

Rules for 2021 Virtual NOSB Competitions

ALL the traditional competition rules will be upheld. Below are the necessary changes to those rules for teams competing in a VIRTUAL competition.

Eligibility:

- A team must compete at their established regional competition.
 - If a team's established regional competition cannot be held or encounters difficulty in recruiting enough teams, two or more bowls may be combined into a 'super region' competition. If this scenario is necessary, team coaches will be contacted as soon as possible with the necessary information regarding registration and participation.
- If a team has an alternate, that (5th) team member may compete during the entire competition round(s). Per traditional competition rules, no more than five team members may compete on a team.

Competition Structure and Requirements

- During virtual competitions, teams will not play head-to-head unless the Regional Coordinator(s) approve it and every participating coach and student of the bowl unanimously agree to accept the potential difficulties and disadvantages resulting from inequitable internet access and speed. (If applicable, please see revised rules specific to virtual head-to-head competition.)
- If no head-to-head play is included, teams will play individually and will be competing against all of the other teams in the competition. Each team will be read the same set of questions during each round. Teams with the highest point totals will advance. The number of teams advancing will be decided by the Regional Coordinator(s).
- Teams will receive a schedule of their individual competition round times as well as times they should be available for any necessary "tie-breaker" and/or "elimination" rounds.
- Each student and coach must be available via a computer with a web camera or a smartphone/tablet to access an online competition room (via Zoom or another online platform).
- Each round will be open only to the competing students, their coach(es), and required competition officials. No family members or guests will be allowed.
- No one will be admitted into the online room after the official start time of the round, unless there are known connectivity issues that can be resolved in a timely manner. Students and coaches are encouraged to log on early to ensure they are not locked out for the entirety of the round.
- Coaches will be muted once the round officially begins and unmuted only during the designated break time.
- Coaches must turn their video camera OFF during buzzer questions and ON during Team Challenge Questions (TCQs) to ensure they are not assisting their competing team.
- Any team member or coach caught recording any part of the rounds, via audio, video, or writing, will be ejected from the online room and be ineligible to participate in any future rounds. Only the equipment required to participate will be allowed - i.e. no additional cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc., may be out unless they are specifically being used by the participant to join and compete in the online room.
- Rules specific to the 2021 National Finals Competition will be made available to all Finals participants in advance of the event.

Rules of the Game:

- The format of the virtual rounds will be a set* number of buzzer questions (*to be determined by the Regional Coordinator or NOSB national office, and may change as the event progresses), a 2-minute break, and 2 TCQs.
- Toss-up and bonus questions will be read in their entirety by the Moderator.
- On a toss-up question, any member of a team may “buzz” in to answer the question by typing “b” or “B” into the online room chat box during any point in the reading of the question. Once the Moderator has finished reading the entire question, a competition official specifically tasked with recognizing the buzzing in will announce which team member was first to buzz in and may provide an answer. This volunteer will announce their role before the round begins. Only the student they announce may answer the question.
 - Note – The order of players that have buzzed in to answer a question may occasionally appear different on competitors’ screens due to the local internet response times. To remain consistent and fair, the first student to buzz in will always be determined by the order on the official recognizer’s chat screen.
- On bonus questions, team captains MUST preface their answer with “my/our answer is” to ensure the Moderator, Science Judge, Timekeeper, and Rules Judge know when the team’s official answer is being provided.
- Team members can work together on a TCQ via a shared Google Doc. When time is called, the team captain will be required to submit the team’s TCQ answers via email or other method determined by the Regional Coordinator(s).
- Team captains will be asked to verify their team’s final score in the online room chat box.
- Online competition rooms will be recorded if the functionality is supported by the platform being used for competition.

Timing Rules:

- Rounds will not be timed. Every team will be provided the same number of questions to answer. The number of rounds will be determined by either the Regional Coordinator(s) or the NOSB national office.
- Timing for answering toss-up and bonus questions remains the same and will be announced by the official timekeeper in the online competition room.

Scoring Rules:

- For virtual competitions where students are not competing head-to-head, the interrupt penalty does not apply during toss-up questions. Therefore, points will not be deducted during the rounds.
- If a team member blurts during a toss-up question, the team loses the right to answer that question and the Moderator will move on and read the next toss-up question.

Rules for the End of a Game:

- The round ends when a team has answered all the questions (buzzers and TCQs) included in the round.
- If tie-breaker rounds are necessary, individual teams will be notified and asked to join a new online room at a predetermined time and will answer five (5) toss-up questions.

Rules about Challenges:

- During virtual rounds, there will be no Grading and Judges' Appeal Room. Any science or rules challenges will be dealt with by the competition officials in the online competition room. If a team requests a second challenge, the necessary competition officials will discuss the issue offline, or use a breakout room to do so, and formulate their response. All decisions made on the second challenge are final.
- As the first student to buzz in on a toss-up question will always be determined by the order on the official recognizer's chat screen, challenges to which student is allowed to answer a given question will not be accepted.

Rules about Warnings:

- Team members and coaches must abide by all rules regarding warnings.
- If an individual team member receives two (2) warnings, they will be ejected from the online competition room and be disqualified from competing in the rest of the competition.
- If a coach receives two (2) warnings, they will be ejected from the online competition room and be disqualified from participating in the rest of the competition.
- If an entire team receives two (2) warnings, the round is over and all players on that team and their coach will be disqualified from competing in the rest of the competition.

Coaching Policy:

- Coaches should be present during their team's virtual competition rounds. However, teams will be allowed to compete if the coach is absent by the start of their scheduled round(s).