

ORATORICAL
INSTRUCTIONS TO CHAIR

High School Oratorical Contests
The American Legion Department of Missouri, Inc.

The materials sent with these instructions should assist you in conducting your contest. The materials are shown on the enclosed list, and should be checked on receipt to be sure everything is in order.

1. Chair of Contest - You are Chair of your Contest. It is your responsibility to see that students are properly certified; to arrange place, date, and time of contest; to arrange the program for the contest; and to provide the judges, timekeepers, tabulators, and escorts (last needed only in District and Zone Contests).

2. Contest Dates - The Missouri Rules for 2018-19 provide that Contests are conducted within the following dates:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| a. High School | Before November 30, 2018 |
| b. County | Between December 8 and 17, 2018 |
| c. District | Before January 21, 2019 |
| d. Zone | Before February 4, 2019 |
| e. State Finals | On February 16, 2019 |

3. Certifications - Each winner must be certified, by not later than the date shown above, to the Department Oratorical Chair and to the Chair of the next higher contest before the winner of such contest may participate in the next level. Certification Blanks have been emailed to the high schools as well as a letter and Rules Brochure.

a. County Chair - Certification Blanks are available on the Dept website: www.missourilegion.org, under the FORMS tab. Check with each high school in your county or group to be sure each has Certification Blanks. If not, furnish a set of two to the school. Be sure your name and address is typed on that copy. Be sure you also send a letter to each high school giving contest instructions and the place, date, and time of your County Contest. This must be held by December 17. You also need a Certification Blanks for reporting your Contest to the Department Oratorical Chair and to your District Oratorical Chair. Please type the information and be sure a phone number and email address is shown for the contest winner.

b. District Chair - Each County Chair will need to get Certification Blanks from the Dept website www.missourilegion.org for reporting their contest. Be sure to contact each of your County Chair in late November and no later than January 3rd and give details about the date, time, and place of your District Contest. You also will need Certification Blanks to report your winner to the Department Oratorical Chair and to the Zone Contest Chair. Please type the information. Be sure the phone number and email address of your winner is included.

c. Zone Chair - Your District Chair have access to Certification Blanks for reporting to the Department Oratorical Chair and to you, via the Department website www.missourilegion.org. Be sure to contact your District Chair no later than January 28th, to give details about the time, place, and date of your Zone Contest. You must also complete the Certification Blanks reporting your Zone winner to the Department Chair. This form is available online at www.missourilegion.org, under the FORMS tab. Please type the information and include the winner's phone number, email address and sponsoring American Legion Post.

4. Selection of City for Contest - This is left to the discretion of the respective Oratorical Chair and local American Legion officials. If contest city selected is some distance from the Chair's home town, he should designate someone in the local Post in the contest city to assist in making the local arrangements, publicity, etc. Zone contests normally rotate among the districts.

5. Contest Site - Contests, if possible, should be held in high school auditoriums before a student audience.

6. Judges - The number of judges needed for each respective type of contest are as follows: (Be sure to have two alternate judges available).

County or Group	3 to 5 judges
District	3 to 5 judges
Zone	5 judges
State	5 judges

Obtain the most outstanding qualified judges (such as:)

- a. High school or college teachers with citizenship or public speaking experience
- b. Judges or top attorneys
- c. Clergymen
- d. Trained speakers from speech training clubs such as Toastmasters, Rectors, etc.
- e. Judges should understand high school youth and be familiar with speech events and contests. (See Instructions to Judges)
- f. Judges should not have judged a previous contest including the contestant, or be employed by a school represented by a contestant.

7. Timekeepers - There should be two timekeepers for each contest. The timekeepers may be Legionnaires familiar with timing by stopwatch or they may be selected from the faculty. A stopwatch should be used, as ordinary watches are not suitable for this purpose.

(visit the website www.missourilegion.org under the [Forms](#) tab, for official Instructions to Timekeepers)

8. Tabulators - 3 to 5 tabulators should be appointed depending on importance of contest, Legionnaires experienced in tabulating or faculty members may be appointed.
(See Instructions to Tabulators at www.missourilegion.org)

9. Escorts - Needed only in District, Zone and State Contests, where the assigned topic is given. It is advisable to appoint at least 5, one of whom serves as Head Escort. Legionnaires or faculty members are to be preferred as escorts. (See Instructions to Escorts at www.missourilegion.org)

10. Ushers and Doorkeepers - Ushers and Doorkeepers should be appointed to add dignity and interest in the program. Legion, Auxiliary members or students may be selected. Duties consist of passing out programs, seating audience, and avoiding disturbances while contestants are speaking.

11. Program - Extensive programs are unnecessary. However, a limited program can be arranged locally to give added emphasis to the contest, and help swell the attendance. Suggested program:

- a. Advance of Colors by Commander of Local Post
- b. Invocation - Local Clergy or Chaplain
- c. Introduction of Chairman of Contest
- d. Contest
- e. Introduction of Contestants (after judging is complete)
- f. Introduction of Judges
- g. Awards to winners
- h. Retirement of Colors

12. Publicity - The contest should be given as much publicity in advance as possible so as to insure an audience. School announcements to student body, newspapers, radio stations, and other local media should be utilized. The names of judges may not be divulged. The names of contestants may be released to press for publicity purposes in advance of the contest. The addresses of the contestants, photographs, press interviews for publicity in advance of the contest are not permitted. Following contest, any publicity that can be obtained is desirable - such as making arrangements for the first place winner to broadcast his prepared oration, pictures, news stories, etc.

13. Requests to see Judges Scores - Instructors of contestants frequently request permission to see the judges scoring following the contest. Do not give out this information at the contest, but direct inquiries to the Commission Chair, Judge Duane Benton.