

**DISTRICT 120 – ADDENDUM FOR CONDUCTING ONLINE
Humorous, Evaluation, TT & International Speech Contest
2021 – 2022**

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Speech contest addendum is to provide specific guidelines to conduct online speech contests in District 120 for Humorous Speech Contest, Evaluation Contest, Table Topics Speech Contest and International Speech Contest covering Club/ Area/ Division & District level contests for the year 2021-22.

2. Scope

The scope of this document is to provide additional guidelines to conduct effective online speech contests of District 120, and is an addendum to the Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rulebook (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). This document will not supersede any of the procedures/rules explicitly stated in the Toastmasters International's Speech Contest Rulebook, at any point in time. The Contest Management Team at all levels, have to follow the guidelines provided in the Toastmasters International's Speech Contest Rulebook 2021-22.

3. Definition

TI – Toastmasters International

D120 – District 120

Contest Leadership Team – Contest Chair & Chief Judge

HSC – Humorous Speech Contest

ISC -International Speech Contest

TT – Table Topics Speech Contest

4. General guidelines for all Online speech contests

- a. All contests would be conducted **“Live”**. All the online contests are recommended to be conducted using a reliable online platform for video & audio conferencing. At the District level speech contest, Zoom application would be used.
- b. All contestants and the contest officials should exhibit absolute integrity throughout the contest and declare upfront to the Chief Judge/Contest Chair if there is any chance of conflict of interest.
- c. Audio and video testing could be conducted by requesting the speaker to speak in low and high volume from his/her self-designated speaking position to check the voice clarity, audibility and visibility.
- d. The following requirements should be met both by the test speaker and the contestants (also refer Page 16 of the Toastmasters International-1171 Speech Contest Rule Book):
 - i. The audio must be clear and without echo, static, or other excessive noise.
 - ii. Only single-camera setup is permitted; use of multiple camera angles is not allowed.
 - iii. The camera must have an unobstructed, in-focus view of the contestant.
 - iv. The camera must be mounted or secured to avoid unwanted movement. Zooming is not permitted.
 - v. The speaking area must be fully lit. The speaker's facial expressions must be visible throughout the speech; the image should not be too bright or too dark; the speaker should remain in frame through the entire speech.
 - vi. It is recommended that the Speaking area be typically spanning 3 – 4 feet to the left and to the right of the camera position (wherever feasible) and that, at all times, during the delivery of the speech, the speaker or the contestant should be visible on camera.
- e. At the Club/Area level a minimum of at least 2 Co-Hosts/Admin Managers should be appointed by the Contest Team to ensure the contest is conducted without interruptions. At the Division Contest a minimum of at least 3 to 5 Co-Hosts/Admin Managers should be appointed by the Contest Team. At the District Contest, a minimum of at least 7 Co-Hosts/Admin Managers should be appointed by the Contest Team. The Contest Chair and Chief Judge, by default, would be given the rights of Co-Host/Admin Manager. The number of Co-Hosts/Admin Managers prescribed is in addition to both of them.
- f. In case of “online” contests, the Chief Judge, Contest Chair and other key contest officials like Contest Master, Host/Admin Manager etc. could endeavour to connect from more than one device to avoid disruption of the contest due to eventuality of them getting disconnected which might have direct impact on the contest.
- g. The waiting room option in the conferencing application should be activated throughout the time of the contest. At Least 1 Co-Host/Admin Manager should constantly monitor the status of the waiting room, throughout the contest. All the audience members/role players/contestants should first enter the waiting room when they login

