

2026

National Health Law
Moot Court
Competition

OFFICIAL RULES

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 September 4, 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 central time on September 4, 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-Second Edition of the Uniform System of Citation ("Bluebook").
- (ii) No information which may 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.
- (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 3, 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 28, 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 September 4, 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 (*see* 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 those scoring the briefs 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. central time, October 2, 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 substantive aspects of the briefs. The formal requirements of the brief (e.g., caption, table of contents, etc.) may be graded by the Scoring Committee, by members of the Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School Moot Court Board, or others that the Sponsor deems appropriate. 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 ballot used by those scoring the formal requirements of the brief is attached as Appendix B. The ballot used by the Scoring Committee when scoring the substantive aspects of the brief is attached as Appendix C.

Rule 8. Faculty or Other Assistance.

- (a) General. No team may receive specific assistance from any non-team member, including faculty and fellow students, when writing the brief or preparing for oral argument. This rule allows for teams to generally discuss the legal issues raised by the problem with non-team members at any time. It also allows non-team members to judge and critique practice oral arguments after the brief has been submitted. In no event should non-team members conduct research, write or edit the brief, or script any part of the oral argument.
- (b) Use of artificial intelligence. Use of generative artificial intelligence to draft the text of a team's brief is strictly prohibited. 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, and for spelling and grammar checks. 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 and 14, 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.

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 weighted and combined with the brief grade by the Sponsor as described in Rule 13(b)(ii).

Rule 12. Judge's Ballots and Instructions.

The ballot used by the judges when scoring oral arguments is attached as Appendix D.

Rule 13. Number of Arguments; Elimination; Pairings.

- (a) Number of Arguments. The Competition will be structured to afford each competing team two 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 13(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 12 teams will advance and be seeded based on their win-loss record and aggregate point differential, in that order. The top four seeded teams will receive a first-round bye and automatically advance to the quarterfinal round, while the teams seeded five through 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. Scores will be calculated to three decimal places (*i.e.*, 95.333).

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).

- (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 14. Time for Arguments.

- (a) Each team will have 30 minutes total to make its presentation. No advocate may argue for less than 12 or more than 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 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 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 making any further statements or requesting any further time. The court may permit a speaker additional time on its own motion.

Rule 15. 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 16. 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 17. 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 18. "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 19. Awards.

The Competition will award prizes to the First Place Team, Second Place Team, Third Place Team, Best Overall Speaker, and the team that submitted the Best Overall Brief.

The Best Overall Speaker will be awarded to the individual advocate with the highest average oral argument scores. All advocates who argue at least twice are eligible. If there is a tie to three decimal places for the Best Overall Speaker award, the Competition will recognize all tied advocates.

Rule 20. 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 21. 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 22. 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 23. 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.

PROBLEM AND RULES RELEASED	August 3, 2026
REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION DUE	August 28, 2026
AMENDED PROBLEM RELEASED (if any)	September 4, 2026
TEAM INFORMATION DUE (names, t-shirt sizes, food allergies, etc.)	September 4, 2026
ENTRY FEE DUE	September 11, 2026
DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWING WITHOUT PENALTY	September 18, 2026
DEADLINE FOR SERVICE OF BRIEFS	October 2, 2026
PRELIMINARY ROUNDS	November 13, 2026
ELIMINATION ROUNDS	November 14, 2026

Appendix A

Team Certification

We hereby certify that the brief for team number _____ is the product solely of the undersigned and that the undersigned did not receive any assistance 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

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School
Official Ballot for Scoring a Brief's Formal Requirements

Please follow the instructions provided to you when scoring. Print and sign your name at the end of the document.

Team # _____ Petitioner or Respondent: _____

Category	Point Range	Score
Brief Cover	0-2	
Table of Contents and Components	0-4	
Table of Authorities and Citations	0-6	
Overall Appearance and Appendix	0-3	
TOTAL	0-15	

Optional comments on the brief (note that competitors receive these):

Scorer's Name (Print): _____

Scorer's Signature: _____

Appendix C

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School
Official Ballot for Scoring a Brief's Substance

Please follow the instructions provided to you when scoring. Print and sign your name at the end of the document.

Team # _____ Petitioner or Respondent: _____

Category	Point Range	Score
Questions Presented	0-3	
Statement of the Case: Facts	0-4	
Statement of the Case: Procedural History	0-2	
Summary of Argument	0-5	
Argument Structure	0-15	
Issue Recognition	0-10	
Persuasiveness of Headings and Text	0-8	
Identifying Authorities	0-10	
Using Authorities Effectively	0-6	
Distinguishing Unfavorable Authorities	0-6	
Policy Arguments	0-8	
Style	0-8	
TOTAL	0-85	

Optional comments on the brief (note that competitors receive these):

Scorer's Name (Print): _____

Scorer's Signature: _____

APPENDIX D

Southern Illinois University Simmons Law School
Official Oral Argument Ballot

Please follow the instructions provided to you when scoring. Enter Petitioner's information and scores on the front of this document. Enter Respondent's information and scores on the back of this document. Print and sign your name at the end of the document.

Petitioner - Team # _____

Counsel 1 Name: _____

Category	Point Range	Score
Evidence of Research; Knowledge of the Record, Issues and Law; Organization and Reasoning	25-50	
Ability to Answer Questions	10-20	
Convincing Irrespective of the Merits	5-10	
Forensic Performance	5-10	
Courtroom Demeanor	5-10	
TOTAL	50-100	

Counsel 2 Name: _____

Category	Point Range	Score
Evidence of Research; Knowledge of the Record, Issues and Law; Organization and Reasoning	25-50	
Ability to Answer Questions	10-20	
Convincing Irrespective of the Merits	5-10	
Forensic Performance	5-10	
Courtroom Demeanor	5-10	
TOTAL	50-100	

Respondent - Team # _____

Counsel 1 Name: _____

Category	Point Range	Score
Evidence of Research; Knowledge of the Record, Issues and Law; Organization and Reasoning	25-50	
Ability to Answer Questions	10-20	
Convincing Irrespective of the Merits	5-10	
Forensic Performance	5-10	
Courtroom Demeanor	5-10	
TOTAL	50-100	

Counsel 2 Name: _____

Category	Point Range	Score
Evidence of Research; Knowledge of the Record, Issues and Law; Organization and Reasoning	25-50	
Ability to Answer Questions	10-20	
Convincing Irrespective of the Merits	5-10	
Forensic Performance	5-10	
Courtroom Demeanor	5-10	
TOTAL	50-100	

Judge's Name (Print): _____

Judge's Signature: _____