

THE THIRTY-FIFTH AUGUST A. RENDIGS, JR. NATIONAL PRODUCTS LIABILITY MOOT COURT COMPETITION

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI DONALD P. KLEKAMP COLLEGE OF LAW

RENDIGS PRODUCTS LIABILITY MOOT COURT COMPETITION

CO-DIRECTORS GRACE TROUTMAN & JACKSON RECHT

PROBLEM WRITERS SAM SKELLEY & JULIA MILLER

FEBRUARY 26–27, 2027

RULES

I. BACKGROUND

The 35th August A. Rendigs, Jr. National Products Liability Moot Court Competition will be hosted by the University of Cincinnati Moot Court Honor Board (“Board”) on February 26–27, 2027. The Competition is administered by the Board and is designed to strengthen law students’ advocacy skills.

- a) The Competition is open to all law students of ABA-accredited law schools. Each student must be a law student pursuing a Juris Doctor degree.
- b) The Board will interpret, implement, and enforce these Competition rules. Additionally, the Board will be responsible for supervising the Competition and addressing any potential issues. Concerns regarding the Competition should be directed to the Competition Co-Directors, Grace Troutman & Jackson Recht at rendigsmootcourtcompetition@gmail.com.

II. REGISTRATION

Registration and payment must be received no later than **December 4, 2026, at 11:59 PM EST** to guarantee registration in the competition.

III. TEAMS

- a) Each ABA-accredited law school may enter teams on a first-come, first-served basis. Each law school may enter no more than two teams.
- b) The competition will allow a maximum of twenty (20) teams to register as competitors. Registration shall close when that capacity is reached.
- c) Each team shall consist of two (2) or (3) members. Only two team members may argue during any one argument.

- d) No team member may hold a law degree. Each member must be enrolled in a full or part-time Juris Doctor or equivalent program in the law school they represent, and each participant must be a member of their law school moot court team or a functional equivalent.
- e) There shall be no replacement of team members after service of briefs except with the express written consent of the Board. Consent will be given at the sole discretion of the Board, and only in extraordinary circumstances.
- f) Each team must designate a contact person (“Team Contact”) and submit that individual’s name, email address, and phone number upon registration. The Board will thereafter direct any correspondence concerning the Competition to the Team Contact.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

- a) The Problem will be emailed to each team’s contact person on or around December 11, 2026.
- b) Please contact the Board’s Co-Directors Grace Troutman & Jackson Recht at rendigsmootcourtcompetition@gmail.com for information requests, interpretation of the Rules, or questions concerning the Problem. The deadline for rule interpretations and problem-related inquiries is 5:00 PM EST on Sunday, January 10, 2027. (“Question Deadline”).
- c) The Board pledges to respond to queries on rule interpretations or questions about the problem by, or shortly after, the Question Deadline.
- d) The Board has the discretion to modify these rules as necessary.

V. BRIEFS

- a) The Board will assign each team to write a brief for either the Petitioner or the Respondent. A team identification number assigning each team’s side for the briefs will be emailed to the team representative on or before December 14, 2026. If you have not received this information by December 14, 2026, please contact the Board immediately. Note that while a team will write a brief on the assigned side, team members must be prepared to orally argue both sides of the case before the Court.
- b) The cover page of the brief must reflect: (1) the name of both the court and the court appealed from; (2) the index number of the case; (3) the title of the document (e.g., “Petitioner’s Brief”); and (4) the anonymous team-identification number provided by the Board pursuant to Section V(a).
- c) Citations must conform to the 21st Edition of The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation, published by the Harvard Law Review Association (“The Bluebook”).
- d) Teams may cite only those medical journal articles specifically cited or identified in the Problem in either their brief or oral arguments. Teams may not cite or rely upon any other medical journal article, regardless of when the article was published or becomes available.