- to the application and one of the Admin/ Co-Hosts shall permit them to enter the main meeting room where the contest is being conducted. Every time someone tries to login, the above entry process has to be strictly followed.
- h. Multiple Breakout rooms facility should be made available in the conferencing application for various purposes like Judges' briefing, CJ & Ballot Counters meeting, and Contestant waiting room for Evaluation Contest etc.
 - i. Backup or additional role players should be made available for crucial roles like Timer, Host/ Admin Manager, SAA, Contest Master, Judges, Ballot Counters to ensure effective, uninterrupted and successful completion of the contests.
 - j. In the case of online contests, arrangement should be made by Contest Chair to ensure that there are at least 2 timers to support the entire duration of the contest and 2 SAAs (with their video turned on inside the contestants' breakout/holding room).
 - k. In the case of online contests, the SAAs (more than one SAA) should ensure that the contestant should not go out of range of the camera or step outside of the room or interact with anyone else in their premises during the time they are inside the breakout/holding room. SAA should ensure that the contestants are not referring any material (printed/written/digital) during the time they are inside the contestants' holding room.

In an on-premise contest, the SAA inside the contestant's holding room should ensure that the contestants should not exit the room, unless it is their turn to speak and they have been duly notified by the SAA. Arrangement could be made for water to be made available inside the room itself.

- l. In online contests, the order of contestants (draw for speaking positions) should be determined by the Contest Chair in front of the contestants in a transparent manner following the TI Rule book. A random number generating option could be used to determine the speaking position.
- m. The Contest chair should ensure that the video release form (Item 470) is sent to each and every contestant well before the commencement of the contest. Permission of contestant is required before the recording of their contest.
- n. If the platform allows virtual backgrounds, the Signalling Timer could use green, yellow, and red backgrounds to signal time. If the Timer is using virtual background, he/she should cover his/her camera lens. This would ensure that only the Timer's background is displayed. It is recommended that the contestants pin both the Timers. Timer 2 should be watching the Timer 1 (and pin Timer 2) and as soon as Timer 1 gets disconnected, he/she should show the timer cards.

Note: If the platform doesn't have this feature of virtual background, then the Timer cards could be shared at all times in screen sharing mode. The judges could be asked to pin the contestants in this scenario, to ensure that they can witness the contestant's speech in an uninterrupted manner. Alternatively, on Zoom platform (and on other platforms wherever feasible), the contestant could be spotlighted.

- o. Timer cards for all the Speech contests should be displayed in the following order:
 - The "**Toastmasters White/Blue colour Background**" should be displayed from the start till the Minimum time limit
 - At the minimum time limit, the "**Green**" colour card should be displayed. At the intermediate time limit, the "**Yellow**" colour card should be displayed. At the maximum time limit, the "**Red**" colour card should be displayed and it would continue to be displayed till the contestant completes her/his speech
 - The same process should be repeated for all the contestants, till the end of contest
 - The Timing backgrounds are available in the following link:
<https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/timer-zoom-backgrounds>
 - Instructions should be given to Timer(s) to show only red card (and not any other colour card) after 1 min of silence between each contestant or 2 mins of silence after the final contestant completes his/her speech and after 5 mins of silence has been observed after the Test speaker's speech in the Evaluation Contest.
- p. The audio, video & chat options should be disabled for all the members of the audience.
- q. Please ensure that chat feature has been disabled. If the contest management team decides to enable the chat feature, kindly update the platform's settings to restrict the list of members with whom chatting could be done to only Chief Judge, Contest Chair, Contest Masters, Host/Admin Manager, SAAs, Timers & Tally Counters.
- r. The speaking order of the contestants, shall not be changed, once the contest starts. The draw of speaking positions (order or lot picking) could be done, as close to the contest start date as possible. It is recommended that the speaking order be determined on the same date of the contest for Area contest and above.

