Judges are serious business – they are the backbone of the tournament.

So where do you find these judges – as long as a person is 18, graduated from high school they can judge so former participants (omers) make great judges, as do parents, teachers, and so on. We know they are volunteers but a prospective judge must be able to commit to 3 days, training, judging at the regional tournament and then at the state tournament if the team advances. You need to make sure your judge is aware of this – most times they do not realize that if the team moves on to states so does the judge for that team.

Each team must provide 2 trained judges – a long term problem judge and a spontaneous judge. Teams may be assessed up to 25 penalty points per judge if they do not provide judges. In the North Central Region a $25 penalty fee will be assessed if the judge does not attend training or fails to judge on the day of the tournament. This fee must be paid before the team will be able to compete the day of the tournament.

When you do secure your judges you need to make sure they have a copy of the problem that your team is solving and a copy of the rules from the program guide so that they can become familiar with the problem and the rules before training. Your judge will not judge your team – they will judge the problem for another division. In some cases there may be a judge that that has been assigned to the same division as the team, but in those cases the judge will be placed in a non-scoring role, perhaps announcer/timer, staging area, etc.

Judges must be registered by the deadline which is January 27, 2018 this year. This is an on-line process – you as the coach may register your judge or the judge may do it himself. To start the process use the link found at [www.ncpaodyssey.com](http://www.ncpaodyssey.com) for judge registration or go to [www.paodyssey.com](http://www.paodyssey.com) - click on registration – boxes will drop down and give you 3 choices – click on judges. The next page will allow you to select register as a judge – click on that. Now you will see a page with a list of the Pa regional tournaments this year – We are the NORTH CENTRAL REGION – PLEASE CLICK ON THIS. Now you finally made it to the actual registration:

Things to have before you start – a working email address for your judge – if you have a teacher as a judge please have them use a non-school email address. Same with the phone # - the problem captain may have to contact a judge after school is out with important information. Do not use your email address for the judge or your phone #. Problem captains need to be able to contact the judges directly.

Judges need to be open minded about what they see when judging. There are times when a judge may be personally offended by what a team may say or do in their performance, especially with regard to humor. They should be able to put their own personal feeling aside for the day – they cannot score a team lower or penalize because they do not care for some aspect of the skit or performance. Humor today is vastly different than it was 10 years ago and often these teams are not even aware that some may find their humor offensive. Teams should be aware that they may offend their judges – and take a close look at the humor before ever getting to competition. This is why training is so important for a judge. This is all about creativity and solving an open ended problem within the limits set in the problem. No one team will have the correct solution. They all will be correct and solved uniquely and creatively.