



General Rules and Regulations-Texas HOSA 2026-2027

Texas Electronic Device Policy

- While competitors can have their cell phones, smart watches, etc. with them, they must be in the off position and stored with their personal items. The competitor may not touch the devices in any holding room or prep-room at any time. If competitors wish to study in the holding rooms it must be on paper copies. There will be consequences for using electronic devices in the holding room. Be sure to turn off your devices and put them away before entering the holding room.
- Electronic devices may be used as a form of electronic notecards during presentations. Notecards or electronic notecards may not be shown to the judges.

Eligibility for Texas Participation

1. All Texas HOSA competitors must be a member of HOSA in good standing as established by HOSA-Future Health Professionals. In good standing means that they must have a minimum of five (5) members in their chapter, an advisor, and their affiliation fees paid in full.
2. **Number of Events** – Texas HOSA members may enter only ONE regular competitive event at the area/state conference. In addition, competitors may participate in as many Recognition Category Events as they wish.
 - At the state conference, if the Healthcare Issues Exam (HCIE) is scheduled at the same time as a regular event, the competitor must choose between HCIE and the regular event. They cannot do both. Individual testing times will not be given.
 - At the state conference, competitors may participate in as many National Geographic Learning Academic Testing Center (NGLATC) events as they wish, if the test is paid for, and if the competitor can logistically sit to test in all events for which they are registered.

Divisions of Competition

3. **Definition of divisions** - The official definition for middle school, secondary and postsecondary/collegiate members of HOSA, for the purposes of Competitive Events registration and participation, is:
 - **Middle School (MS)**- A middle school student is one who: a) is enrolled in a state-approved health science program or is planning to pursue a career in the health professions; and b) has not been promoted to a secondary institution (grades 9-12) prior to the state's/country's annual conference. He/she must be in grades 6-8.
 - **Secondary (SS)**- The Secondary Division shall be composed of secondary students at the junior high (9th grade) or high school level (9th – 12th).
 - **Postsecondary/Collegiate (PS/C)** - The Postsecondary/Collegiate Division shall be composed of undergraduate students who (a) are enrolled in a state-approved



postsecondary program at the community college level or college level program; (b) have received a high-school diploma (or its equivalent) or (c) have been out of the continuous, sequential educational system prior to the current enrollment for two or more years prior to the current year's HOSA International Leadership Conference and/or enrolled in a health career program in pursuit of a baccalaureate degree.

Accommodations

4. HOSA members with disabilities, special needs, and non-English speaking competitors, will be reasonably accommodated in the Texas HOSA Competitive Events Program through event accommodations. All details of event accommodations can be found in [Appendix H](#). For Texas Conferences you will need to use the following link: [Texas HOSA Accommodations Form](#)
5. **Accommodations** will only be given to students in the four IDEA events. Accommodations will not be given for written exams. Extenuating circumstances in other events can be emailed to Texas HOSA and be reviewed by the Board of Directors.
6. **Language/Personal Services** - All Texas HOSA events at the area and state level are to be conducted in English. This includes all written or recorded material that is submitted as part of the event for judging, as well as speaking and presentation events. Personal Services: When additional specialty trained personnel are required, the student's school district is asked to provide those services.

Ethics

7. **Appointment times** are given to competitors in many HOSA events to avoid detaining competitors in holding rooms for long periods of time. *Professional ethics demand that competitors DO NOT discuss or reveal the secret topic or scenario for ANY event. This includes discussions with other competitors in the event who have finished competing until the event has concluded.*
8. All competitive event materials (such as presentations, projects, portfolios, etc.) must be the original work of the competitors.
9. **Ethics and Integrity** - As future health professionals, Texas HOSA members are held to a higher standard regarding their ethical behavior as competitors. Texas HOSA members should **always (must)** follow the HOSA rules and always act with honor. Plagiarism, copyright violation and falsification of information are prohibited. **All sources must be cited, including AI.** Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Violation of the ethics rules will be severely penalized.
10. **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)** - You may use AI tools to support your creative process—for example, to brainstorm ideas, generate questions, or explore ways to refine or expand your concept. However:
 - Do not rely on AI to fully write your speech, presentation, narrative, script, etc. The core message and wording should originate from you and/or your team.
 - Do not use AI-generated statistics or data without independently verifying and citing credible sources.
 - Treat AI as a tool to enhance your thinking, not a shortcut. Your work should demonstrate your own originality, creativity, and critical thinking rather than relying on AI-generated material.