- s. Once the contest starts, if a contestant has informed in writing that he or she cannot contest, his/her name would be still announced with a notification to the Role players that the contestant will not be able to participate and then the next contestant would be called by the Contest Master/Chair. However, if before the contest starts, a contestant who has been allotted a speaking position (using order or lot picking), withdraws by writing to the CJ and/or to the Contest chair, the Contest Management Team may substitute him or her with the next highest placed contestant from the Winner Notification list.
- t. If a contestant withdraws before the speaking position has been determined, and he or she is able to make it on the day of picking the speaking order, then the Contestant can participate by informing the Contest Chair about his or her desire to contest.
- u. If a contestant withdraws after the speaking position has been determined, he or she would be substituted with the next highest placed contestant from the Winner notification list, as the alternate contestant. If the contestant is able to make it for the contest, and expresses his or her desire to compete, then the contest management team would need to admit the contestant and inform the alternate contestant about the change.
- v. The Contest Leadership team reserves the rights to reconvene the entire contest, as found appropriate.
- w. Any member who has nominated for the position of Division Director/ CGD/ PQD/ District Director for the next Toastmaster year (2022-23) are advised not to play any roles in the contests. Though they can play the voting judge role, they should not take up roles like Contest Chair/Chief Judge/Contest Master/Test Speaker or be a contestant at any level of contest.
- x. If the platform has the feature to lock the meeting, this feature should not be used. This would hamper the contest functioning if any contestant or key role player gets disconnected and is unable to reconnect since the meeting is locked.
- y. If the contest team decides to use a platform with an upgraded version to utilize the advance features, contest team should notify all contestants, all the contest role players including the Host/Admin Manager, Contest Chair, Contest Masters, SAAs, Chief Judge, Judges, Timers and Tally Counters to install the latest version of the chosen platform.
- z. Even though multiple members like Host/Admin Manager, Chief Judge and most of the Contest officials may have co-host access, permitting a member (once he/she connects) from waiting/lobby to main room should be done only by Host/Admin Manager, Contest Chair and Chief Judge.
- aa. The Chief Judge should ensure neutrality while arranging the voting judges. It is recommended that the Chief Judge appoint judges from outside of the club for a Club Contest, judges from outside of the area for an Area Contest, and judges from outside of the Division for a Division Contest. If the latter is not feasible, then equal representation could be given to the constituting segments (Area/Division).
For District Contest, it is recommended to have equal representation of judges from all the Divisions and at least a few judges from outside of the District (wherever feasible).
All rules pertaining to TMI rule book need to be adhered to while appointing the judges.
- bb. The Chief Judge could check if the Contest Chair has briefed the Contestants and role players (except for timers, ballot counters and judges who would be briefed by the Chief Judge).
- cc. If the platform allows one to set any profile picture, the Judges could be instructed by the Contest Management team, to remove their such profile pictures and turn off their videos at all points of time to remain anonymous and discrete. Alternatively, if the platform permits, then the tech master could use “remove profile pictures” option.
- dd. In the case of the Evaluation Contest, the Test speaker also should be requested to remove his/her profile picture and turn off the video unless called upon by the Contest Master to speak.
- ee. For club contests, Contest Chair could check with the respective club’s executive committee team for arranging trophies and mementos. For Area or Division contests, Contest Chair could check with the respective Area Director or Division Director regarding the budget that could be allocated for purchasing trophies and mementos. As per the District guidelines, it is recommended that cash or cash-based vouchers should be avoided.

5. Guidelines for all Speech Contestants

- a. In the current scenario of online speech contest, where the contestants are competing from their own choice of premises, Technology and Connectivity facilities have to be arranged by the individual contestant. It is the sole responsibility of the Contestant to ensure uninterrupted internet connectivity, uninterrupted power and technical non-disruption, throughout the entire duration of the contest, or at least until she/he completes delivering the

speech. All the contestants are recommended to have their audio & video checked during the contestant briefing or dry run of the contest, as organized by the Contest management team.

