



Video Recording Guidelines

For District Online and Hybrid Speech Contests

These guidelines are intended to support you in recording your online or hybrid District International Speech Contest for region quarterfinal submission.

Preparing for your contest

- ▶ Ensure the platform you select for hosting the online portion of your contest includes video recording capabilities.
 - It is recommended that you thoroughly test your selected platform ahead of your contest. Things to consider while testing include:
 - Your platform clearly indicates that the recording has started.
 - The audio and video produced by your selected platform are clear.
 - Your platform can capture audio from multiple participants in different locations.
- ▶ Review the region quarterfinal video recording rules in the *Speech Contest Rulebook*.
 - It is recommended that you discuss video recording rules during your contestant's briefing.
 - If contestants are providing their own technology, have them practice with it and recommend adjustments to ensure they meet requirements.

Video Recording Rules

The chief judge for region quarterfinals will be advised that Districts were provided an exception to conduct the International Speech Contest online or hybrid. Districts should be able to adhere to most video recording requirements while using an online or hybrid format. Guidelines outlined here apply to online contestants, whether they are competing in a fully online or hybrid contest.

The following list includes rules for region quarterfinal video recordings, along with guidelines for helping you adhere to each rule. When appropriate, there are notes about how enforcement of the rules may be adjusted for these circumstances.

Audio

Rule: *The audio must be clear and without echo, static, or other excessive noise.*

- ▶ Have the contest chair and all contestants test their audio during your briefing. Pay attention to whether there is any echo while a contestant is speaking and work with them to mitigate it.
- ▶ Advise contestants to ensure they are in a space without background noise.
- ▶ Ensure that online audience members, contest officials, and contestants keep their microphones muted when not speaking.

Camera

Rule: *The camera must record in high definition.*

- ▶ If a contestant does not have a camera that records in high definition, ensure the image is as clear as possible.
- ▶ The region quarterfinals chief judge will take into consideration the online speech contest exception and limitations of this environment when reviewing videos.

Rule: *Only single-camera setup is permitted; use of multiple camera angles is not allowed.*

- ▶ Each contestant must use only one camera; switching cameras when changing contestants will not be considered as using multiple camera angles.

Rule: *The camera must be placed on a tripod to maintain stability and prevent unwanted movement.*

- ▶ All contestants must ensure their camera is secured on a stable surface.

Rule: *The camera must have an unobstructed, in-focus view of the contestants.*

- ▶ Test this with each contestant during the briefing.

Rule: *The entire speaking area must be visible throughout the recording.*

- ▶ This typically means that the stage on which the contestant is standing must be visible, along with the contestant's entire body.
 - The chief judge should determine if this is feasible for your contestant's setup and define a standard speaking area for all online contestants that maximizes the view of the contestant without sacrificing audio quality. If your contest is hybrid, it is likely that the speaking area will look different for onsite contestants. Judges will be briefed to not consider contestant's speaking area when judging. Instead of looking at the amount of space available to a contestant, they will consider if the contestant effectively used the speaking area as it was defined to them.
 - Defining the speaking area for online contestants should include:
 - Providing a set distance that all contestants must maintain between themselves and their cameras (for example, all contestants must stay within 3 feet of their camera).
- ▶ If contestants do not have microphones that can be on their bodies, ensure that the defined distance still allows their microphone to clearly record their voice. We recommend conducting a sound check with all contestants at the defined distance and then adjusting the distance as needed.
- ▶ Set a distance that shows as much of your contestant's bodies as possible; if it is not possible to show their entire body, ensure that the camera is set so that their face is clearly seen.
- ▶ If facial expressions are clear, not showing the contestant's entire body will not lead to a disqualification.
- ▶ Notify each contestant how far they can move in each direction without exiting the view of the camera.
 - Once the speaking area is defined, it is suggested that each contestant mark the area and not move their camera again until the contest has concluded.
 - Inform all judges of the defined speaking area.
- ▶ When submitting your video recording to World Headquarters, include a description of how the speaking area was defined.

Rule: *The camera must be monitored by a camera operator at all times to ensure it is recording properly.*

- ▶ While cameras for online contestants cannot be monitored, place someone in charge of monitoring your online platform to ensure it indicates that it is recording through the entire contest. If the recording stops, they should notify the chief judge immediately.

- ▶ The chief judge should pause the contest if the quality of the video or audio degrades to the point of not being able to understand the contestant. They should resolve the technological issues prior to resuming the contest. Then the contestant will resume from where they were paused. See the **Online and Hybrid Speech Contests Best Practices** document for more information on pausing contests.

Rule: *Zooming is not permitted.*

- ▶ If contestants have someone operating their camera, remind them that they cannot zoom.
- ▶ If contestants have a camera with a feature that automatically adjusts to keep them in frame, they must turn this feature off during the contest.

Lighting

Rule: *The speaking area must be fully lit.*

The speaker's facial expressions must be visible throughout the speech; the image should not be too bright or dark.

No lighting, artificial or natural, should point directly at the camera.

- ▶ Test lighting with each contestant during the briefing. If there is not enough light to meet these requirements, have them move to a different room or add additional light.
- ▶ If necessary, have them move lights or their camera to ensure no lights are pointing at the camera.
- ▶ It is recommended to test the lighting as close to the time of day of the contest as possible.

Video Recording

Rule: *The recording must only contain the introduction of the winning contestant's speech by the contest chair and the entire winning speech.*

The recording may not be edited in any way, such as by adding text, graphics, images, or anything that does not meet the requirements above.

- ▶ Make sure to have your contest chair test their audio before the contest to ensure that the speaker's introduction will be clearly captured.