

# **New Jersey Model Congress**



## **NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS MANUAL 2023-2024**

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**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
MARCH 14-15, 2024  
RIDER UNIVERSITY  
LAWRENCEVILLE, NEW JERSEY**

**PARTY DAY – DECEMBER 8, 2023  
LEADERSHIP DAY – FEBRUARY 23, 2024**

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# NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS MANUAL

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## New Jersey Model Congress



Welcome back to the New Jersey Model Congress program for the 2023-24 school year! Here are some critical logistical details we need to bring to your attention:

**First**, the registration cost for this year's New Jersey Model Congress is \$200 per person. The cost for delegations not staying at the hotel, using the shuttle buses or staying for social hour is \$150 per person.

Second, we would ask you to prepare your students based on these rules and these formats, rather than introduce motions, formats or procedures that may be used in other settings but that we do not use at New Jersey Model Congress. These are the rules we have agreed to—let's apply them uniformly. For just one example, we have agreed to begin each vote on a bill in committee with a roll call vote. So, we should do exactly that.

**Finally**, our steadfast commitment on refunds, should they ever become necessary, is always to work with you to avoid incurring every possible cost as soon as you make us aware of a cancellation or change in registration. Based on past experience, two-thirds of the total registration fee can be expected to be recovered two weeks (or more) prior to Model Congress. Between one and two weeks prior to Congress, we can expect to recover a third.

*Micah Rasmussen  
Jeremy Rasmussen  
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**New Jersey  
Model Congress**



**CRITICAL DATES AND DEADLINES**

December 1, 2023	<b>Deadline for Party Day registrations</b> <i>(form on page 35)</i> <i>(For students who wish to be party officials or write party platforms)</i>
December 8, 2023	<b><u>**BILL PREAMBLES AND CONDUCT AGREEMENTS DUE TO MODEL CONGRESS OFFICE**</u></b> <b>Party Day – State House Annex, Trenton, New Jersey</b> <i>(Party platform and leadership selection)</i>
January 19, 2024	<b><u>**BILLS, REGISTRATIONS DUE TO MODEL CONGRESS OFFICE**</u></b> <b>Deadline for Leadership Day registrations</b> <i>(form on page 36)</i> <i>(All students who wish to serve as chairs, and party officials should attend)</i>  <b>Deadline for Model Congress registrations</b> <i>Also deadline for all final registrations for Model Congress</i> <i>Due are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <i>All bills</i></li><li>- <i>Conduct forms (on page 34)</i></li><li>- <i>All fees</i></li><li>- <i>Registration forms (on pages 37 and 38)</i></li></ul>
February 9, 2024	<i>Packages of bill copies distributed to teachers</i> <i>(assumes student bills have been submitted on time)</i>
February 23, 2024	<b>Leadership Day – State House Annex, Trenton, New Jersey</b> <i>(Chair selection, Overall leader selection, final preparation)</i> <i>Legislative indexes distributed to teachers</i>
March 14-15, 2024	<b>Model Congress</b> <b>Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey</b>

## PREPARING LEGISLATION

At Model Congress, students will have the exciting and memorable opportunity to debate and try to pass their legislation, but one of the most important parts of the legislative process happens before the Congress even begins.

Students should be instructed to choose bill topics that interest them. If they are motivated by an interesting topic they will be focused on making sure their legislation is well written, researched and debated fairly. Students should note that joke and evergreen bills will not be prioritized by overall and committee chairs at Model Congress.

Preambles for student legislation are due in December. This should allow students more time to produce well written legislation with any necessary changes based on your feedback.

Final bills should be properly formatted, edited and be written in clear, concise language. Often legislation is passed or failed based simply on appearance. If students are to have a fair and equal chance of having their legislation passed it is advantageous to have taken precautions not to have unedited or unclear legislation. Please note that school names, other Model Congresses and bill numbers should not be written on the legislation, to help ensure an impartial hearing at Congress. Bills should not be longer than a single page. **Bills submitted that do not meet these standards will be edited and compressed, and may very likely result in the loss of a sponsor's preferred formatting.**

The following steps to writing legislation are easily apportioned into individual lesson plans or can be assigned as a whole. Working through these steps sequentially will assist students to submit well-written, complete legislation.