- b. The Contestants are allowed the option to use Primary and Secondary devices and have to declare it to the Contest Chair and Chief Judge, prior to the commencement of the contest. They will have to ensure that all the prescribed guidelines are being followed for both the devices.
- c. In the case of disconnection of any of the facilities from the contestants' end, the individual contestant should take all efforts to re-establish connection to continue in the contest. The contestants should make sure to receive the contact details of the Contest Chair and Chief Judge. The contestants should make an effort to inform the Contest Chair and/or Chief Judge if they are facing internet or technical issues.
- d. The Contest management team shall not be held responsible for the contestants' audio, video, speaking area or power facilities or internet connectivity facilities during the online contests.
- e. It is recommended that contestants do not use virtual backgrounds for an online contest.
 - Virtual backgrounds can become easily distorted, particularly when using gestures or movement, and this distortion could distract from a contestant's speech. If a contestant chooses to use a virtual background, this is considered to be a prop; ensure that they tell the contest leadership team in advance and practice with it during the briefing.
 - Rather than using virtual backgrounds, it is recommended that contestants set their speaking area in front of a neutral background with limited distractions such as a blank wall. Alternatively, a sheet could be hung to eliminate distractions in the background.

6. Additional Time Guidelines

- a. The additional time would be permitted only after the contestant commences delivering her/his speech, neither before nor after the delivery of the speech.
- b. The additional time will be applicable only if the Chief Judge announces such an allotment.
- c. An additional time of 30 seconds may be provided by the Contest Leadership Team, for some of the technical issues. It would mean in the category of Humorous Speech Contest; the total duration will be 7 mins + 30 secs grace + 30 secs additional time. Hence, the maximum permissible timing before the contestant gets time disqualified will be 8 mins instead of 7 mins 30 secs, if the additional time guidelines become applicable. Similarly, for Evaluation, the total duration will be 3 mins + 30 secs grace + 30 secs additional time. Hence, the maximum permissible timing before the contestant gets time disqualified would be 4 mins instead of 3 mins 30 secs, if the additional time guidelines become applicable.
- d. The contestant would continue delivering the speech from where it was discontinued and shall not restart the speech.
- e. In case, the contestant is unable to continue delivering the speech, the Timer would notify after the completion of 4 mins (Evaluation) or 3 mins (Table Topics) or 8 mins (for ISC and HSC) to both the Contest Chair and Chief Judge. Subsequently, the Contest Master would be informed by the Chief Judge to proceed with the progress of the contest.
- f. In case, the contestant explicitly communicates in writing or in a message format to the Chief Judge and/or the Contest Chair, about her/his inability to continue delivering the speech, and voluntarily concedes the opportunity to complete the speech. The contestant would be considered qualified, if he/she has already spoken for 1 min 30 seconds in the case of Evaluation Contest and if he/she has already spoken for 4 min 30 seconds in the case of Humorous Speech Contest or ISC.
- g. The Timer and Contest Master would be informed by the Chief Judge or the Contest Chair to proceed with the progress of the contest, before the expiry of the total allotted time.
- h. Some of the scenarios which may be considered for additional time allocation are as follows:

Scenario 1: Technical issues from the Contest Management Team's end, while the contestant has commenced delivering her/his speech, causing disruption in the contest. It would be applicable for Contest Management roles such as Timer, Host/ Admin Manager, which have a direct impact on the progress of the speech.

Scenario 2: Contestant's audio/video/online connectivity gets affected during the progress of her/his speech. Chief Judge or Contest Chair may ask the contestant to restart from the last audible line. It has to be noted that it may not be practically viable for the Contest Chair/Chief Judge to accurately provide the last line spoken by the

contestant due to operational reasons. The respective Contest Master could make a note of the contestant's speech and send the last audible line to the Contest Chair & Chief Judge. However, it is not a mandatory responsibility of the Contest team, but only a support rendered. The contest team will not be held responsible for accuracy.

Scenario 3: The contestant's audio/video/online connectivity gets affected; however, the contestant is not aware.

In such a scenario, the Chief Judge would communicate with the Contest Chair and decide to interrupt the speech and announce the additional time allocation.

