

Original language of Section IV, subsection C, rule 5:

Judges. Each school will be required to furnish one judge for every five entries. Hired judges are available at a cost of \$100 per judge hired.

Proposed new language of Section IV, subsection C, rule 5

Judges: Each school will be required to furnish one judge for every five entries. Hired judges are available at a cost of \$35 per entry not covered by the school's judges.

Rationale:

The current judging fee structure makes for a sharp increase in costs if a team adds an extra entry to the state tournament that pushes them over a judge requirement threshold (such as adding a 6th entry, 11th entry, 16th entry, or 21st entry). This sharp jump in costs – paying \$100 in addition to that student's entry fee or having to secure an additional judge – may disincentivize schools from adding one extra entry to the state tournament in such a case.

Restructuring the missing judge fee will make the decision to add an extra student much more palatable for coaches. They are still welcome to add an additional judge to their roster if they have someone available, but they can also choose to pay the fractional missing judge fee.

Moreover, the current missing judge fee of \$100 is right around what many schools are paying their judges. Right now, if a school's judge has to cancel in the days immediately leading up to the state tournament, there is little incentive to find a replacement to avoid paying the missing judge fee. The result is increased pressure on the judging pool. An increase in the amount that schools need to pay for a judge that is covering a full load of five entries can provide the needed motivation for schools to find replacement judges in such a situation.