**LINCOLN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE LEAGUE**

**ONLINE TOURNAMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

***\**** ***This document is potentially subject to tournament-by-tournament amendments over the course of the season, at the discretion of the LPDL Board. All enforcement of this document is subject to the rulings of the LPDL Board members present at any given tournament.\****

**GENERAL TOURNAMENT GUIDELINES AND POLICIES**

**TOURNAMENT PLATFORM AND GENERAL PROCEDURE**

1. LPDL Tournaments will be conducted using the **Zoom platform.**
2. **All students and coaches will be required to submit phone numbers they can be reached at during the tournament**. Personal phone numbers are strongly preferred. Anyone unwilling to share personal numbers should take advantage of opportunities provided by Google Voice (or equivalent technology). Each accompanying coach (the “Coach in Charge”) is responsible for being able to contact all of their students and judges at any given moment. Individual school coaches should also ensure that all of their school’s partnerships have each other’s phone numbers. Phone numbers will not be retained or utilized by tournament administrators beyond the boundaries of any given tournament. These numbers will be used only for tournament administration purposes.
3. Registration will be held in a Common Zoom Room. Coaches should check-in with their students prior to Registration to ensure that all competitors are present, accounted for, and able to technologically participate in the tournament.
4. **Following Registration, ALL PARTICIPANTS (coaches, judges and competitors) MUST attend a brief “online orientation” meeting preceding the first round.**
5. At the beginning of each round, all tournament participants are expected to be in the Zoom common room at least 5 minutes before the scheduled round. At this point, the **tournament administrators will assign participants to designated “breakout rooms” corresponding with each individual debate section.**
6. At the conclusion of each round, competitors and judges will return to the zoom common room. It is important to exit your breakout rooms in a prompt fashion so you can be appropriately reassigned for the next round.
7. **Twenty-minute gaps** will be scheduled between rounds by the tournament administrators. All participants are encouraged to leave their computers and walk around during this time. Each participant should do whatever they know is most likely to help them feel more energized and engaged.
8. **Post-round critiques are discouraged**. In absolutely no instance should oral critiques extend beyond an absolute maximum of 5 minutes past the end of the last speech OR interfere with the beginning of the next round.
9. **Forfeit Rule:** Students must be in the Zoom Common Room a minimum of 5 minutes before the round is due to start. Failure to be present in this room 5 minutes before the round is due to start will result in immediate and automatic forfeiting of the round. Appeals to this forfeit may be made to the LPDL tournament administrators.
10. **Postings will be made available in the Zoom Common Room**. Since the exact amount of time it will take to determine breaks will vary from tournament to tournament, students and judges should keep a close eye on what happens in the Zoom Common Room following the completion of the last preliminary round. Whenever feasible, group texts will also be sent from the tournament administrators to the phone numbers provided by judges/students at this time.
11. Following the completion of final rounds, all participants should join the appropriate Zoom Common Room. Awards will be announced in this room ASAP. Whenever feasible, group texts will also be sent from the tournament administrators to the phone numbers provided by judges/students at this time to inform them that awards are starting.

**PARTICIPANT DRESS AND DELIVERY**

1. Virtual Environment: Issues of virtual background, lighting, camera angle, etc. are a matter of individual/school choice. Appropriate room settings and/or neutral backgrounds are preferred. The LPDL organization urges all judges to remember that the pragmatics of financial and physical access may impact the “choices” made by any given participant.
2. Dress Code: Students should remember that delivery makes a significant difference to many judges, and judges may take dress, demeanor, and all other general delivery issues into account when making their judging decisions.
3. Stance: Students are free to sit or stand as they speak.
4. Camera: Participants are expected to be visible on camera for the entirety of the round. The only exception to this would occur when bandwidth issues require the turning off of participant(s) camera(s). . Please consult the “best practices” guidelines provided below for instructions in instances such as those above.

