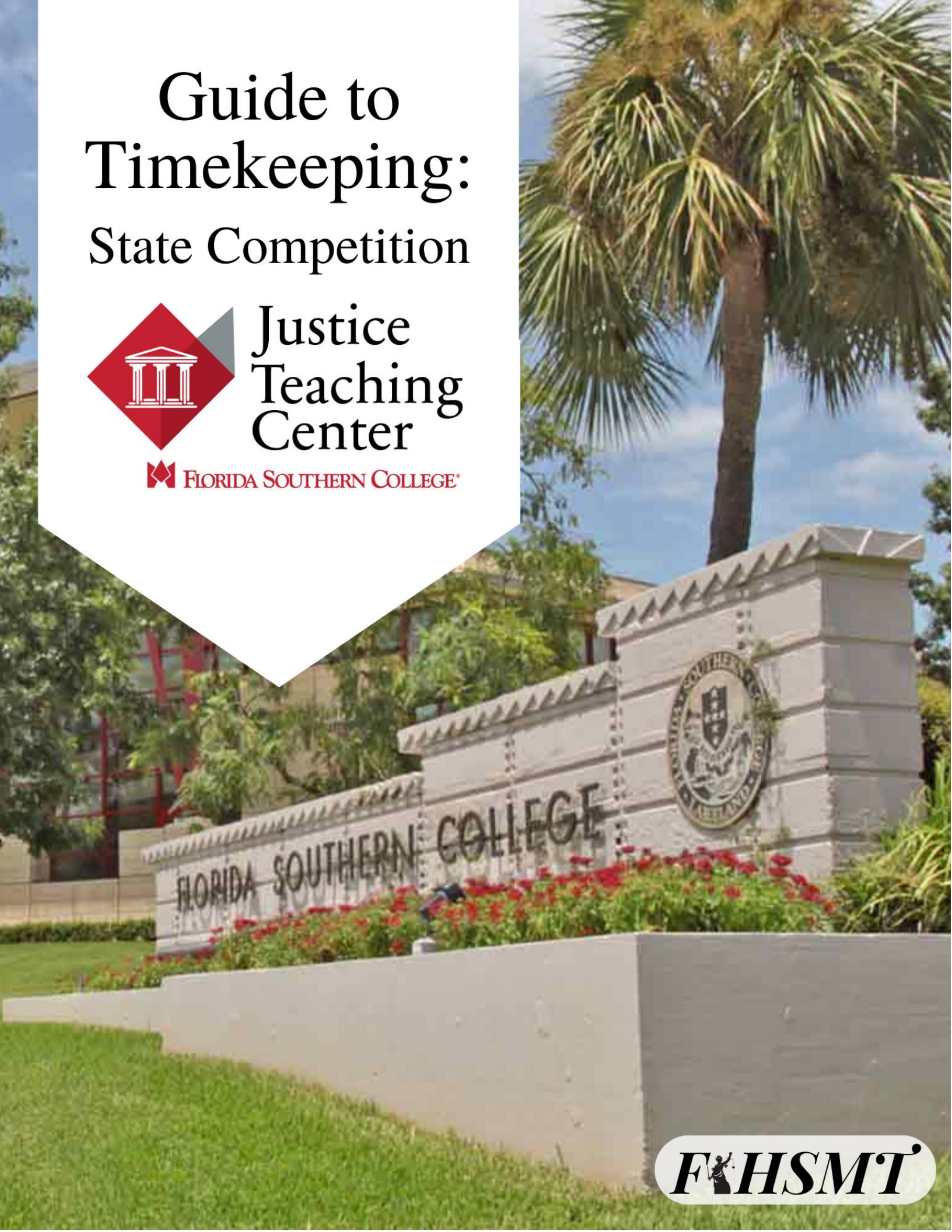
Guide to Timekeeping:

State Competition

Justice Teaching Center

FLORIDA SOUTHERN COLLEGE



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Timekeeping Rules

While all mock trial team members should review all mock trial rules and handbooks, there are several rules in the Rules of Competition handbook that apply to timekeeping and must be reviewed carefully by timekeepers, including:

