

Rules & Compliance

YouTube Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7Yyetz2YLo>

As you prepare for upcoming tournaments, you'll want to be sure you're familiar with the league policies and the specific event rules on the NCFCA website. You will also want to check details in the Information section of the registration page for each tournament. As with any competitive activity the rules and policies matter, and when they aren't followed, it disrupts competition. No one wants that, so we ask that everyone shoulder the responsibility of learning the boundaries.

Questions about rules that arise during competition can and should be directed to our Compliance Team via the Tournament Dashboard or in the Judge Hospitality room at in-person tournaments. We understand that some parents and other participants feel hesitant to ask questions for fear of getting students in trouble. It's important to remember that we simply want to **ensure fair competition and help students learn and grow**. Any application of penalties would be related to one or both of these goals.

Our Compliance teams are trained to evaluate rules and communicate with students and their families in an encouraging way. Rule infractions and penalties are administered under the guidance of a National Adjudication Team to ensure consistent application across the league and to identify ways to improve competition prep materials. We just ask that you bring the questions to the Compliance team if you have them. Ignoring a potential issue can result in greater difficulty as competition progresses through a tournament and through the season.

For parents, who are working with students to help them learn and succeed, it can be tempting to become part of the action at tournaments. Please be mindful of where to draw the line between coaching and getting too involved in the competition. **Competitors benefit the most when ALL of the parents are working as a constructive team** to prioritize supporting our mission with EVERY student, rather than prioritizing competitive goals for their own children or the children of friends. We ask that adults keep their opinions and rankings for speeches, and their debate flows and win-loss decisions confidential until after the tournament.

Students may bring questions or concerns to parents about something that happens in a competition round, and they need the support of a parent to



present their question to the Compliance team if appropriate. In this case, it's best to **discuss the concern with gracious thinking and consult the rules** to see how the situation lines up with written guidance. If you believe there is a potential rule violation, then the question should go forward. The Compliance FAQs on our website may also be helpful as you prayerfully consider difficulties that can arise in competition.

If you are a competitor, please keep in mind that any question about a rule infraction is simply a boundary check conducted by the compliance team in response to a question. It's not a judgment on anyone's character or the motives of anyone involved. It's also not a question of one person against another. It's a question of actions versus rules and policies.

Our Compliance Team volunteers always want to help students learn, grow, and continue in competition when possible. In the rare event a rule violation issue cannot be resolved to allow for continued competition in a tournament, we ask everyone involved to trust that the situation was thoroughly evaluated and the determination weighed carefully for fair and consistent competition.

The best way to avoid difficulties with rule questions is to **carefully review our league policies, and the rules for your events, including timekeeping rules**, to ensure YOU are staying within the bounds! We also have FAQs on our website, and we encourage you to send questions to SpeechCommittee@NCFCA.org or DebateCommittee@NCFCA.org if a rule or its application seem unclear to you.

We hope you'll be part of encouraging fellow competitors and their families to think the best of one another while working to keep competition fair and enjoyable for everyone involved.