- 11. Code of Conduct** - Any competitor who violates the HOSA Code of Conduct during any area/state conference may forfeit any award won during the conference.
- 12. Online Testing Proctors** must act in a manner to ensure valid and reliable results and to ensure test security and integrity. All confidential Materials are kept strictly confidential and are not disclosed to any unauthorized individuals, including HOSA student members and local advisors. Online tests are to be administered in a positive and quiet testing environment that is the same for all testers. Proctors will ensure that test-takers adhere to the online testing rules, which include: no talking, no cell phone/smart watch use, no internet use outside of the testing browser, no notes, and no electronic devices. Students are allowed access to a hard copy reference book while testing. (online versions of books will have to be printed to use). **All teams and individuals from a campus competing in the same event must test at the same time.** Students will be allowed access to a “single” hard copy reference book while testing at the AREA level only. No reference materials will be allowed at the State level. *SEE the Texas HOSA “Section G Online Testing Handbook”.*
- 13. Conduct during live events-** students or teams who are distracting or disrespectful during events may be subject to disqualification

Team Events

- 14. Substitutions** — A team event at the area level must include at least 50% of the members who were judged during round one. A team event at the state level must include at least 50% of the members who were on the winning team at the area level. Other "qualified" student members may be substituted or added to the remaining team positions so that the number of team members is consistent with the rules for that event. **(Texas HOSA defines “Qualified” as an active HOSA member who is a member of the same chapter as the missing team member for whom he/she is substituted.)** Substitutes on a team competing at the state conference are not required to have competed in the event at the area level.)
- 15. Minimum Team Members** - Teams may not compete with less than the minimum number of team members.
- 16. Participation in Both Rounds** - If a team member misses Round One of competition at a live event, and the team advances to Round Two; the missing team member cannot compete in Round Two. Only team members who participated in Round One are allowed to participate in Round Two.
- 17.** In testing rounds, all registered team members must test at the same time according to the conference schedule. Teams will not be allowed to test until all registered members have arrived at the testing area (the only exception is a cancellation when the remaining team still has the minimum number required to compete)

Event Content

- 18. Independent Work** – Except for team events, competitors must work independently, without assistance from judges, teachers, fellow students, or observers. Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will be considered a violation of the GRR Ethics rules.
- 19. Content Selection** - Competitors should use good judgment and discretion when planning event content. Procedures, demonstrations, displays or speeches with content that could be interpreted as insensitive or of a highly personal nature should be avoided and may not be judged.



20. **Changing Event Content** - When advancing from one level of competition to the next (such as from area to state, or state to international), except where expressly prohibited, competitors can change/improve their speech, notebook, portfolio, or any other event products as a part of the competitive event. All changes must be made and uploaded prior to published deadlines.
21. **Notebook Page Clarification** - - When a section of a notebook or portfolio indicates a specific range of pages, and a competitor uses fewer than the maximum number of pages, he/she CANNOT add pages in another section.
22. **Material Submission** - Unless otherwise noted in the event guidelines, all copies and materials submitted at an Area Spring Leadership Conference or the State Leadership Conference as part of the Texas HOSA Competitive Events program become the property of Texas HOSA. Submission of materials implies consent for Texas HOSA and/or affiliated partners, with Texas HOSA's permission, to publish materials in newsletters, websites, blog posts, social media etc. as deemed appropriate to help market and promote Texas HOSA and/or its partners. Texas HOSA does not sell competitor information or materials to 3rd party vendors.
23. **Content From Year to Year** - - Content for all competitive events must be unique and new each membership/school year. Content used in a previous membership year's competition may not be used again. The intent of the competition is to use new material every year. If a violation of this rule is discovered, the competitor will receive 35 penalty points. Points will be deducted in Tabulations.

