



Official NorCal State Tournament Rules

Updated October 21, 2025

NorCal Science Olympiad Regional & State Tournament Rules

School Team Registration: Regional and State Rule – Participation in a Science Olympiad tournament requires the following:

- All teams must have approval of the school's principal to participate
- The school principal must verify that their team's participation in a tournament is considered to be a school sponsored/school sanctioned event that is covered by the school district's insurance
- The school principal must approve the team's lead coach

Second Teams: Regional and State Rule - A second team from the same school can compete at the regional level. The decision to allow more than two teams from a school site to participate in a regional event is up to the discretion of the Regional Director. Each team is considered a separate team of up to 15 students and no more than 5 alternates. National rules state that "each team must have a separate paid membership." The **Four** top scoring teams from different schools in each division (B & C) at a Regional tournament advance to the State Finals until further notice. Only one team per school advances to the State Finals tournament.

Code of Conduct Violations or Disqualifications: Regional and State Rule – Following are steps to be taken for violations or disqualifications:

- Inform the Coach and student(s) of the violation or disqualification
- Talk to the student and the Event Coordinator to determine the facts
- Verify that the violation occurred
- Arbitration Board to decide immediate consequences:
 - DQ from event
 - DQ from any event in which student was involved
 - Team prevented from further participation in Regional and/or State competition
- Arbitration Board can also recommend long-term consequences (for a time to be determined by the Regional/State Director and the Arbitration Board):
 - Individual(s) DQ from future events
 - Team put on provisional status
 - Team disqualified from future Regional and State competitions

Team structure - Each registered team submits an Official Team List of up to 15 team members (see National rules) and no more than five alternate team members prior to the start of the tournament. The list must include signatures from the coach and school principal. A maximum of five 9th grade (DIV B) & seven 12th grade (DIV C) students on a team is permitted (see National rules).

If a regular team member is unable to attend the tournament, then an alternate team member listed on the team's list can replace the student for the ENTIRE day at that tournament.

To support and expand the Science Olympiad program, the NorCal Regional Directors made the decision to welcome schools from outside the Regional areas that do not have an established program, providing them the same opportunity to participate in the program. Regional Directors have the option to ensure that an "invited" team does not displace a local team from advancing to the state finals event (open to middle, Division B, and high school, Division C, level only). The Regional Director has the option to invite an additional team to the state event if an "invited" team places in the top four spots thereby avoiding displacing local teams. Regions also can decide if invited teams participate equally with local teams in regard to medals and overall team awards, or if they are eligible for individual awards and not overall team awards.

Device Impound: State AND REGIONAL Rule - Only regular team may impound a device. The team member(s) impounding a device does NOT need to be the student participating in the individual event **unless specified in the official rule book**. Adults, including parents and coaches, are NOT allowed to impound or be present at the impound site.

Scoring Procedures: State Rule, recommended for Regional – The lowest scoring team in each division at the NorCal State Finals advances to the National Science Olympiad. The NorCal State Finals will follow the [National Science Olympiad scoring guidelines](#).

Awards at the state tournament will remain as follows: gold, silver, and bronze medals for first, second, third, fourth and fifth place.

Posting Scores: State Rule - No scores or best times will be posted.

Final Score Appeal Process: Regional and State Rule - The final team scores will be available to each team coach upon completion of the awards ceremony. Team coaches will be given thirty minutes after completion of the Awards Ceremony to appeal their team's scores. Event Supervisor judgment calls are not subject to review. Individual event tests will NOT be reviewed and will NOT be returned under any circumstance.

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Arbitration: State Rule - An Arbitration Board, made up of one or more of the following: the State Director, Regional Directors and others as approved by the State Director, will be available throughout the day to assist with issues that may arise. A link to the online event appeal forms will be sent to the head coach prior to the tournament. A team coach or assistant coach of record must complete and submit the form. No one except the coach or the assistant coach of record may file an appeal. Please keep in mind that the Science Olympiad tournament is designed to "turn kids on" to science not turn them away yet respect the needs of the Event Supervisor to provide a fair experience and a quality tournament.

Volunteer: State Rule - Each team will be assigned three hours of volunteer time to be fulfilled by an adult and the time and event(s) will be posted ahead of the tournament. The specific task(s) (e.g. helping time, ensuring the gym door is closed during flight, etc.) will be provided by the Event Supervisors on tournament day. Head coaches are responsible for making sure to that the adult volunteer(s) do not have any conflicts of interest with their role (e.g. coaching a team in the division they're volunteering with, or having relatives competing in the division they're volunteering with).

Device Authentication: Regional and State Rule - All devices to be used in the current year Science Olympiad competitions must have been newly constructed by one or more team members listed on the team list. The devices must NOT have been used in past Science Olympiad events. Note: see NorCal Official Team List for additional information. Also, see "Constructed Devices" under "Rules" on the NorCal Science Olympiad website.

Team fees for NorCal State Finals: Current year team fees are payable to the California Science League.

Note: Event Supervisors cannot make exceptions to any tournament or event rules, including the rule changes listed above.