**TIME: GRACE PERIODS AND TECHNICAL ERRORS**

1. **Traditional LPDL time limits will continue to be observed:**

**Prep = 15 minutes**

**Prime Minister Constructive = 7 minutes**

**1st Opposition Flex Time = 2 minutes**

**Leader of Opposition Constructive = 8 minutes**

**1st Government Flex Time = 2 minutes**

**Member of Government Constructive = 8 minutes**

**2nd Opposition Flex Time = 1 minutes**

**Member of Opposition Constructive = 8 minutes**

**Leader of Opposition Rebuttal = 4 minutes**

**2nd Government Flex Time = 1 minute**

**Prime Minister Rebuttal = 5 minutes**

**(prep = 15 minutes, flex**

1. **The prep and flex times listed above will be extended by a maximum grace amount of 30 seconds per period *if needed to resolve technical issues.* In general terms, such extensions are discouraged. Judges will be asked to run separate stopwatches and “start speech time” at the expiration of any given prep/flex time.**
2. In situations where a debater’s/judge’s screen (audio and/or video) freezes, the following process will apply:
3. The Judge (or any other member of the room) will say “Pause the round please” if they see problems arise. Stopwatches will be “frozen” at this point. The person noticing the problem will draw attention to it vocally in BOTH the Zoom chat and orally.
4. Judges will handle this type of technical pause in a manner similar to the handling of a “Point of Order” situation.
5. Punctuality is crucial in this tournament format. As such, strict forfeit rules will be enforced:
6. If at any point during the tournament a competitor experiences technical problems which cause them to be unable to access the tournament, they should do all possible in their power to reach out to their partner. The partner who IS able to access the tournament is empowered to make either of the following two choices: (1) Forfeit the round and retain the opportunity for the missing partner to return in later rounds, or (2) Maverick without their missing partner that round knowing that they will need to continue through the rest of the tournament as a Maverick. If a technical issue cannot be resolved by the time that a debater is meant to speak, the remaining partner must decide which option to take at that point.
7. If the judge experiences a technical error during the round that cannot be resolved within 15 minutes, both participating teams will receive a Win for the round. If the judge experiences a technical error that delays the start of the round, tournament administration will administer Strike and begin prep. If the scheduled judge (or a replacement judge) is not available by 15 minutes past the time scheduled for the first speech, then both participating teams will receive a Win for the round.

**IN-ROUND PROCEDURES**

**STRIKE PROCEDURE**

1. Once all participants are present in the “breakout room,” the judge must post the list of Resolution options for the round in the Zoom chat.
2. Following traditional strike procedure (Opposition strikes, then Government), partners will mute their Zoom audio and discuss strike decisions using one of two methods: (a) Calling one another on their personal phones, or (b) Using the chat function on Zoom (in the chat module, partners may choose to send messages only to their partner rather than to “all” participants).

**Please Note:** (a) While private chat comments may be visible to the Zoom host at the conclusion of the tournament, this should not deter use of the private chat function given that the tournament host would only be able to view chat comments after downloading the concluded Zoom meeting and digging through chat comments. (b) Strike times will remain at a traditional limit of 1 minute per team.

1. After a decision has been made, each team must announce to the judge and opponents which resolution they have decided to strike. The judge will then announce the final resolution both orally and in the chat. Prep time will then begin!

**PREP PROCEDURE**

1. Participants will already be in “breakout rooms” once prep begins, so **competitors should conduct prep by turning off their Zoom video and audio functions and consult with their partners by private phone call.**
2. Internet research **IS** allowed during prep time for the 2020-2021 LPDL season.
3. While prep will ideally take the traditional 15 minutes, time may be extended by a 30-second grace period *if necessary to accommodate for partner coordination and/or technical challenges*.

**DEBATE PROCEDURE**

1. After the conclusion of the 15 minute prep time, all debaters should turn on their audio and video functions and inform the judge (providing both their first and last names) of their chosen speaker roles (Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, Member of Government, or Member of Opposition).
2. Once the debate is ready to begin, **ALL PARTICIPANTS EXCEPT THE SPEAKER MUST MUTE THEIR AUDIO!**
3. All participants should set their Zoom display to **“Gallery View”** rather than “Speaker View” – this ensures that all participants are visible on screen at the same time, therefore making it easier to notice questions, etc.
4. **Time:** Participants should keep their own time while speaking, but judges should also time speakers and are strongly encouraged to provide time signals.
5. **Flex Time:** Partners should communicate during flex time using the same methods used during strike (phone call and/or Zoom chat). All participants must remain attentive and present during flex time in the event that any questions are posed. As noted, flex time may be extended by a 30-second grace period when necessary.
6. **Asking Questions:** Debaters are encouraged to ask questions throughout the debate. Debaters should NOT pose questions in Zoom chat (since they may not be seen). Instead, if a debater wishes to ask a question during a speech, they may do so using one of the following options:
7. Holding up a brightly colored notecard with “Question” written on it.
8. Raising/waving their hand to be seen visually.
9. Using the “clap hands” icon under the “reactions” tab on Zoom (perhaps not ideal given that these icons only display for a few seconds).
10. **Partner Communication Mid-Debate:** Partners may communicate with one another during the debate as they normally would, but they must do so in a manner that is not disruptive to the speaker. Some options might include utilizing personal cell phones or the direct messaging function of Zoom’s chat feature.

**POST-ROUND PROCEDURE AND BALLOT SUBMISSION**

1. Upon the conclusion of the debate, all participants should prepare to return to the Zoom “common room” (take some time to stretch, walk around, etc., but keep an eye on the time!).
2. Again, post-round judge critiques are discouraged and must not exceed an absolute maximum of five minutes!
3. **Ballot Submission:** Ballots will be completed via Google Forms and should be submitted as quickly as possible upon the conclusion of the round. Judges will receive a link to this Google form prior to the start of the round and will be required to fill out all text boxes with the appropriate information. Once complete, you will submit the document where it will be collected in a google drive folder that only tournament administration has access to. Judges may edit the document after submission
4. Ballots and tournament tab sheets will be emailed directly to the accompanying coach as soon as possible after the conclusion of the tournament.