- Rule 1.4 Student Timekeepers
- Rule 3.3 Team Composition
- Rule 4.1 Courtroom Setting
- Rule 4.5 Trial Sequence and Time Limits
- Rule 4.6 Timekeeping
- Rule 4.7 Time Extensions and Scoring
- Rule 4.12 Trial Communication
- Rule 4.24 The Critique

Other Rules of Competition that discuss the timekeeper:

- Rule 1.3B Emergencies in Virtual Competitions - involving loss of connection of a timekeeper
- Rule 4.20B Procedure for Introduction of Exhibits when Virtual

Timekeeping Supplies

- **Two Timekeeping Devices Per Team:** Each timekeeper is required to have one device to time their own team and one device to time the opposing team. Timekeepers may use stopwatches, phones, or other timing devices, but if using phones, the phones must be placed on silent and airplane mode.
- **Time Elapsed / Time Remaining Cards:** Teams must print a copy of the time cards provided in this packet below before each competition round.
- **Timekeepers Forms:** Teams must print a minimum of 5 copies of the Timekeepers Form included later in this packet. Timekeepers will submit this form at the end of each round
- **Pen(s)/Pencil(s):** Teams should bring a writing utensil to complete the Timekeeping Form.
- **(Optional) Clipboard:** Teams may elect to bring clipboards. Given that the timekeepers typically sit in the jury box, there is often no surface for timekeepers to easily write on/complete the timekeepers form, bringing this will make filling out the form easier.

Timekeeping Duties

Each team is responsible for training at least one team member to serve as the team's official timekeeper. The timekeeper from the Prosecution side and the timekeeper from the Defense side will work collaboratively as a neutral timekeeping unit, timing both sides and ensuring accurate and fair time for both teams. Timekeepers are responsible for being proficient with the information in the Rules of Competition and this Timekeeping Guide.

Before The Trial

1. Include the name of the timekeeper(s) on the team's Roster.
2. Gather timekeeping materials as outlined in the Timekeeping Supplies section.
3. Attend the scheduled timekeeper orientation.

During The Trial

Timekeepers work collaboratively as a neutral timekeeping entity to ensure that time is kept accurately and fairly for both sides during the trial. The timekeeper will display the time elapsed/time remaining cards, as included at the end of this document, for their specific team (not the opposing team). The time cards will be allocated as follows (shown as Time Elapsed/Time Remaining):

- Opening and Closing: 1:00 / 4:00; 2:00 / 3:00;. 2:30 / 2:30; 3:00 / 2:00; 3:30 / 1:30; 1:00 / 4:00; 4:20 / 0:40; 4:30 / 0:30; 4:40 / 0:20; 4:50 / 0:10, STOP
- Direct examinations: 3:00 / 22:00; 5:00 / 20:00; 7:00 / 18:00; 10:00 / 15:00; 13:00 / 12:00; 15:00 / 10:00; 18:00 / 7:00; 20:00 / 5:00; 21:00 / 4:00; 22:00 / 3:00; 23:00 / 2:00; 24:00 / 1:00; 24:20 / 0:40; 24:40 / 0:20; STOP
- Cross-examinations: 2:30 / 17:30; 5:00 / 15:00; 7:30 / 12:30; 10:00 / 10:00; 12:30 / 7:30; 15:00 / 5:00; 16:00 / 4:00; 17:00 / 3:00; 18:00 / 2:00; 19:00 / 1:00; 19:20 / 0:40; 19:40 / 0:20; STOP

At the end of each task during the trial presentation (i.e., at the end of each opening, at the end each direct examination, at the end of each cross examination and at the end of each

closing argument) if there is more than a 15 second discrepancy between both teams' timekeepers, the procedures outlined in the Timekeeping Discrepancies section of this guide should be adhered to. It should also be noted that time discrepancies less than 15 seconds will not be considered and that no time disputes will be entertained after the trial concludes.