Judging

24. **Rating sheets and Test Scores** - Participant rating sheets and test scores are the property of Texas HOSA and will NOT be returned or released.
25. **Judge Interaction** – The distribution of event samples, materials, gifts, or thank you notes to judges, other than those materials specified in the event guidelines for judges to review, is NOT permitted.
26. **Materials for Judges** - During competition, only those items specified in the event guidelines may be shown to judges (i.e. portfolio, props, photographs, etc.) Showing the judges, extra materials not outlined in the event guidelines may result in point deductions. Props are not allowed in any event except for Public Health and Family Medicine Physician.
27. **Handshakes with Judges** – No handshakes are allowed with judges except in Job Seeking Skills, Interviewing Skills, and Health Career Preparation. In these events, handshakes are allowed both in the beginning and end of the event. Due to the nature of HOSA competition, there is no time to allow for handshakes between competitors and judges.
28. **Introductions** - For events with judges, competitors/teams will be introduced to the judges by an event team member. In individual events, competitors are usually introduced by name and school. In team events, teams are usually introduced by name and school.

Point Deductions

29. **Late Arrivals** - All competitors must be at their competitive event at the designated time and place.
 - For non-testing events, ten (10) penalty points may be assessed if the competitor is more than 5 minutes late to their appointed time.



- For all written tests, a competitor who is late to the event will be allowed to take the test. The competitor will stop when all other test-takers are stopped and will *not receive the full time for taking the test*. The competitor's score may not be counted.
 - For HOSA Bowl and Biomedical Debate, which require a paired match-up, if a team is more than 5 minutes late to its Round Two appointed time, the team forfeits its right to compete.
 - For Medical Spelling, which is a live spelldown, if the competitor is more than five (5) minutes late to Round Two, the spelldown will begin without the competitor, and the competitor may not be allowed to compete.
 - It is the competitor's responsibility to arrive to compete as scheduled according to the conference agenda. Make-up tests or other accommodations will NOT be given for late arrivals- *missed bus; missed route; missed time; missed location; read the agenda wrong; etc. *Act of God exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the competitor, State Advisor, and Texas HOSA Competitive Events Management.
- 30. End of Time** - If the competitor is stopped at the event time limit for any event, there is no additional penalty. However, anything presented after time is called will not be scored.
- 31. General Penalty Points** - If judges feel there is a rule infraction that is not addressed in the written guidelines or processes, they may assess penalty points after consultation with Texas HOSA CE Management.
- 32. Late or Missing Digital Uploads** – If a digital upload is missing or is not uploaded to the directed site by the stated upload deadline, the competitor/team will be penalized according to the Texas HOSA guidelines for the event.

Sections

- 33. Number of Sections** - The Competitive Events Management Team will determine whether (and how many) sections will be scheduled for each Competitive Event at Texas HOSA area/state conference according to the number of registered participants.
- 34. Fairness Between Sections** - A mathematical formula – called standard deviation - will be used for multiple sections in selected events. The computer adjusts the judge's scores to account for judging differences so that all sections are mathematically equal. Such a process provides a statistically fair method for evaluating students in multiple sections with multiple sets of judges. The formula can be found at www.hosa.org in Appendix A.
- 35. Sections** - Separate sections of each event shall be conducted for middle school, secondary and postsecondary/ collegiate unless stated otherwise. Competitors/teams may have the same section number or may demonstrate their skills for the same judges, but the divisions will not compete against each other. Individual and team competitor numbers will be randomly assigned by the computer.

Skill Events

- 36. Scenario Development** - The Competitive Events Management Team will determine which skills are to be performed for skill events, based upon criteria which include space arrangements and condition of available sites, availability of equipment and similar factors pertaining to operation of these events in a particular year.

