time discrepancy has occurred. *-Rule 18(f)*
2. Timekeepers may raise time discrepancies of more than 15 seconds at the end of each task during the trial presentation (i.e. at the end of each opening, at the end each witness examination, at the end of each cross examination and at the end of each closing argument).
 - To do this, one timekeeper will politely gain the presiding judge's attention and state: "Your honor, under Rule 18(f), there is a time discrepancy of more than 15 seconds."
 - The presiding judge will likely ask for an explanation of the discrepancy and will then rule on the time discrepancy before the trial continues. The presiding judge has the option to rule on the discrepancy without any explanation of why it occurred.
 - Timekeepers will synchronize their stopwatches to match the ruling of the presiding judge. (i.e. if the P team's stopwatch indicates that the P team has 2 minutes left in the direct examination block and the D team's stopwatch indicates that time has expired for the P team in the direct examination block, the presiding judge MIGHT decide to split the difference in the timing variation and give the P team 1 minute to conclude the direct examination. The D timekeeper would adjust timing to allow for the 1-minute decision.)
3. Any discrepancy between timekeepers of less than 15 seconds will not be considered a violation.
4. No time disputes will be entertained after the trial concludes.
5. The decisions of the presiding judge regarding the resolution of timing disputes are final.

Things to Remember During a Trial Round

1. The presiding judge has sole discretion to grant time extensions.
2. If time has expired and an attorney continues without permission from the Court, the timekeepers should indicate so on the timesheet and should continue holding the STOP card until the overage is acknowledged and dealt with by the presiding judge. *-Rule 18(e)*
3. The time sequence listed gives the *maximum* time limits per trial segment (*Rule 14*). Time not used in one segment may not be applied to any other segment of the trial.

Concluding a Trial Round

1. After the round concludes, add up the time used for each side and sign the time sheet.
2. Politely obtain the presiding judge's attention and turn in the time sheet before the presiding judge retires to the scoring room. No matter the confusion, timekeepers *must* deliver their time sheets to the presiding judge immediately after the trial round has concluded.
3. If an "Inside the Bar" dispute is raised at the conclusion of the trial round, a presiding judge may request that timekeepers time portions of the dispute procedure.
4. Reset the stopwatch to zero in order to time the debriefing session.
5. Politely remind the presiding judge that both timekeepers will be timing the debriefing and that a maximum of 10 minutes is allotted to that portion of the round.
6. Signal the presiding judge with the STOP card when the 10 minutes for debriefing has elapsed.
7. When the debriefing session has ended and the presiding judge has released both teams, timekeepers should help the teams straighten up the courtroom for the next round.

TIME CARD USE CHART

Georgia Mock Trial Competition

For **Direct** Examination (25 minutes total)

When your stopwatch says	Hold up the timecard that says
5:00	20:00
10:00	15:00
15:00	10:00
20:00	5:00
21:00	4:00
22:00	3:00
23:00	2:00
24:00	1:00
24:20	0:40
24:40	0:20
24:45	0:15
24:50	0:10
24:55	0:05
25:00	STOP

For **Cross** Examination (20 minutes total)

When your stopwatch says	Hold up the timecard that says
5:00	15:00
10:00	10:00
15:00	5:00
16:00	4:00
17:00	3:00
18:00	2:00
19:00	1:00
19:20	0:40
19:40	0:20
19:45	0:15
19:50	0:10
19:55	0:05
20:00	STOP

For **Opening** Statements & **Closing** Arguments (5 minutes each)

When your stopwatch says	Hold up the timecard that says
1:00	4:00
2:00	3:00
3:00	2:00
4:00	1:00
4:20	0:40
4:40	0:20
4:45	0:15
4:50	0:10
4:55	0:05
5:00	STOP

The time sheet and the timecard templates can be found under the FORMS LINK in the secure Team Information section of the website.

Timecards must be printed on yellow paper or card stock.