Both timekeepers will keep time for both sides during all competition rounds, however, only the timekeeper of the team actively participating will display the time elapsed/time remaining card. The trial sequences and time limits are as follows:

1. Opening Statement (5 minutes per side)
2. Prosecution calls their three prosecution witnesses
    a. Prosecution attorneys will have 25 minutes total to conduct the direct and redirect examinations of all three of their team's witnesses (prosecution timekeeper will display time elapsed/time remaining cards)
    b. Defense attorneys will have 20 minutes total to conduct the cross and recross examinations of all three of the opposing team's witnesses (defense timekeeper will display time elapsed/time remaining cards)
3. Defense calls their three defense witnesses
    a. Defense attorneys will have 25 minutes total to conduct the direct and redirect examinations of all three of their team's witnesses (defense timekeeper will display time elapsed/time remaining cards)
    b. Prosecution attorneys will have 20 minutes total to conduct the cross and recross examinations of all three of the opposing team's witnesses (prosecution timekeeper will display time elapsed/time remaining cards)
4. Closing Arguments (5 minutes per side)
    a. Prosecution may use a portion of their time for an optional rebuttal. This is NOT extra time and it does not need to be reserved in advance.

After The Trial

After the trial round has finished and scores have been tallied, the critique will begin. This provides judges a chance to give commentary to teams. As per Rule 4.24 The Critique "The judging panel is allowed 10

minutes for critiquing. The timekeepers will monitor the critique following the trial. Presiding judges are to limit critique sessions to a combined total of ten (10) minutes." This allows for two possible options as will be described below. Judging panels may elect to conduct the critiques whole group with both teams present or separated individually by team.

1. The judging panel may elect to give a total of 10 minutes of critique to both teams. This meaning each team will receive 5 minutes of critique.
2. The judging panel may elect to give each team 10 minutes of critique.

Timekeeping Protocols

For the purposes of this guide, the word **pause** will denote that you will pause and not reset or zero out the timer. You should have the ability to resume the timer from where it pauses. The word **reset** will denote completely resetting your timer back to zero.

- ✓ START timing only when each attorney starts to speak (i.e., when the attorney speaks the first word of his or her opening, closing, or examination question)
- ✓ PAUSE timing during objections, responses to objections, and questioning by the judge.
- ✕ DO NOT TIME:
    - When an attorney responds to a presiding judge's inquiry as to whether the side is ready to proceed, asks for permission to reserve time for a rebuttal, asks for permission to use/move a podium
    - From the time the witness is called until he or she takes the witness stand
    - From the time an objection is raised until after the ruling by the presiding judge and the examining attorney says the first word to continue the examination
    - During the time a judge may raise questions to a team or the judging panel
    - During a technical emergency during a virtual competition with permission from the presiding judge
- ✕ DO NOT PAUSE THE TIME for the introduction of exhibits or other evidence

- Time should remain counting while exhibits and other evidence are being used/introduced

✓ At the end of each segment of the trial, timekeepers should confer, to make sure both sides timing devices for that segment are within 15 seconds of each other. If the timing devices show a discrepancy of more than 15 seconds, follow the procedures outlined in the Timekeeping Discrepancies section of this guide.

✓ Timekeepers will typically sit directly next to each other so that timekeepers can easily glance over at one another's timing devices to check for discrepancies.

✓ Tips:

- Timekeepers may label one timing device "P" for Prosecution and "D" for Defense.
- Timekeepers can also opt to always keep one of these to your left-hand side and one to the right, to ensure the two are never mixed.

Timekeeping Discrepancies

At the end of each segment of the trial (i.e., at the end of each opening statement, at the end of each direct examination or cross examination of a witness, and at the end of each closing argument), if there is a timing discrepancy of more than 15 seconds between the Plaintiff and Defense timekeepers, the following rules will apply.

➢ Any timing discrepancies between timekeepers of 15 seconds or less WILL NOT be considered a timing discrepancy.

➢ If a timing discrepancy more than 15 seconds has occurred, timekeepers are to notify the Presiding Judge that a timing discrepancy has occurred.

➢ Timekeepers may raise timing discrepancies ONLY at the end of each phase of the trial presentation as outlined above.

- For example, it would be appropriate to notify a judge of a timing discrepancy after an attorney finished their opening statement, not while the attorney is still delivering the opening statement.