- 37. Skill Event Scenarios** – Events that require the performance of a health-related skill use a written scenario to give information to the competitor about the setting and skill to be performed. The scenario is a secret topic. Competitors MAY NOT discuss or reveal the secret topic until after the event has concluded or will face penalties per the GRRs. The scenario will be the same for each competitor (team) and will include a challenging component that will require the competitors to apply critical thinking skills. The timing of the skill performance begins when the competitor (team) is given the scenario. Competitors must read quickly and begin the skill performance promptly. Competitors may keep the written copy of the scenario as a reference as needed during the performance of the judged skill. For events that use a scenario and are specifically for competitors with special needs (Life Support Skills and Personal Care), the scenario will be read out loud to all competitors. Competitors will be stopped at the end of the time allowed in the scenario.
- 38. Points and Times with Combined Skills** - Skills may be combined in the scenarios to provide a more real-world experience for the competitors. An example of a combined scenario for Clinical Nursing would be the competitor providing an injection to a patient in isolation. The scenario would include donning & doffing PPE in addition to the injection skill. When multiple skills are used and steps in skills are duplicated on the rating sheet but not in practice, points will be awarded one time only. In such cases, the amount of time allowed for the total skill may be adjusted by the Competitive Events Management Team. Competitors will be notified of total time allowed via the written scenario.
- 39. Judge Responses in Skill Events** - Judges will provide information to competitors as directed by the rating sheets. Competitors may ask questions of the judges while performing skills if the questions relate to the patient's condition. Judges will respond based on information provided in the skill scenario or judge script.
- 40. Verbalization of Skills** – It is the competitor's responsibility to communicate fully and effectively with judges. For skill events, this may include "thinking out loud" so that judges are clear on why the competitors are doing what they are doing. In some event guidelines, competitors may be asked to verbalize steps, but no credit will be given for verbalization when the competitor does not bring required equipment per the event guidelines. When equipment is present, competitors must perform the applicable part of the skill and will not receive points for verbalization alone.
- 41. Extended Stay Preparation** - Due to the use of holding rooms in skill events, Texas HOSA competitors should be prepared for an extended stay. It is strongly suggested that competitors bring recreational materials. Food and/or snacks may be available for purchase at the sites if possible. Just in case, the competitor should be prepared and have his/her own snacks and water available.
- 42. Highest Level of Training** – Competitors should compete in skill events at the highest level of training. An example would be students enrolled in an Emergency Medical Technician course should compete in the Emergency Medical Technician event and not in the CPR/First Aid or CERT Skills event.
- 43. Highest Standard of Care** - In the performance of a skill scenario, competitors are required to follow the highest standard of care when treating victims/patients. Competitors should follow the steps on the rating sheets unless the highest standard of care required differs from the steps on the rating sheet. Judges will know when the treatment of victims/patients differs slightly from the



rating sheet and when the competitors provide medically acceptable care. The judges will award points accordingly.

- 44. Mercury & Latex Exclusion** - HOSA does not use thermometers, sphygmomanometers, or any other equipment that contains mercury. HOSA does not use latex gloves, and competitors with latex allergies are requested to notify event personnel.
- 45. Equipment Preview Time** – Event personnel have the option of providing one additional minute to the skill event interval prior to the scenario for competitors to preview the equipment that is provided for the event. Competitors will be told prior to their skill time beginning if they have been given this additional time.
- 46. For all skills, body fluids will be a simulated product. In applicable Vet events, live animals are NOT used.**

