

2026

National Health Law  
Moot Court Competition

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OFFICIAL RULES

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SPONSORS:

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School

The American College of Legal Medicine  
The American Health Law Association

## **PART I. ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL COMPETITION**

The National Health Law Moot Court Competition (the "Competition") is an inter-law school appellate moot court competition sponsored by the Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School ("Sponsor") along with our co-sponsors, the American College of Legal Medicine and the American Health Law Association.

## **PART II. THE RULES**

### **Teams**

#### Rule 1. Number and Composition of Teams.

Up to 26 teams from ABA-accredited law schools may participate in the Competition. Each participating school may enter one or two teams depending on available space, on a first-come basis. If the Competition is oversubscribed, the Sponsor reserves the right to place additional teams on a wait list or otherwise adjust participation. Each team shall be composed of two or three students, all of whom must be law students currently enrolled in a J.D. program at the time of the Competition, either in a full-time day program or an equivalent night or weekend program,

#### Rule 2. Identification of Team Members, Substitution or Dropping.

Teams must provide team members' names and email addresses by 5 pm central time on August 8, 2026. Any student who participates in preparing a team's brief is considered a team member and must participate in that team's oral arguments. There shall be no substitution or dropping of team members after 5 pm CST on August 8, 2026, except with written consent of the Sponsor upon the team's showing of circumstances beyond the team's control. Violating this rule is grounds for disqualification.

### **Briefs**

#### Rule 3. General.

For schools entering only one team, the team may elect to serve as counsel for petitioner or respondent for the purposes of preparing its brief. If a school enters two teams as provided by Rule 1, one team shall represent petitioner and the other respondent for the purposes of preparing briefs.

#### Rule 4. Form and Length of Briefs.

- (a) Format and Length of Brief.

- (i) The brief shall comply with Rules 24.1 and 33.2 of the Supreme Court of the United States as to format and content, except as otherwise provided in these Rules or the Record on Appeal. Both Petitioner and Respondent's briefs shall contain all items Rule 24.1 requires in a Petitioner's brief, except that neither party's brief need contain a formal statement of jurisdiction or list of parties. Citation form should comply with the Twenty-First Edition of the Uniform System of Citation ("Bluebook").
  - (ii) No information which tends to identify the school or the contestants other than the number assigned by the Sponsor may appear at any place in the brief or on the cover. The contestant's names or school must not appear anywhere in the brief.
  - (iii) Appendices may be used to recite the text of statutes, constitutional provisions, and regulations that are too long to include in the constitutional and statutory provisions section of the brief, and other materials that are not generally available. No appendices to the brief may exceed 20 total combined pages. Do not include the Record on Appeal in the appendix.
  - (iv) Exclusive of the questions presented, table of contents, table of authorities, opinions below, constitutional and statutory provisions, and appendices, the body of the brief (including the statement of the case, summary of argument, argument and conclusion) may not exceed 13,000 words in length. Captions, footnotes and headings are included in the word count.
  - (v) The brief must have one inch margins on all sides with double spacing between each line of text except for footnotes which may be single spaced. Page numbers should be included in a footer in the bottom center of the page, which can fall within the one inch margin.
  - (vi) The cover of the brief should be light blue for Petitioner and light red for Respondent. The cover's text should be clearly readable. Sloppy brief assembly may result in a point penalty.
- (b) Certification.

Each team submitting a brief in the Competition shall certify that its brief has been prepared in accordance with these rules and that it represents the work product solely of such team's members. The certification form is attached to these Rules as Appendix A. ***Team members must each individually sign the certification form by name, either by hand or by a method that produces a digital image of your signature. A typed name will not be sufficient.*** Do not insert the certification into the brief.

(c) Requests for Clarification

The Problem and Rules will be released on August 03, 2026. The Problem and Rules will be emailed to teams, as well as posted on the competition website. Teams will have until 5 pm central time on August 10, 2026, to submit requests for clarification of the record. Requests submitted to the Sponsor will be reviewed, and any changes to the record will result in an Amended Problem that will be emailed to teams and posted on the website on August 17, 2026. Any Amended Problem will supersede the previous Problem and be the controlling document for purposes of the competition.

