

Judge Conflicts

Judge conflicts are defined as situations where debaters are given an unfair advantage by their judge. In other words, these are judges perceived as loving the debaters too much. The opposite situation, where judges are perceived as being prejudiced against a team, are handled via strikes and preferences.

A judge conflict exists with a student:

- whose high school the judge attended in recent years;
- to whom the judge is related;
- who attends a school with whom the judge has had a coaching or judging relationship, paid or unpaid, during the past two school years (does not apply if the only relationship to a school was as a hired judge at that school's tournament);
- who attends a school that has offered to hire the judge to coach or judge for the team in the future;
- for whom the judge has ever had primary instructional responsibility as, e.g., a school coach or a personal coach;
- with whom the judge has or has had in the past personal friendships or romantic relationships, or with whom the judge socializes in non-debate settings;
- who personally has provided a judge's transportation or housing at this tournament, or who attends a school that has provided the judge's transportation or housing at this tournament;
- who has been hired by, or who has an outstanding explicit or implicit offer from, a debate business (e.g., workshop or brief company) to which the judge has financial ties;
- if the judge's current, or in the past two years, coach of record is currently coaching the student;
- if the judge coaches or debates for a college/university, any student that is debating for the judge's program next year or whom the judge's school is still actively recruiting;
- with whose coach(es) the judge has or had in the past had romantic relationships;
- to whom the judge bears any other relationship that might reasonably be thought to compromise the judge's impartiality as a judge. To determine whether a relationship meets this test, the judge might ask, "If I were a competing student and knew nothing about my judge except that he or she bore the relationship in question to my competitor or my competitor's coach, would I have any doubts about his or her impartiality?" If the answer is "yes," that is a conflict.

Judges and competitors are all listed on tabroom.com. Please mark any conflicts before the tournament. (Do them on tabroom, and they'll be there for all tournaments in the future.) Conflicts reported after a round is assigned will, at best, mean that a 1-1 pairing will become a 4-5 pairing.

Any judge who deliberately fails to report a conflict will face penalties up to and including immediate removal from the tournament. Tournament hires will forfeit their fees; schools bringing any such judge will be fined the cost of a replacement.

Teams deliberately failing to report conflicts will face possible disqualification.