The Contest Leadership Team may decide on the allocation of the additional 30 seconds if similar scenarios arise during the course of the contest. The additional time would be allocated only after the Chief Judge announces it.

7. Guidelines for Evaluation Contest & TT Speech Contest

The Evaluation/TT Speech contest is highly sensitive in nature and needs utmost precautions to ensure that a fair and successful contest is being conducted. The Contest management team and the contestants are urged to adhere to the appended online contest guidelines positively. We are sure as Toastmasters; the values of Toastmasters International (Integrity, Respect, Service and Excellence) would be upheld at all times.

- a. All the contestants have to ensure that their audio and video are always switched on for the entire duration of being in the breakout/holding room.
- b. The contestants should be seated in a well-lit room which has no form of communication with others in the premises.
- c. The contestants should make sure that they are seated in a position where their hands are clearly visible, 3-4 feet away from the device and they should always face the camera and their microphone should remain unmuted.
- d. If a headset is being used, it should be removed during the waiting period in the breakout/holding room.
- e. **The following guidelines are exclusively for the Evaluations Speech Contest:**
 - I. The Evaluation notes should be taken in the Form 1177 – Evaluation Contestants Notes. The contestants are requested to have at least 2-3 blank sheets for making notes and an additional 1177 sheet (blank) should be available to cover the notes, after the 5 minutes duration elapses.
 - II. The chosen test speaker for the Evaluation Contest should login with the name "Test Speaker" only.
 - III. Before the test speaker commences, audio video testing could be conducted for the test speaker and confirmation sought from the Chief Judge/Contest Chair.
 - IV. Before the test speaker commences speaking, the contestants should display their blank "Form 1177-Evaluation Contestant Notes" sheets and SAA has to ascertain the same. The Contest Chair/Master also could instruct that the Contestants are not supposed to access any books/mobile/electronic devices, once the test speaker commences speaking.
 - V. Once the test speaker starts speaking, the video of the contestants should not be switched off preferably until the last contestant completes his/her speech. The video of the contestants should be "on" even inside the break out room or contestants' holding room. SAA has to check this and alert the Chief Judge on any discrepancies.
 - VI. If the test speaker gets disconnected, then he/she might be asked to restart from the beginning by the Chief Judge or Contest Chair.
 - VII. The completed notes should be covered with the blank 1177 sheet on top and showed to the SAA. Then it should be placed on a table/ chair or any place which should be clearly visible to the SAA/Host at all times in the breakout/holding room.
 - VIII. Chief Judge could take steps to ascertain that the test speech has not been given at any other contest during the season. Chief Judge could ascertain that the test speaker is not from the home club of any of the contestants. The test speaker could avoid giving the same speech in more than one contest.
 - IX. Chief Judge could ensure that the Test Speaker is not asked to play the role of any type of judge in the same contest, in which the Test Speaker has delivered his/her test speech.
 - X. Chief Judge could brief the Judges that they should strictly abide by the evaluation contest ballot and should not give special weightage to props used by the Evaluation Contestant.
 - XI. If a contestant has access to an electronic device which can transmit messages (the list of such devices would include a headphone as well), he or she should remove such a device and keep it along with the evaluation notes at a place that is clearly visible to the SAA.