Rule 5. Service of Briefs.

(a) Service on the Sponsor by email.

Each team must serve upon the Sponsor via email a) an electronic copy of their brief in Microsoft Word, version 6.0 or higher, format; b) an identical copy of their brief in PDF format; and c) an electronic copy of their original brief certification form (Rule 4(b)), in separate files. The Word copy will be used to determine compliance with Rule 4(a). The PDF electronic copy will be provided to the brief scoring judges and posted on the competition website in lieu of serving competing teams. The Word and PDF electronic copies must each be in one complete document file. No other formats will be accepted.

(b) Timing and Format for Electronic Service.

The email attaching the electronic copies of the brief and the brief certificate should be sent to mootct@siu.edu **so that it is received no later than 11:59 p.m. CST, September 11, 2026.** The subject line of the e-mail must contain the team's designated number, and the body of the email must contain the name of the law school and team members' names as you wish them to appear on certificates. No other text should be included in either the subject line or body of the email. The first email received from a team will be used to determine compliance with this rule. Incomplete or late submissions will be assessed a five-point penalty against the final brief score.

Rule 6. Revision of Briefs.

A team may not revise or supplement its brief after it has been served upon the Sponsor.

Rule 7. Scoring of Briefs.

(a) Scoring Committee. A committee appointed by the Sponsor (the "Scoring Committee") will score the briefs. The brief score will be used in determining the

result of every argument round in accordance with Rule 11 as well as the winner of the Best Brief and Second Place Brief. Any matter serving to identify a team or its members will be excised by the Sponsor prior to submission to the Scoring Committee and a point penalty assessed.

- (b) Brief Ballots and Median Substantive Score. The official brief ballots are attached as Appendices B and C. Each member of the Scoring Committee who is scoring the substantive portions of the briefs (Appendix C) will set a median of 65 out of 85 points for the briefs that member is scoring. There is no mandatory median for the formal aspects of the briefs (Appendix B), worth 15 points. The maximum possible total combined score for the brief is 100 points.

Rule 8. Faculty or Other Assistance.

- (a) General. No team may receive specific assistance in the writing of its brief or the preparation of its oral argument from anyone not a member of that team, including faculty or fellow students. This rule allows for general discussion of the legal issues raised by the record at any time and judging and general critique of practice rounds after the brief has been submitted. In no case should anyone other than team members contribute research to, write or edit the brief, or script any part of the oral argument.
- (b) Use of artificial intelligence. Use of artificial intelligence to generate the text of a team's brief is strictly prohibited except for the following: teams may use search engines such as Google and electronic databases such as HeinOnline, LexisNexis, and Westlaw to identify relevant authorities and their text, and teams may use the standard production tools of a word processing program to generate the component parts of the brief, including tables of content and tables of authorities. This rule does not prohibit use of technology to accommodate a disability for which a student receives accommodations at his or her home institution, if that technology is part of the approved accommodation.
- (c) Purpose. When interpreting this assistance rule, teams and coaches should act consistent with the purpose of the Competition to develop the art of appellate advocacy through the students' own work.

### **Oral Arguments**

Rule 9. Time and Place.

Oral arguments will take place at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois on November 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Rule 10. Participants in Argument.

Any two members of a team may participate in any argument, but two team members (and only two) must participate in each argument. Each team member must argue at least once during the two preliminary rounds.

Rule 11. Weight of Briefs and Arguments.

In all cases the scores of the competing teams will be computed by weighing the oral arguments sixty percent (60%) and the brief forty percent (40%). The oral argument score will be determined by a panel of judges without knowledge of the brief grade, and will be arithmetically weighted and combined with the brief grade by the Sponsor as described in Rule 12(b)(ii).

Rule 12. Number of Arguments; Elimination; Pairings.