Tests

- 47. Higher-Order Thinking Skills** - Written tests will measure knowledge and understanding at the recall, application, or analysis levels. Higher-order thinking skills will be incorporated as appropriate. Notes are not allowed on HOSA tests.
- 48. Use of Calculators** - Competitors may NOT use calculators when taking any written test, unless permitted in the individual event guidelines.
- 49. Test Security** – Tests and word lists for Texas HOSA competitive events are developed from the HOSA secure test bank for that event. At all levels, HOSA tests are the property of HOSA-Future Health Professionals and should never be taken, copied, or shared with HOSA members or chapter advisors. HOSA tests are provided exclusively for use by Texas HOSA and other chartered associations in good standing for their competitive events and at the ILC.
- 50. Test Plan and Resources** – The test plan and list of resources in the guidelines are designed to help the competitor prepare for the test. Texas HOSA has the option of using the previous year's ILC tests for the state competition, and the previous year's state tests for area competition. For that reason, tests may reflect the test plan and/or resources from the previous year's guidelines.
- 51. New Testing Events** – For any new event that requires a test, the regional and chartered association tests will be half the number of items for the first year. In other words, if a new test is 100 items, the first year at the chartered association level, it will be 50 items.
- 52. Pencils** – For all written tests, it is the responsibility of the competitor to bring pencils to the event. Mechanical pencils are discouraged for use on Scantrons.

Equipment

- 53. Failure to Bring Equipment in Skill Events** - Competitors who fail to bring the required material/equipment as specified in the Competitive Events guidelines for any skill used in any event will be allowed to compete but will not earn points for all or part of the skill(s) that require the missing material/equipment.
- 54. Equipment Failure** - It is the competitor's responsibility to ensure that the equipment they bring to the event and use as a part of the event is in good working order. Equipment failure (when the equipment is provided by the competitor) may result in an inability to judge all or part of an event that involves the use of equipment. This includes battery operated laptops/devices.



- 55. Podium** - When a podium is provided during an event, the use of the podium by the competitor(s) is optional.

Other

- 56. Photo ID** – All competitors must have photo identification, as outlined in Appendix G at www.hosa.org for each round of competition. If a competitor comes to competition and does not have the proper photo ID with him/her, the competitor will be allowed to compete but will receive 35 *penalty points*. Points will be deducted in Tabulations. For round 2 Biomedical Debate, HOSA Bowl, Foundations of HOSA Bowl, and Medical Spelling, which require a paired matchup or live spelldown, if a competitor does not provide a valid photo ID, they forfeit their right to compete.
- 57. Inquiry Process** - A process is established to provide an opportunity for a competitive event participant to submit constructive inquiries and recommendations to the Competitive Events Management Team at any Texas HOSA Conference via completion of a "Competitive Event Inquiry Form." This completed form must be signed by the HOSA competitor and the competitor's advisor and turned in to Competitive Events Headquarters within two (2) hours after the competitive event concludes. ([Texas HOSA Advisor Handbook, Section J, Page 8](#))
- 58. Personal Articles** - Competitors will be asked to place personal articles (purses, bags) under their chair during a test or an event. They may not obtain anything from their personal articles until the test/event is complete. Event personnel will NOT collect or hold competitors' personal articles during an event.
- 59. Study Materials**-These are NOT allowed in testing/event rooms but are allowed in holding rooms and on event buses to skill sites unless otherwise specified in the guidelines. Please see Texas HOSA cell phone policy as notes in holding rooms will need to be in print form.
- 60. Observers** - There will be no observers in any of the events at the area spring leadership conferences or the state leadership conference.
- 61. Chartered Association Autonomy:** Chartered Associations (Texas HOSA) have the discretion to do things that meet the needs of their chartered association; therefore, HOSA members should check on the Texas HOSA website or with the Texas HOSA Competitive Event Coordinators or the Texas HOSA State Advisor for all processes and event modifications being used at the Area/State level. **GUIDELINES ARE WRITTEN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (ILC). IT IS THE COMPETITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO DETERMINE DIFFERENCES THAT MAY OCCUR IN THEIR CHARTERED ASSOCIATION.**
- 62. Extenuating Circumstances** – It is the intention of Texas HOSA to enforce all rules and event guidelines fairly and consistently. On rare occasions when circumstances are beyond the control of the competitor, such as a canceled flight, a rule can be appealed to the Competitive Events Management Team.

63. Advisors are expected to assist with competitions at Area and State conferences. Registered advisors who fail to assist at the conference may be fined \$100.00 and chapter locked out until payment has been made. Tx HOSA BOD's will review each incident on the day of the occurrence.