- f. Contestants need to maintain silence and avoid unnecessary movements or gestures during the waiting period.
- g. If there are any discrepancies found in following these guidelines, the SAA/ Host, monitoring the contestants in the breakout room will inform the Chief Judge/ Contest Chair. The Contest Leadership team reserves the rights to disallow the defaulting contestants to continue competing in the Evaluation Contest.
- h. After all the contestants (except the first contestant) are moved to the holding/breakout room, Chief Judge could move to that breakout/holding room to check the preparedness of the SAA and the contestants.
- i. The Evaluation Contestants have the choice to opt for using both the primary and secondary devices and it should be declared in advance. The video should be on in both the devices inside the Contestants' holding room/break out room. However, at any point in time, if both the Primary and Secondary devices get disconnected during the waiting period; the contestant would be allowed a maximum of 2 minutes to get re-connected. However, this opportunity would be given only once. If the contestant loses complete connectivity again, the contestant will lose the opportunity to contest.
- j. If a TT or Evaluation Speech Contestant loses connectivity (from both the devices) while in the break out room, he or she should immediately inform the contest chair or the Chief Judge. If a TT or Evaluation Speech Contestant loses connectivity in only one device, that device would not be allowed inside by the host or admin. The contestant would have to continue with the other device.
- k. If an Evaluation Contestant has been moved out of the breakout/holding room to the main room but gets disconnected before he/she commences the speech, the Contest Leadership team may wait for the maximum duration of 2 mins before proceeding to invite the next contestant.
- l. During the Evaluation contest, if a contestant in the breakout/holding room gets disconnected and reconnects, the contestant (even though the reconnecting contestant is up next) should be kept in waiting/lobby when another contestant is delivering his/her Evaluation speech. The reconnected contestant will be moved to the main room during the 1 min of silence and then would be moved to the breakout/holding room if that contestant is not the next contestant to be called on stage.

Note: If the platform has the feature to create multiple breakout rooms, the Evaluation Contest can be conducted much more effectively. This is because, the entire contest could be executed in the first breakout room with all the contest team, audience and speaking contestant. Another breakout room could be created as a contestants' holding room. This way, if a contestant in the holding room gets disconnected, once he/she reconnects, they can be in the main room where they cannot witness the contest proceedings, until they get moved to the holding room.

8. Guidelines Specific to TT Speech Contest

The TT Contestants have the choice to opt for using both the primary and secondary devices and it should be declared in advance. The video should be on in both the devices inside the Contestants' holding room/break out room. However, at any point in time, if both the Primary and Secondary devices get disconnected during the waiting period; the contestant would not be allowed to re-connect.

If only one device was disconnected, the Tech master would not permit the entry of that device again.

All the other rules mentioned in the rulebook (including those on page 19) would be applicable for the TT Speech Contest.

9. Guidelines for Humorous Speech Contest & International Speech Contest (ISC)

When the Contest Master announces the name of the HSC or ISC contestant to take up the stage to deliver the speech and due to any reason, including technical glitches, arising at the contestant's end, if the contestant is unable to get connected and commence the speech, the Contest Leadership Team will wait for the duration of maximum 2 minutes before proceeding to invite the next contestant. Under such circumstances, where the contestant is unable to establish connectivity, it will be deemed that the contestant forfeits the opportunity to deliver the contest speech.

In case the HSC or ISC contestant has informed the Chief Judge or Contest Chair in writing that he/she is unable to continue the speech, irrespective of the time taken by the contestant, the Chief Judge or Contest chair, would give instructions to the Contest Master to proceed to the next contestant.

10. Speech Contest Resources

- a. Item 1171 - 2021-2022 Speech Contest Rulebook
- b. **Item 479 - Online Speech Contest Best Practices 2020-2021**
- c. Item 637 - Speech Contest Rulebook – Explanation of changes:
<https://toastmasterscdn.azureedge.net/medias/files/department-documents/speech-contests-documents/637-speech-contest-rulebook-explanation-of-changes.pdf>
- d. Item 206G - Conducting Quality Speech Contests (Area and Division Director Training – Facilitator’s guide):
<https://toastmasterscdn.azureedge.net/medias/files/department-documents/speech-contests-documents/206eg-conducting-quality-speech-contests.pdf>
- e. All contest resources are available in the link: <https://www.toastmasters.org/leadership-central/speech-contests>
- f. Item 470 – <https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/video-release-form>
- g. D120 Humorous, Evaluation, TT and International Speech Contest Guidelines (this document)

11. Reference

- a. All items a through g mentioned in Point 10
- b. **Previous version of the District 120 Addendum (as approved by the District Council in August 2021)**