- For example, it would be appropriate to notify a judge of a timing discrepancy after the directing attorney has said there are no further questions for that witness and before cross examination begins. It would not be appropriate to address this when an attorney is questioning a witness or while that witness is answering.

- The Presiding Judge will rule on any timing discrepancy before the trial continues. Timekeepers will synchronize timing devices to match the Presiding Judge's ruling. For example, if Plaintiff/Prosecution timing device indicates 2 minutes left for Plaintiff/Prosecution's case and the Defense timing device indicates time is expired, the Presiding Judge might decide to split the difference in the timing variation and give Plaintiff/Prosecution 1 minute to conclude. Defense would adjust timing to allow for the 1-minute timing decision.
- No time disputes will be entertained after the trial concludes.
- The decision of the Presiding Judge regarding the resolution of timing disputes is final

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Timekeepers Form

Round (Circle One): 1 2 3 4 F

Method (Circle One): Time Elapsed Time Remaining

Prosecution Team Code: _____ Defense Team Code: _____

Timekeepers from both teams should complete this Timekeepers Form. Before the trial starts timekeepers should fill out the information above. During the trial and at the end of each segment, timekeepers should write down the time shown on their timing device (whether it is counting down or up). At the end of each round timekeepers should sign this form and indicate their team code.

Opening Statements (5 Minutes per Side)

Prosecution: _____

Defense: _____

Direct / Redirect Examinations of Prosecution Witnesses (25 Minutes Total)

First Witness:	Direct: _____	Redirect: _____
Second Witness:	Direct: _____	Redirect: _____
Third Witness:	Direct: _____	Redirect: _____

Cross / Recross Examinations of Prosecution Witnesses (20 Minutes Total)

First Witness:	Cross: _____	Recross: _____
Second Witness:	Cross: _____	Recross: _____
Third Witness:	Cross: _____	Recross: _____

Direct / Redirect Examinations of Defense Witnesses (25 Minutes Total)

First Witness:	Direct: _____	Redirect: _____
Second Witness:	Direct: _____	Redirect: _____
Third Witness:	Direct: _____	Redirect: _____

Cross / Recross Examinations of Defense Witnesses (20 Minutes Total)

First Witness	Cross: _____	Recross: _____
Second Witness	Cross: _____	Recross: _____
Third Witness	Cross: _____	Recross: _____

Closing Arguments (5 Minutes per Side)