- e) The brief from Questions Presented through the signature block must not exceed 35 pages, with the Questions Presented appearing on page 1. All pages before the Question Presented, other than the cover sheet, must be numbered using small Roman numerals.
- f) Each team must submit one (1) electronic copy of the brief in PDF format to the Board at rendigsmootcourtcompetition@gmail.com. The brief is due not later than Sunday, January 24, 2027, at 11:59 PM EST. Any team whose brief is submitted after Sunday January 24, 2027 at 11:59 PM EST will be penalized ten (10) points per day, or portion thereof, that it is late, which will be deducted from the brief score. No briefs will be accepted after Wednesday, January 27, 2027, at 11:59 PM EST.
- g) Each Brief must include the following sections in the following order:
 - a. Cover page
 - b. Table of Contents
 - c. Table of Authorities
 - d. Questions Presented
 - e. Statement of the Case
 - f. Summary of the Argument
 - g. Argument
 - h. Conclusion
- h) The Cover Page of a team's brief arguing on behalf of the Petitioner must be light blue. The Cover Page of a team's brief arguing on behalf of the Respondent must be red.
- i) Each submission must include the team's assigned number on the Cover Page. No identifying information, such as the names of schools or competitors, may appear anywhere on the brief.
- j) When submitting a brief, each team must certify that its work is original, and that the brief adheres to the rules set forth herein ("Certification"). The Certification must be included in the body of the email sent to the address specified in Section V(e) with submission of the brief. Any brief submitted without the Certification will not be scored, thus resulting in a mark of zero.

VI. RELEASE OF COMPETITORS' BRIEFS

- a) Prior to the Competition, all teams will have the opportunity to review all submitted briefs. On or around Friday, February 12, 2027, all submitted briefs will be posted on the competition webpage.

VII. BRIEF SCORING

- a) The brief score for each team will be determined by averaging scores assigned by the brief judges. Each team's brief will be scored by at least three judges (collectively "Graders"). The Graders will use a score sheet that will be shared along with the problem on December 11, 2026.
- b) The overall brief score for each team will be the average of the Graders' Score.

VIII. ORAL ARGUMENTS

- a) The Preliminary and Quarter-Final Rounds will be hosted at The University of Cincinnati College of Law on Friday, February 26, 2027, beginning at 9:00 A.M. EST. Each team's argument will be limited to thirty (30) minutes per round ("Overall Time"). Each team must have two (2) members argue the issues presented throughout each round, and each member must argue for at least twelve (12) minutes every round ("Individual Time"). During the oral arguments, a bailiff will display timecards to the oralist that indicate five (5) minutes, three (3) minutes, one (1) minute, and zero (0) minutes remaining.
- b) Should there be an uneven number of teams during the Preliminary Round, one or more teams will be selected at random to compete in an additional Preliminary Round. Whether they will be Petitioner or Respondent depends on the assignment of the other team. The selected team's lowest oral argument score will be dropped for grading purposes in the Preliminary Round.
- c) The Semi-Final and Final Rounds will be held at the Potter Stewart U.S. Courthouse in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Board will communicate with teams closer to the Competition regarding procedures and timing for entering the Courthouse.
- d) A team arguing on behalf of the Petitioner may reserve up to three (3) minutes for rebuttal time ("Reserved Rebuttal Time"). Any Reserved Rebuttal Time will be deducted from the respective team's Overall Time. Reserved Rebuttal Time may be charged to the time of any team member's Individual Time, but only one team member may deliver the rebuttal. At the outset of their argument, the first member of the Petitioner's team to argue must request rebuttal time from the chief judge. The judges have the discretion to deny rebuttal time in the event Petitioner fails to request it.
- e) Professional attire shall be worn by all competitors. Competitors must ensure that there is nothing on their attire which identifies their school.
- f) During the Preliminary and Quarter-Final Rounds, no team member, coach, or faculty advisor of a team to the Competition may attend an argument of any other team. The only individuals permitted to attend each argument are members of the competing teams and a maximum of two (2) coaches or faculty advisors per team. Before teams enter the argument room, requests for permission for additional attendees must be made to the Competition Co-Directors identified in Section IV(b). All participants in the Competition may attend the Semi-Final Rounds and the Final Round of oral arguments.
- g) Except for the oralists, any attendees of the Semi-Final and Final Rounds must remain silent during the entire duration of the oral arguments, both before and after the actual arguments. Coaches, faculty advisors, and other approved auditors are prohibited from asking the judges questions.
- h) Each year the Board strives to bring many distinguished members of the bar and bench to judge oral arguments. In the event of a shortage of judges for the preliminary, Quarter-Final, and semi-final rounds, it is possible that a team may be evaluated more than once by a judge. However, the Board will make every effort to avoid such a scenario.