- (a) Number of Arguments. The Competition will be structured to afford each competing team two (2) arguments (preliminary rounds) prior to the elimination of any team. No team shall argue the same side of the case in the first two preliminary rounds. No team will argue against any other team representing the same school in the two preliminary rounds nor will the same two teams be paired together in the two preliminary rounds.
- (b) Pairings.
  - (i) Preliminary rounds. The Sponsor will determine by random assignment pairings for the preliminary rounds, including assignments of the side of the case to be argued, except for adjustments necessary to comply with Rule 12(a). The Sponsor will inform all contestants in advance of the identity of the other teams against which they will argue.
  - (ii) Elimination rounds. After the preliminary rounds, the top twelve (12) teams will advance and be seeded based on their win-loss record and aggregate point differential, in that order. The top four (4) seeded teams will receive a first-round bye and automatically advance to the quarterfinal round, while the teams seeded five (5) through twelve (12) will compete in the octofinal round. The teams with the highest win-loss record and highest aggregate point differentials will be seeded higher. "Aggregate point differential" will be calculated as follows: For each team, the raw oral round scores for each team member will be averaged and added to the other team member's averaged oral score, and that total will be divided by 2 and multiplied by .6 for the adjusted oral score. The team's average brief score will be multiplied by .4 and added to the adjusted oral score, for the team's total round score. The difference between the two teams' total round score will be the point differential for that round (a positive number for the winning team and a negative number for the losing team). The point differential for each team's rounds will be added together to make

the aggregate point differential.<sup>1</sup> Scores will be calculated to three decimal places (*i.e.*, 95.333).

- (iii) If teams are tied at the end of the preliminary rounds, for purposes of both advancement and seeding, ties will be broken in favor of the team with highest aggregate point differential over its opponents in the two preliminary rounds. If two teams have the same aggregate point differential over their opponents, the tie will be broken in favor of the team having the higher brief score. If there is still a tie, the advancing team will be decided by a coin toss.
- (iv) After the seeding described in (ii) above, advancing teams will be placed into one of two brackets and will advance through the bracket to which they were originally assigned until one team from each bracket reaches the final round. No adjustments will be made for teams from the same school.
- (v) Sides in the elimination rounds will be determined by a coin toss, with the higher seeded team calling the toss and the winning team picking their preferred side.

Rule 13. Time for Arguments.

- (a) Each team will have 30 minutes total to make its presentation. No advocate may argue for less than twelve (12) or more than eighteen (18) minutes, but teams may otherwise allocate the time between advocates as the team sees fit. Teams must inform their bailiff of the number of minutes each advocate wishes to speak prior to the round beginning.
- (b) The team representing petitioner may reserve up to five (5) minutes for rebuttal but must indicate its desire to do so to the bailiff before the beginning of the round. In order to reserve rebuttal, the team representing petitioner must also verbally request reservation of rebuttal time at the beginning of its oral argument from the court. Judges will be instructed that they may refuse rebuttal to any team that fails to comply with this rule. Only one (1) member of the petitioner team may argue on rebuttal.
- (c) The bailiff will hold up timecards when 5, 2 and 1 minute(s) remain of each speaker's time, and a card indicating "STOP" when time has expired for each speaker. When the bailiff calls time, the speaker must inform the court that time has expired ("Your Honor, I see my time has expired.") and must refrain from

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<sup>1</sup> Aggregate point differentials are computed in the manner illustrated by the following example: If team A defeated its first-round opponent by a total round score of 80-75 and lost its second round argument by a total round score of 78-80, its aggregate point differential for the two rounds is +3 points (*i.e.*, the net of the +5 point difference in its first argument and the -2 point difference in its second argument).

making any further statements or requesting any further time. The court may permit a speaker additional time on its own motion.

Rule 14. Challenges.