Prosecution	Initial: _____	Rebuttal: _____
Defense	_____	

Timekeeper's Signature **Team Code**

Opening Statements / Closing Arguments Timecards

Time Used

1:00

Time Remaining

4:00

Time Used

2:00

Time Remaining

3:00

Time Used

2:30

Time Remaining

2:30

Time Used

3:00

Time Remaining

2:00

Time Used

3:30

Time Remaining

1:30

Time Used

4:00

Time Remaining

1:00

Time Used

4:20

Time Remaining

:40

Time Used

4:30

Time Remaining

:30

Time Used

4:40

Time Remaining

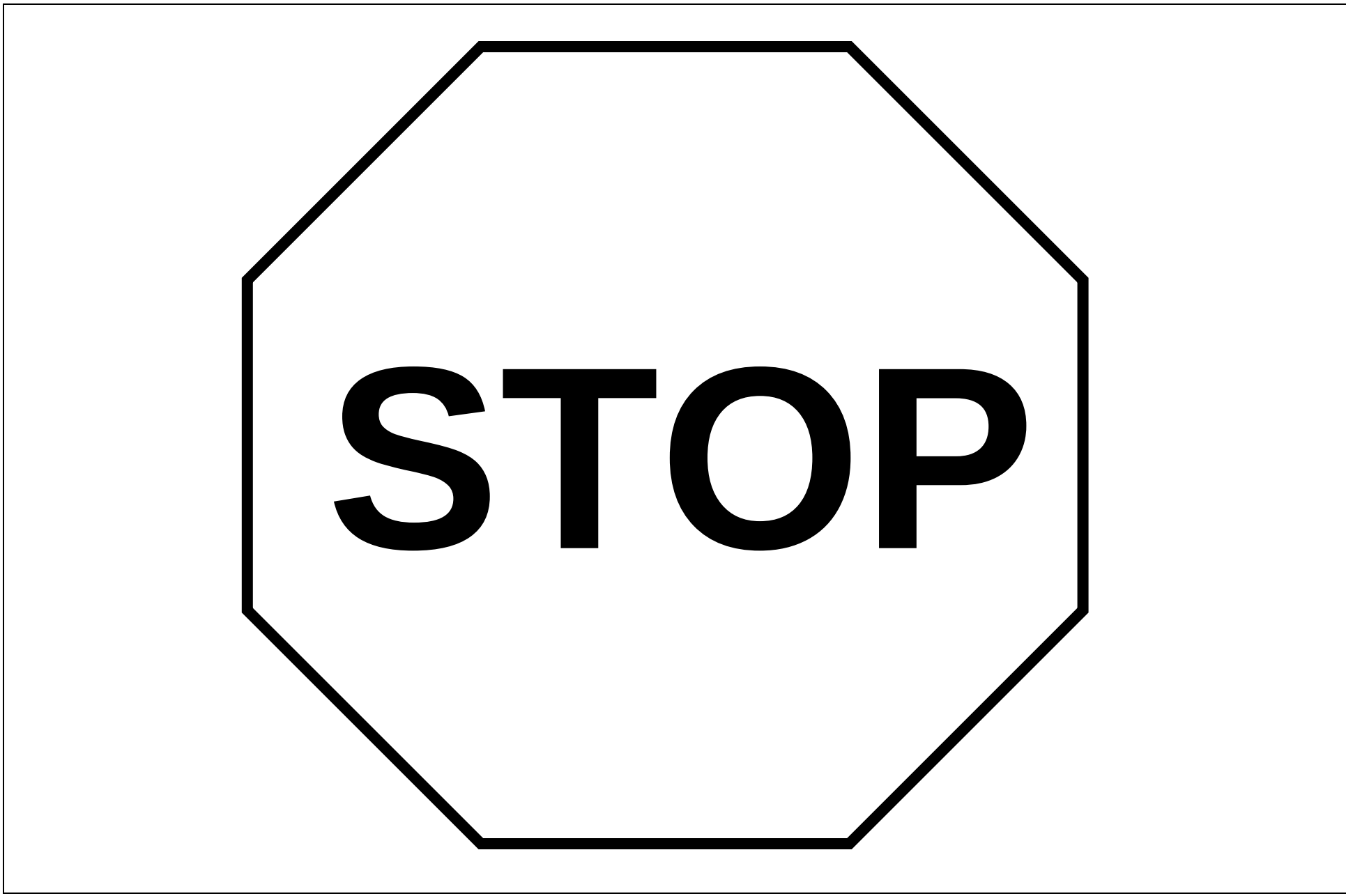
:20

Time Used

4:50

Time Remaining

:10


STOP

Direct Examination Timecards

Time Used

3:00