- i) After the rounds, competitors will step out of the courtroom while the Judges tabulate their scores. Teammates may, if they wish, speak to each other during this time, but Petitioner and Respondent will be in the same waiting area. After the judges have tabulated their score, competitors will be brought back into the courtroom to hear feedback from the judges.
 - a. Substantive comments on the law will not be permitted.
 - b. The time for feedback will be timed by the Bailiff and limited to a total of 15 minutes.

IX. AWARDS & ADVANCEMENT IN THE COMPETITION

- a) On Friday, February 26, 2027, at 6:00 PM EST, the University of Cincinnati College of Law will host an awards ceremony and banquet in the atrium of its building (“Awards Ceremony”) on the first evening of the competition. Three (3) oralists will receive awards based on their individual performance scores in the Preliminary Rounds. To be eligible for an oralist award, an oralist must have participated in both preliminary rounds. In addition, awards for the three (3) highest-scored briefs will be presented at the Awards Ceremony.
- b) Advancement in the Competition shall take place according to the following criteria:
 - a. *Preliminary Rounds*: Each round score is comprised of a combination of a team’s average brief score and average oral argument score (35% brief and 65% oral argument scores). The combined scores will be ranked, and the teams with the top eight combined scores will advance to the Quarter-Final Round. In the event of a tie, the team with the highest average oral score will advance.
 - b. *Quarter Final Round*: In each of the four Quarter-Final pairings, the team with the higher Quarter-Final Round score will be the winner, and advance to the Semi-Final round. Each score in the Quarter-Final Round is determined by combining a team’s average brief score and average oral argument score (20% brief and 80% oral argument scores). Teams will be seeded in the Quarter-Final Round by their combined scores from the Preliminary Rounds. In the event of a tie, the team with the highest average oral score will advance. Teams will be seeded in the Quarter-Final Round so that seed #1 argues against seed #8; seed #2 v. seed #7; seed #3 v. seed #6; and seed #4 v. seed #5. Petitioner and Respondent will be determined by a coin toss, with the team winning the toss given the choice between Petitioner and Respondent. The higher seeded team will call the coin toss. A member of the Board will perform the coin toss.
 - c. *Semi-Final Round*: In each of the two Semi-Final pairings, the team with the higher Semi-Final Round score will be the winner, and advance to the Final Round. Each score in the Semi-Final Round is determined by the judges of the Semi-Final Round, based only on the oral argument performance of the Semi-Final Round. Petitioner and Respondent will be determined by a coin toss, with

the team winning the toss given the choice between Petitioner and Respondent. Again, the higher seeded team will call the coin toss. A member of the Board will announce the teams advancing to the Semi-Final Round and perform the coin toss at the banquet.

- d. *Final Round*: The winner of the Final Round will be determined by the judges of the Final Round, based only on the oral argument performance of the Final Round. Petitioner and Respondent will be determined by a coin toss, with the team winning the toss given the choice between Petitioner and Respondent. A member of the Board perform the coin toss after the Semi-Final Round.

X. OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

- a) The brief and oral argument must be the exclusive work of the student team members. The text of the brief must be the original work of the team members and cannot be copied, or duplicated, from other briefs or sources, except for passages clearly marked as quotations. All brief submissions may be analyzed with a plagiarism detection program to ensure originality.
- b) The prohibition on outside assistance does not limit preliminary broad discussion of the issues with the student coach, faculty, or others before competitors begin writing the brief or, after submission of the brief, during mootings sessions in preparation for the Competition.
- c) Competitors may not use artificial intelligence (AI), including generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or similar platforms, in the drafting of any portion of their briefs. All written work submitted as part of the competition must be produced solely by the team members.

XI. COMPETITION PUBLICITY RIGHTS

Participation in the Competition, whether as a team member, coach or faculty advisor, constitutes consent to be photographed and recorded by any member of the Board or the University of Cincinnati Donald P. Klekamp College of Law. Photographs and recordings may be displayed or distributed during or after the Competition in a variety of formats and media, including posting on the internet and use in press releases and promotional materials. Participants waive all claims for any compensation, damages, or other remedies relating to the use of these photographs or recordings.