

Registration Policy



1.1 - Registration Requirements

1. **PRIMARY ADULT CONTACT.** All teams that wish to participate in an Empire competition must designate a Primary Adult Contact. For the purposes of this Policy, a Primary Adult Contact means an adult that is responsible for registering an eligible mock trial team, which includes, but is not limited to, communicating with Empire on behalf of the mock trial team and submitting payments.
 - a. **Legal Authorization.** The Primary Adult Contact must be legally authorized to act on the behalf of each student that is part of the team(s) they are representing.
 - b. **Adult Required.** The Primary Adult Contact must be 18 years or older as of the time that they submit their team's application and cannot be a student on the competing team.
2. **SUBMISSION.** All schools that are interested in participating in an Empire competition must complete an online application through Empire's designated registration platform.
3. **TEAM ELIGIBILITY.** A school may only participate in a competition where it meets all of the eligibility requirements of this Policy.

1.2 - Eligible Team

1. **GENERAL RULE.** Each team shall consist of no less than six (6) eligible students from a single school and shall adhere to Empire's team composition requirements.
 - a. **Eligible student.** A student enrolled in a single school who has not yet received a high school diploma, or eligible middle school student as defined below (See 1.1.2).
 - i. **Premier League.** A student is considered ineligible for the Premier League if they did not compete in a mock trial tournament during the 2023-2024 academic year.
 - b. **Single school.** A United States high school, foreign secondary school, or homeschool organization.
 - c. **Homeschool organization.** A community or association of students, in a particular geographic area, whose instruction is managed by their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) rather than in a formal public or private school setting.
 - d. **Team Composition.** The following rules apply for the 2024 Sapphire and Premier Leagues:
 - i. at least half of the eligible students on the team seeking entry into the Sapphire League must have competed in a mock trial tournament during the 2023 academic year;
 - ii. at least half of the eligible students on the team seeking placement in the Premier League must have competed on the team that qualified for the Premier League.
2. **EXCEPTIONS FOR ELIGIBLE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS.**
 - a. **Purpose.** Some state tournaments allow middle school students to compete in the same tournament as their high school students (e.g. Minnesota). Additionally, some high school mock trial teams start practicing with 8th grade students that will attend their schools upon graduation. Empire has enacted this Rule to account for both scenarios; the Rule seeks to balance inclusivity with competitive concerns.
 - b. **Eligible middle school.** The following categories of students are considered eligible:
 - i. an 8th grade student that has committed to a single school for the fall and seeks to compete with that school in the Spring Leagues, or;
 - ii. a student enrolled in middle school who has previously competed with a single school as part of their state's high school mock trial circuit because their state's rules permit middle school students to do so.

- c. **Composition.** No more than half of a mock trial team may be comprised of eligible middle school students.
- d. **Process for Competing with Eligible Middle School Students.** As part of its application and/or registration, a team's Primary Adult Contact must provide Empire with the following information:
 - i. the proposed number of students on its team;
 - ii. the proposed number of middle school students on its team;
 - iii. whether team is seeking student eligibility under 1.1.2.b.i or 1.1.2.b.ii.;
 - iv. supporting information for Empire to consider that establishes eligibility.

3. **EXCEPTIONS FOR COMBINED SCHOOLS.**

- a. **Purpose.** If prior permission of Empire is obtained in writing, a team may comprise students from more than one school. This exception is intended to accommodate schools that cannot generate sufficient participation to field a team and groups of It students whose single schools cannot attend Empire because of financial hardship or a lack of overall interest in mock trial.. This Rule is not intended to allow schools to combine teams for competitive purposes.
- b. **Process for Competing as a Combined School.** Any group of eligible students that is interested in participating in an Empire competition as a Combined School must submit a written request to Empire before beginning their application. The request should include the following information: details about the proposed team's composition, an explanation of why the eligible students cannot apply as a single school, and a statement asserting that the team is not forming solely for competitive purposes (i.e., to create an "all-star" team).
- c. **Good Faith Reliance.** Empire relies on the statement of a Combined School in determining its eligibility to compete. Any Combined School that knowingly makes a false declaration to Empire will be penalized to the fullest extent in accordance with the Tabulation Manual.

1.3 - **Obligation to Verify Eligibility**

The Primary Adult Contact has an affirmative obligation to verify each competitor's eligibility. Submission of a roster through PROcess constitutes certification that the eligibility of each participant has been verified.

1.4 - **Sapphire and Premier League Placement**

- 1. **CRITERIA FOR LEAGUE PLACEMENT.** This Policy incorporates the Spring Leagues' section of Empire's website (<https://empiremocktrial.org/spring>), which establishes the criteria for placement in the Sapphire and Premier Leagues.
- 2. **OBLIGATION TO REPORT ACCURATE SEASON RESULTS.** Empire trusts each team's Primary Adult Contact to accurately report their team's placement in their 2022-2024 mock trial seasons. A team's placement impacts whether they are assigned to the Sapphire or Premier Leagues. Failure to be forthright in reporting accurate season results will result in suspension from, at least, one competition season.

1.5 - **Use of Ineligible Students**

Any team that knowingly uses an ineligible student as a competitor or fields an ineligible team will be subject to penalties. Challenges alleging ineligibility of a competitor and/or team must be made to a Tab Officer, but not to a judge, as soon as possible.

1.6 - Number of Competing Students on a Team

A team shall consist of no less than six (6) eligible students.