Time Remaining

22:00

Time Used

5:00

_____

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Time Remaining

20:00

Time Used

7:00

Time Remaining

18:00

Time Used

10:00

Time Remaining

15:00

Time Used

13:00

Time Remaining

12:00

Time Used

15:00

Time Remaining

10:00

Time Used

18:00

Time Remaining

7:00

Time Used

20:00

Time Remaining

5:00

Time Used

21:00

Time Remaining

4:00

Time Used

22:00

Time Remaining

3:00

Time Used

23:00

Time Remaining

2:00

Time Used

24:00

Time Remaining

1:00

Time Used

24:20

Time Remaining

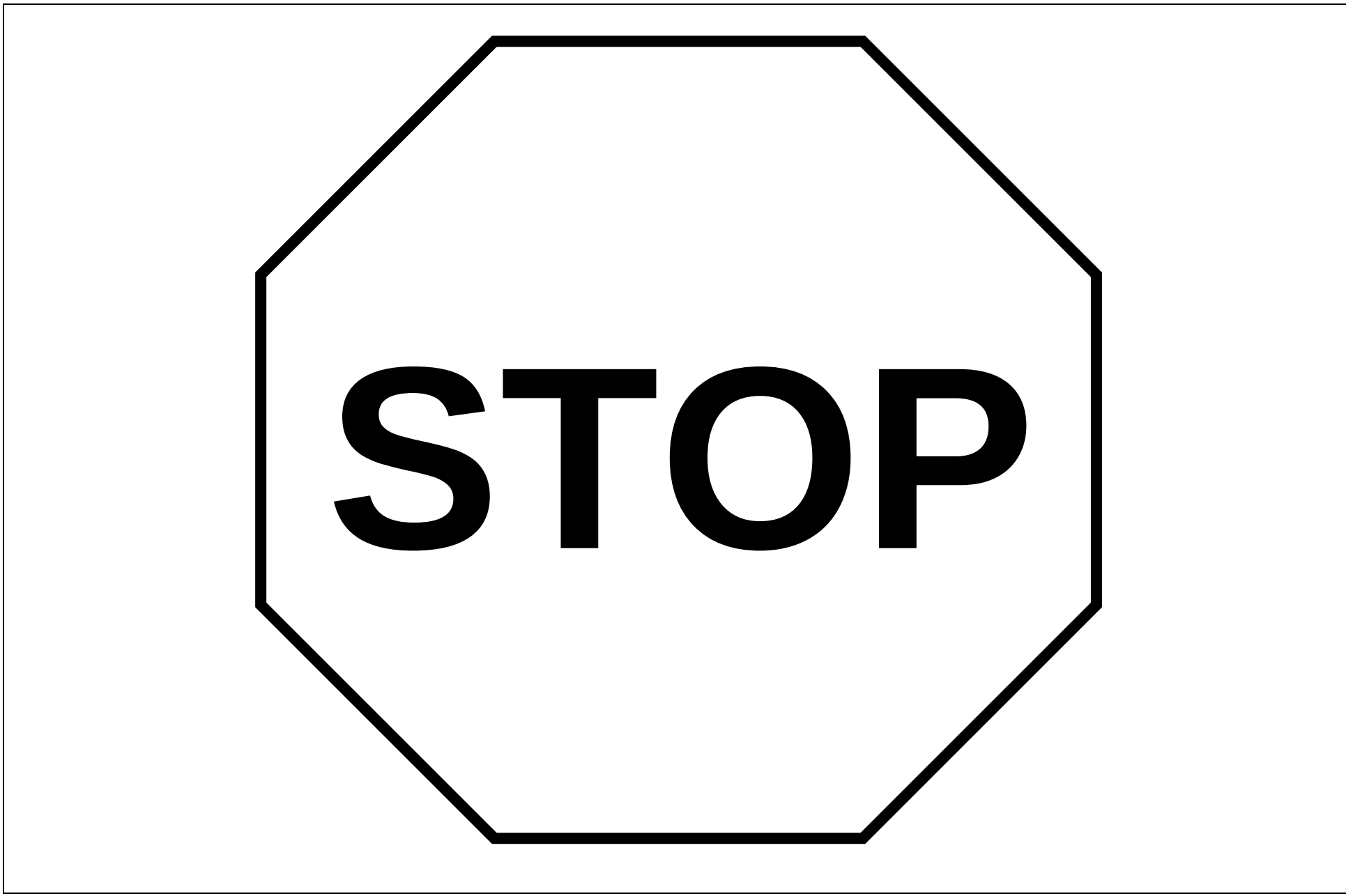
:40

Time Used

24:40

Time Remaining

