

Florida Forensic League, Inc. Civility Code

This document provides guidelines to coaches, judges, contestants, observers, and others regarding decorum at league tournaments and meetings. Our goal is to foster an environment which encourages a full and fair discussion of material issues; any activity or behavior in contravention of this goal is discouraged and may be sanctioned in accordance with Article IX of the bylaws of the league.

Meeting Decorum

1. Speakers are permitted to deliver their comments without interruption with the caveat that members of the Board of Directors may object to the relevance of the information provided by the speaker by asking the meeting chairperson (normally the president) only to rule on the relevancy of the information provided.
2. Speakers should focus on relevant issues, not on politics, personalities, or matters that are not relevant to the issue at hand.
3. Speakers must provide copies of any documents they wish to be considered as evidence to the Secretary. The Secretary will not return the copies.
4. Discussions by audience members while others are speaking are not permitted during the Board meeting. These discussions are to be held elsewhere so as not to be disruptive to the conduct of business at the meeting.
5. Any member coach may speak on any issue, provided that the remarks of the speaker remain relevant to the issues before the Board of Directors and/or the membership.
6. Only the person recognized by the chairperson has the floor. A person who wishes to speak on a matter should raise his/her hand to be recognized by the chairperson. All speakers should identify themselves for the record.
7. Every speech ought to be delivered with respect to those who are present.
8. The use of language that is abusive, threatening, obscene, or slanderous, including using profanities, insults, or other disparaging remarks or gestures will not be tolerated.

Tournament Decorum

1. Respect shall be shown to all persons and property, especially host school facilities.
2. The *Head Coach, Assistant Coach*, and/or the person designated by the principal to function as supervising adult of a school at a tournament shall be responsible for the conduct of his/her students, judges, and observers affiliated with the school. This person must be on campus at all times during the tournament and available to answer questions from the tournament staff. Only these persons may speak on behalf of a school, either for raising questions/concerns, filing protests, or responding to protests.
3. No person at a league tournament shall audiotape or videotape any round or performance.
4. No coach or judge shall ask a student to reveal the name of his/her school. Similarly, students should not reveal the name of their school to anyone except a tournament official.
5. All questions and concerns should be brought to the Tournament Ombudsperson, who will be stationed in an area accessible to coaches and judges. The tabulation room is not the proper venue for initial concerns. The Ombudsperson, who shall have no other responsibilities during the tournament, will bring relevant issues to the attention of the tournament staff and/or league officers.
6. Formal protests must be submitted in writing on an official form provided by the Ombudsperson and in a timely manner as defined by the governing documents of the league. Unwritten and untimely protests will not be entertained. Coaches shall refrain from participation in gossip and hearsay regarding protests.
7. Requests that a judge divulge his/her decision/rankings in a round, the questioning of a judge's decision, and/or the harassment of a judge is unacceptable behavior. Contestants and coaches with concerns about a judge should bring that information to the attention of the Ombudsperson.
8. The use of language that is abusive, threatening, obscene, or slanderous, including using profanities, insults, or other disparaging remarks or gestures will not be tolerated.
9. No person with access to information about tournament results shall divulge those results to others.
10. No person shall provide coaching assistance to contestants from the time that a round begins to the time that a round ends, including the period of time after a contestant has drawn his/her question in extemporaneous speaking events and during prep time in all debate events.