1.7 - Registration Fees

1. **TITLE I SCHOOLS.** A school that receives *school-wide* Title I funding, shall be eligible to receive free admission to the Spring Leagues. In order to receive free admission, the school must be able to corroborate their *school-wide* Title I status through the [U.S. News Education Database](#) or other Empire approved source of information.
 - a. A school which is designated as a Title I school, but which is not designated as having a Title I school-wide program, is ineligible for free admission to the Spring Leagues, and will be assessed a registration fee in accordance with sections 2-3 of this Rule.
2. **STATE RUNNER UP.** If a school finishes second place in its statewide competition during the 2023-2024 season, then it shall be eligible to receive free admission to the 2024 Spring Leagues.
3. **TOP 5 AT 2023 FALL EMPIRE COMPETITION.** A competing school shall receive free admission for one of its teams at a Spring League competition, if they fielded a team which:
 - a. Placed in the top 5 teams at either the 2023 Empire Windy City Challenge, or the 2023 Empire World Championship; or
 - b. Qualified to compete in the Final 4 elimination round at Empire Interstellar 2023.
4. **ALL OTHER TEAMS.** Registration for all other teams shall cost \$250 USD.
5. **PAYMENT TERMS.** All payments are refundable until April 15.
6. **TEAMS THAT SUPPLY A JUDGE OR JUROR.** A competing team that provides a Qualified Volunteer to act as a judge or juror during the Spring Leagues will receive a \$50 discount on their registration.
 - a. **Definition.** The Qualified Volunteer must meet the following requirements:
 - i. *Eligibility.* Be at least 18 years of age as of the day they commence volunteering for the Spring Leagues;
 - ii. *Qualification.* Possess at least two full years of experience as a coach of a mock trial team at any level; or two years of experience as a mock trial competitor at the college or law school level; or three years of high school mock trial level experience;
 - iii. *Service.* Act as a judge or juror for two full rounds of preliminary competition (i.e. non-elimination rounds). Follow the directions of Empire staff throughout their service, and act in good faith to preserve competition integrity (including disclosing any personal or professional relationships they may have with competing teams, so that Empire staff may make an informed determination of how they may volunteer).
 - b. **Discount.**
 - i. *Applicability.* Where a team qualifies for free registration under subsections 1- 2 of this rule, this discount will not apply, and the team will instead receive a 10% discount on a Shop Empire purchase.
 - ii. *Clawback.* If a team attests in their registration form that they will provide a Qualified Volunteer, and then subsequently fails to do so, the team will be responsible for paying the difference between the full-price registration and the amount already paid (i.e. \$50). Failure to pay this balance will result in the team's suspension from participating in an Empire competition during the 2024 and 2025 seasons.

1.8 - Case Access

A team's Empire registration fee includes a license for all affiliated members of its team to use the 2024 Empire Spring Leagues case to prepare for and participate in the competition.

1. DEFINITIONS.

- a. **AFFILIATED MEMBERS.** A registered team's coaches, students, non-competing students who are a part of the school's mock trial competition, and members of a non-Empire registered team that is scrimmaging the registered Empire school.
- b. **SCRIMMAGING.** The act of participating in a practice trial before an Empire competition with the purpose of preparing for the competition.

2. ACCESSING CASE.

- a. Teams may access the case in the manner prescribed by Empire.
- b. The case materials, and a school's online login information that would enable case access, may not be posted in any public forum, including but not limited to web sites and social media. Each school's Primary Adult Contact:
 - i. Has an affirmative obligation to monitor case access and use at her school, and to inform Empire of any violations; and
 - ii. Is responsible for ensuring that the case is only accessed by affiliated members of its teams as defined above.

3. SCOPE OF LICENSE. A team's license to use its Empire case expires at the conclusion of the Championship Round of the registered competition.

4. CASE USE AFTER EXPIRATION OF LICENSE. A school which has been granted a case license for the purpose of a competition may not use an Empire case under any circumstances once the license has expired. If a school wishes to use an old Empire case for any purpose in the future, they must contact Empire to purchase a new license.

Any individual or team that violates this Rule will be penalized to the fullest extent in accordance with the Tabulation Manual, and may be subject to legal action.

1.9 - Competition Prize Eligibility

Teams which advance to the Final 4 of the competition are eligible to receive a cash prize.

1. QUALIFICATION.

- a. 1st Prize will be awarded to the team which wins the Championship Round.
- b. 2nd Prize will be awarded to the team which advances to, but then loses, the Championship Round.
- c. 3rd Prize will be awarded to the team which is eliminated in the Final 4 Round, but which then wins the Bronze Medal Final.
- d. 4th Prize will be awarded to the team which is eliminated in the Final 4 Round, and then loses the Bronze Medal Final.

2. AMOUNTS.

- a. 1st Prize - 500 USD
- b. 2nd Prize - 350 USD
- c. 3rd Prize - 250 USD
- d. 4th Prize - 150 USD

3. DISBURSEMENT. Following the conclusion of the Spring Leagues, teams which qualify for a prize under this rule will be required to provide the account information of the bank account which the prize should be paid into.

- a. The account information must appear on a letter addressed to Empire Mock Trial, on the letterhead of the team's school or sponsoring organization, signed by an authorized representative of the school or organization. The letter cannot be signed by a coach or primary adult contact affiliated with the team.
 - b. Teams must provide this information within 2 weeks of the competition concluding. Failure to provide account information within 1 week may result in the team forfeiting their prize.
4. **FORFEITURE.** In circumstances which constitute a serious breach of competition rules, the Spring Leagues tab room may penalize a team by making them ineligible to receive a prize (See Tabulation Manual Rule T3.4). If such a penalty is imposed, the team subject to the penalty will not receive any prize under this rule, irrespective of their final competition standing or finals rounds outcomes.

1.10 - Acceptance of Registration Policy Terms

When a Primary Adult Contact (See 1.1.1) submits their registration fee (See 1.7), they consent to the terms and conditions set forth in this Policy for the team(s) in which they have been designated the Primary Adult Contact.