Any challenges to the proceedings during a round, such as timing errors and failure to request rebuttal, must be brought to the attention of the Chief Justice presiding in the round at the first opportunity, which in most cases means at a time when the error can be corrected either by adjusting the round procedure or taking it into account in the judges' scoring. The presiding Chief Justice shall determine any procedural challenges raised regarding that round. The judges will have discretion whether to consider any procedural issues in their scores. Once the judges in a round have submitted their scores, there will be no further team challenges to the procedure of a round. Violations of any rules that may result in disqualification of a team may be raised with the Sponsor directly but must be made at the earliest possible moment.

Rule 15. Identification Prohibited.

All teams shall refrain from identifying the school they represent to any judge participating in the Competition prior to or during any round in which such judge shall participate. Judges shall refrain from inquiring of the identity of the teams until the results of the round have been announced. Violation of this rule will be grounds for disqualification.

Rule 16. Results; announcement of advancing teams.

Teams advancing after the preliminary rounds will be announced at the reception on Friday night. At announced times during the competition day, the Sponsor will provide teams with their oral round score sheets from the two preliminary rounds and their brief score. At the Friday night reception, the Sponsor will provide each team with a written record of their win-loss record and differential. Each team will be given time to examine this written record for accuracy, after which a team representative will be asked to confirm the calculation. The win-loss record and differential will then be deemed official with no further ability to challenge the calculation results. Any team who does not have a representative present will be deemed to have agreed with the Sponsor's calculation. Once all win-loss records and differentials have been confirmed, the Sponsor will announce the advancing teams and their seeding.

For each of the elimination rounds, teams will have a brief period to review the score sheets and confirm calculation of the winning team as announced at the competition. After that review period, there will be no further potential for challenge of the calculation results.

Rule 17. "Scouting" Prohibited.

No team member or faculty advisor for any team may observe any round not involving such team, until such team has been eliminated. Violation of this rule will be grounds for disqualification.

### **PART III. OTHER RULES**

#### **Rule 18. Awards.**

The Competition will recognize the Best Preliminary Round Oral Advocate and Best Overall Oral Advocate with prizes. Best Preliminary Round Oral Advocate will be awarded to the individual advocate with the highest average oral scores at the end of the two preliminary rounds. All advocates who argue at least twice are eligible. The award will be announced at the reception on Friday night, along with the names of the second through fifth top scoring advocates. Best Overall Advocate will be awarded to the individual advocate with the highest average oral scores at the end of the Competition. All advocates who argue at least four times are eligible for this award. In case of a tie to three decimal places for either Best Oralist award, the Competition will recognize all tied advocates, who will share any monetary prizes.

The Competition will also recognize with prizes the Champion, Runner-Up and Third Place Teams, the Best Brief, and the Second Place Brief at the final Awards Ceremony following the final round on Saturday, November 14.

#### **Rule 19. Recording and Photographing; Consent and License.**

Video or audio recording by participants or spectators is prohibited. Flash photography may not be used during any rounds. The Sponsor may record and photograph participants at various times during the Competition, including the final round. A participant's decision to enter and participate in the competition constitutes consent to recording and photographing by the Sponsor. As a condition of participation, and for no monetary compensation, the participant grants the Sponsor the nonexclusive worldwide rights to reproduce, distribute, and sell any visual or audio material in connection with the participant's participation, in whole or in part, in any media, in a law-related publication, as part of a course book, or in any other publication published under the auspices of Sponsor and to license these rights to others. This consent also grants the Sponsor the right to use students' names, voices, and images in connection with published Competition materials.

#### **Rule 20. Consent and License for Publication of Briefs**

As a condition of participation, and for no monetary compensation, the participant grants the Sponsor the nonexclusive worldwide rights to reproduce, distribute, and sell the participant's written brief submitted in connection with the participant's participation, in whole or in part, in any media, in a law-related publication, as part of a course book, or in any other publication published under the auspices of Sponsor and to license these rights

to others. The participant shall, if asked, execute a specific consent or license if required by the Sponsor in order to publish the participant's brief. If the participant cannot be located or does not respond to a request from Sponsor to execute a specific consent and license within a reasonable time, the participant agrees that the Sponsor may provide consent and enter into a license agreement on participant's behalf.