:20


STOP

Cross Examination Timecards

Time Used

2:30

Time Remaining

17:30

Time Used

5:00

Time Remaining

15:00

Time Used

7:30

Time Remaining

12:30

Time Used

10:00

Time Remaining

10:00

Time Used

12:30

Time Remaining

7:30

Time Used

15:00

Time Remaining

5:00

Time Used

16:00

Time Remaining

4:00

Time Used

17:00

Time Remaining

3:00

Time Used

18:00

Time Remaining

2:00

Time Used

19:00

Time Remaining

1:00

Time Used

19:20

Time Remaining

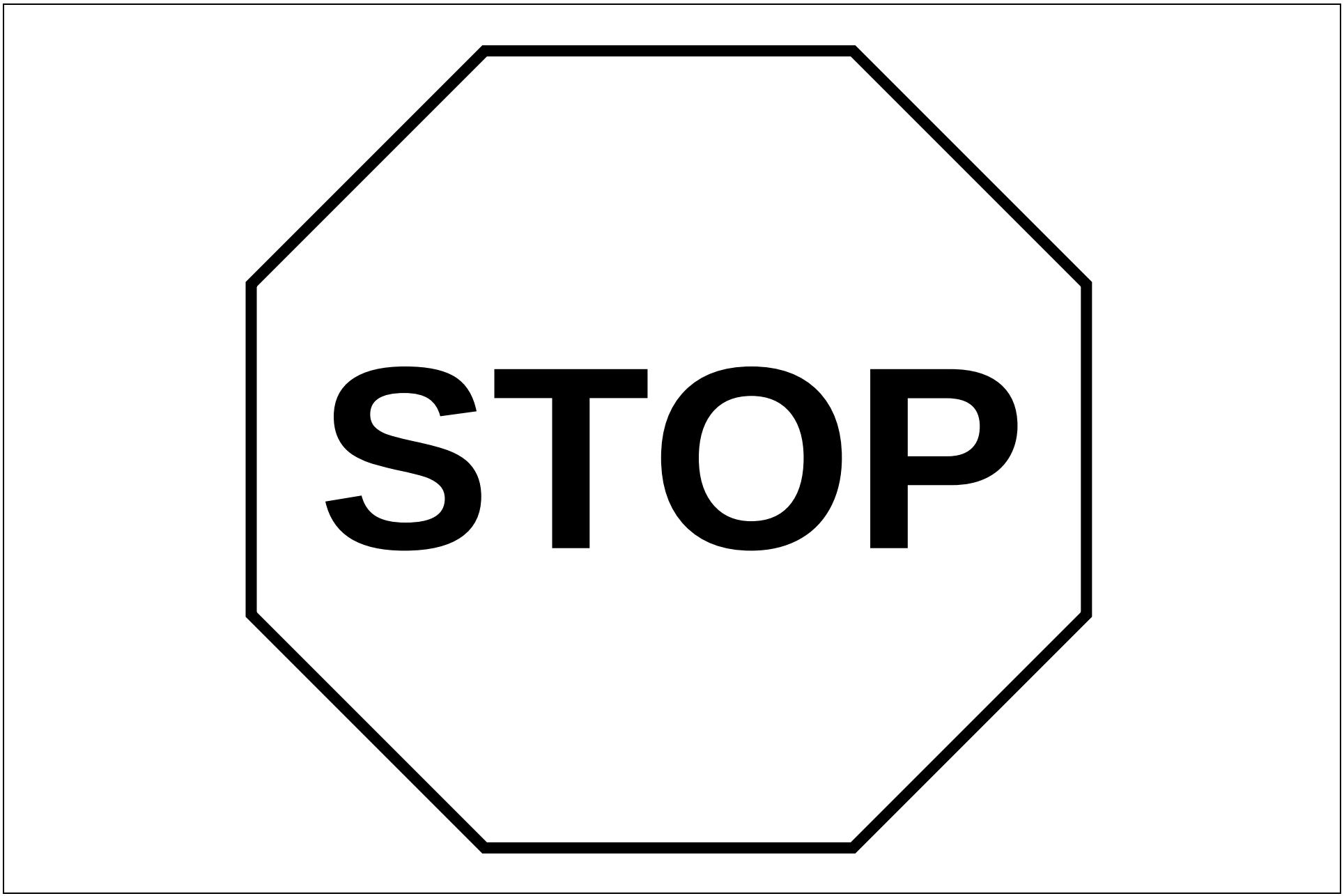
:40

Time Used

19:40

Time Remaining

:20


STOP

Cross Examination Timecards
Florida High School Mock Trial 2022-2023