



## 2021-2022 State Finals COVID Protocols

March 14, 2022

The 2022 NJ Odyssey of the Mind State Finals is rapidly approaching, and we have been working diligently with Princeton High School's (PHS) administration and health staff to establish the following plan for State Finals on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Our in-person Regional Tournaments were great successes, and we'd like to thank all our coaches, teams, officials, school personnel, and supporters who made them happen!

As with those Regionals, the goal is to limit the number of people in the building to allow for easier social distancing and adherence to state and local COVID protocols. Major changes from the Regionals have been marked with an ▲ icon.

- (1) We are not able to accommodate spectators and are limiting teams to one (1) Coach and two (2) Assistant Coaches.** Only team members and up to three (3) adult coaches per team will be allowed into the building. PHS has established maximum capacity limits for the building and individual rooms which will not allow us to fairly accommodate spectators.
- (2) All Coaches and Assistant Coaches must be registered with their associated team in the Odyssey HQ system.** If the Coach hasn't included an assistant coach, and/or need to change them around from the Regionals, please visit <https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/member-resources/> and log into the "Team Login" using the username/password in the team registration confirmation email. Then click "Competition Record".
- (3) All Judges, Volunteers, and Tournament Staff must self-attest to their COVID status at Officials Check-in the morning of the tournament.** We ask that anyone experiencing COVID symptoms or feeling ill please stay home. We will not penalize any teams if someone must be absent for health reasons and is able to let their Officials Coordinator know via email.
- (4) All Coaches must attest to the COVID status of the team at Team Check-in the morning of the tournament. This includes the Coach, all Assistant Coaches, and all team members.** We ask that anyone – child or adult – experiencing COVID symptoms or feeling ill please stay home. No penalties will be assessed if any team member must stay home.
- (5) Everyone is required to wear a mask at all times within the building.** We may be able to relax this (for during performances) in the days leading up to State Finals. However, as of now, PHS is asking that all teams, coaches, assistant coaches, judges, volunteers, and staff be masked while inside the building. We will again be assessing *Unsportsmanlike Conduct* penalties for repeated failure to properly wear a mask over your mouth and nose. Teams or Coaches will receive a penalty to their team. Judges or Volunteers will have a penalty assessed to the team they represent.



**(6) Teams will have access to the building for the entire day.** Thanks to some hard work by the PHS administration and staff, we are being allowed to have teams stay on site for the entire day, and we will be assigning Holding Rooms for teams to store props in. PHS has asked that teams stay in their assigned Holding Rooms when not actively traveling to a site, spontaneous, loading or unloading, etc. We please ask for everyone's cooperation in keeping the hallways clear and for returning Holding Rooms to their original state before the Awards Ceremony.



**(7) Performances will be open for other teams to spectate.** We will be allowing teams to see other teams present their solutions. Each problem site will have a maximum number of audience members allowed, based on room capacity. Audience members will also be asked to social distance within the room.



**(8) An *in-person* Awards Ceremony will be held at the end of the day!** Teams and coaches are invited to join us in the Gymnasium for our Awards Ceremony, following the end of the competition day!

We are very grateful to Princeton High School for hosting the 2022 NJ OotM State Finals, and for all of their assistance and cooperation in setting up COVID protocols that are closer to our pre-pandemic "normal" tournaments. Sarah Pankiewicz, our State Finals Tournament Director, will be in touch with Coaches over the next couple weeks with more specific information including the competition schedule. Please keep an eye out!

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the NJ Odyssey of the Mind program. If you have any further questions, please reach out to the State Finals TD, your Officials Coordinator or to [questions@njootm.org](mailto:questions@njootm.org).

**See you in a few weeks and – good luck!**

Nick Pankiewicz, Association Director  
Sarah Pankiewicz, State Tournaments Director  
Joy Stephenson, Skylands Regional Director  
Beth Nelting, Coastal Plains Regional Director  
Ariana Kerchner, Gateway Regional Director  
Trish Jamison, Coastal Plains & Skylands Officials Coordinator  
Michele Rattigan, Gateway Officials Coordinator  
and the entire NJ Odyssey of the Mind Board of Directors