Rule 21. Penalties.

The Sponsor may assess such penalties, including disqualification, as it deems reasonable and appropriate in its sole discretion for failure to comply with these Rules. All briefs will be subject to uniform point penalties for each type of violation, which may be levied in whole or fractional points. The penalty scale for brief violations that do not have a set penalty in the Rules will be in proportion with the overall range of scores of the briefs being graded.

Rule 22. Amendments and Interpretation of Rules.

In addition to the Rules herein set forth, the Sponsor may make any other rules and procedures it deems advisable. Participants will be advised promptly of any additions, amendments or corrections to these Rules. Failure to comply with the additional, amended or corrected rules and procedures may be grounds for disqualification, among other penalties.

Requests for the interpretation of these Rules or the record should be addressed in writing to the Sponsor. Interpretations issued by the Sponsor shall be final and binding on all competitors. Requests for interpretation should be sent to mootct@siu.edu.

**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SIMMONS LAW SCHOOL  
NATIONAL HEALTH LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION  
LESAR LAW BUILDING  
CARBONDALE, IL 62901  
(618) 453-3114**

Below is a list of important dates and deadlines regarding submission of briefs, certification, service of notice, etc. for the National Health Law Moot Court Competition.

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<b>PROBLEM AND RULES RELEASED</b>	August 3, 2026
<b>COMPETITOR NAMES DUE</b>	August 8, 2026
<b>REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION DUE</b>	August 10, 2026
<b>AMENDED PROBLEM (IF ANY) RELEASED</b>	August 17, 2026
<b>ENTRY FEE DUE</b>	August 28, 2026
<b>DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWING WITHOUT PENALTY</b>	September 4, 2026
<b>DEADLINE FOR SERVICE OF BRIEFS</b>	September 11, 2026
<b>PRELIMINARY ROUNDS</b>	November 13, 2026
<b>ELIMINATION ROUNDS</b>	November 14, 2026

**Appendix A**  
**Team Certification**

We hereby certify that the brief for \_\_\_\_\_(team number) is the product solely of the undersigned, that the undersigned did not receive any assistance of any kind whatsoever in connection with the preparation of the brief other than as permitted by Rule 8 of the current Rules of the National Health Law Moot Court Competition.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Team member's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Team member's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Team member's signature)

**Appendix B**  
**2026 NATIONAL HEALTH LAW MOOT COURT**  
**COMPETITION**

**OFFICIAL BRIEF BALLOT**  
**(Formal Requirements)**

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**Team Number:**

**Judge:**

	<u>Points Possible</u>	Points Given
I. Formal Requirements		
A. <u>Cover of Brief</u> Is it correctly set up and is color correct?	(1)	_____
B. <u>Table of Contents</u> Are the brief sections in the proper sequence? Does the brief contain all necessary parts?	(2)	_____
C. <u>Table of Authorities and Citation Form</u> Is there a proper division of cases between federal and state? Is there a sensible division and arrangement of statutes and secondary sources? -- <b>1</b>  Are citations to legal authorities correct? 0 or 1 error - 5 points; 2 or 3 errors - 4 points; 4 or 5 errors - 3 points; 6 or 7 errors - 2 points; 8 or 9 errors - 1 point; 10 or more errors - 0 points -- <b>5</b>	(6)	_____
D. <u>Overall Appearance of Brief</u> Overall, does the brief appear neat and polished in terms of typing and physical presentation? If an Appendix is attached, is it in neat and polished form and does it contain appropriate materials? -- <b>3</b>  Are there few, if any, typographical errors? -- <b>2</b>	(5)	_____
TOTAL TECHNICAL SCORE	(15)	_____

## Appendix C

### 2026 NATIONAL HEALTH LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION OFFICIAL BRIEF BALLOT (Legal Analysis and Style)

For guidance, please see Point Ranges explanation attached.

Team Number:

Judge:

		Points <u>Possible</u>	Points Given
<b><u>I.</u></b>	<b>Legal Analysis and Argument</b>		
	<b>A. Preliminary Matters</b>		
	<b>1. Questions Presented</b>	(3)	_____
	Are the issues phrased such that the answer naturally favors the party propounding them? Do they include the essential facts of case appropriately described? Or, do they merely copy and paste the certiorari questions from the problem, for which 0 points should be awarded?		
	<b>2. Statement of the Case; Statement of the Facts</b>	(6)	_____
	Are the facts stated in a favorable way without leaving out material facts or being argumentative? Is the factual summary effective? - 4 Is the procedural history complete and clear? - 2		
	<b>3. Summary of Arguments</b>	(5)	_____
	Development, persuasiveness and conciseness. Does the summary condense the argument without merely restating the headings?		
	<b>B. Structure and Substance of Analysis</b>		
	<b>1. Argument Structure</b>	(15)	_____
	Are the arguments organized in a clear and persuasive manner? Is the argument subdivided and do those subdivisions make logical sense when viewed as a whole? Do the arguments in each section flow logically, compelling a conclusion in the writer's favor? Are there clear conclusions?		

	Points Possible	Points Given
<p><b>2. Issue Recognition</b>  Does the argument include all the necessary issues?  Are the subissues relevant, persuasive and comprehensive?  Were any significant subissues missed?</p>	(10)	_____
<p><b>3. Persuasiveness of Headings and Text</b>  Are the headings and text argumentative without being intellectually dishonest? Was the argumentative tone of both the headings and the text properly developed? Do the headings describe the subsection's point fully and persuasively?</p>	(8)	_____
<p><b>4. Use of Authority</b>  Have the leading cases been used? Do the authorities support a sound legal analysis? Have relevant statutes and regulations been cited with any important legislative history? Have persuasive secondary authorities been used? Does the brief show an excessive reliance on secondary authorities? - <b>10</b></p> <p>Has the brief incorporated the facts of cited cases and text of any relevant statutes and regulations to inform and persuade the reader where appropriate? Have the cases and authorities cited been used as effectively as possible? - <b>6</b></p> <p>Has the brief distinguished cases or other authorities that are unfavorable to its position? - <b>6</b></p> <p>Have strong, relevant policy arguments been made and developed appropriately? Are contrary policy arguments effectively dealt with? - <b>8</b></p>	(30)	_____
<p><b>II. Style</b></p> <p>Is the brief clear and unambiguous? Has there been proper word choice by the writers? Does the brief look polished from re- drafting and re-writing? Are there grammar or typographical errors? Has there been an excessive use of quotations or cites? Has the brief effectively used the allotted word limit?</p>	(8)	_____
<p><b>TOTAL SUBSTANTIVE SCORE (See Point Ranges attached)</b></p>	<b>(85)</b>	

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES ON POINT RANGES FOR SUBSTANTIVE SCORING**

In evaluating the SUBSTANTIVE legal analysis and style of the briefs, our rules provide that you must set **65 out of 85 total points as the median score** for the briefs you are evaluating. To help you create a reasonable point distribution, here is how we would expect the scores to range, given our experience with students who compete in national moot court competitions and the number of briefs you can expect to be scoring.

**80-85 points** (exceptional briefs that display great depth of research and analysis and great writing style):  
10-20% (no more than one or two briefs)

**70-79 points** (strong briefs with solid research and analysis and good writing style): 25-40% (about two or three briefs)

**60-69 points** (average briefs that show mostly decent research, analysis and writing style but also have room for improvement in one or more of those categories):  
25-40% (about three or four briefs-most should fall into this range)

**50-59 points** (below average briefs that needed significantly better research and writing or attention to structure, grammar, or punctuation):  
20-30% (about two or three briefs)

**Below 50 points** (briefs with poor writing style and poor understanding of the legal argument):  
0-20% (no more than one or two briefs)

The numbers are based on judges scoring between 10 & 12 briefs each. If you score more or fewer, please adjust the ranges accordingly.