1. Students should be instructed in the basics of the legislative process. They should understand that a law starts with a problem that generates many ideas for solutions. From these ideas the best possibility is turned into a bill.
2. Students should be reminded that Model Congress is a branch of the federal, national government, and therefore legislative proposals should be both national and federal in nature.
3. Students should be encouraged to brainstorm many possible solutions and develop their opinions of what will work and why.
4. Students should research the topic thoroughly. Research should include solutions that have been attempted and the status quo.
5. **Students should be aware that the “evergreen” bill topics (legalized marijuana, prostitution, abortion, etc.) always yield dozens of clone bills, and our strong advice to overall and committee chairs this year will be that these bills should be docketed last, in order to not lose committee members’ interest. The same goes for joke bills. If you and your students wish to ensure that their bills will be debated, you may wish to vary the topic or come up with a novel approach.**

6. Students should label legislation properly, and should use one of the following two forms:

**A Bill or A Resolution or An Amendment**

- i. A bill is the way in which Congress creates a public policy that alters or creates new national law.
  - ii. A resolution is an expression of the will or opinion of Congress, and may urge some other entity to take a specific action, but it does not by itself carry the force of law.
  - iii. **An amendment to the Constitution is the rarest of laws—it has only been successfully undertaken 27 times in the entire history of the United States Constitution. When a bill author seeks to change a fundamental right or procedure laid out in the Constitution, it will require a supermajority vote of two-thirds to be approved in both committee and a full chamber of Model Congress. It should be noted that although this completes Congress' role in amending the Constitution and thus ends our simulated process, an amendment approved by Congress must still be ratified by three quarters of the states.**
7. Students should write their legislation according to the template on the following page. The bill template has been simplified, and may be cut, pasted and used as a Word template or as a starting point for students as they write their bills.
8. Students should edit their legislation.

There are a few considerations when editing legislation.

- Wording in legislation should be concrete and not opinion.
- **Legislation should be typed on *one* sheet of 8½X11” paper.**
- Typos, spelling errors and inconsistencies should be edited out.
- Each student should write a piece of legislation. No bill may have more than two total sponsors. Each student should write no more than two bills.
- As per Model Congress Rule XVI, the Model Congress staff will assign students to committees based on the issue area of their legislation. Legislation may be submitted with an appropriate committee preference; however, the Model Congress staff will make the final committee assignment.
- Legislation slated to take effect **less than** 90 days after passage is considered emergency legislation, and must be approved by a two-thirds vote.
  - **less 90 days = two-thirds vote is required to approve**
  - **90 days or more = a simple majority vote is required to approve**

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT NOTES FOR USING THE TEMPLATE  
ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE:**

1. The header should look like it does here, including the blank space for bill number, which will be filled in by Model Congress staff. Simply cut and paste it into the top of your own bill.
2. Insert your first and last names immediately prior to “presents the following legislation.” (no titles)
3. Insert your preamble on the line starting with “To.”
4. When writing your sections, omit the instructions, which are included here only as sample text.
5. Please remember that legislation must NOT exceed one page. Longer submitted bills will be compressed and you may lose your preferred formatting.
6. **Please remember that joke and evergreen bills will not be prioritized for debate by committee and overall chairs.**

*(Insert your name)* presents the following legislation:

A BILL

To *(insert your preamble)*.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND  
THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ASSEMBLED

- Section 1      This section should be a short description of the legislation.
- Section 2      This section should define any vocabulary specific to and as it relates to the legislation.
- Section 3      The middle sections of the legislation should explain how the legislation works and what is going to be done if the legislation is passed. Each individual point should be a separate section.
- A – If need be, sections can be divided into subsections.  
B – Subsections should be lettered.
- Section 4      After the legislation has been adequately explained a section should be dedicated to explaining how the bill will be funded.
- Section 5      The final section of the bill should state when the bill would be enacted.



## **PARTY DAY**

### **(WRITING PARTY PLATFORMS AND ELECTING PARTY LEADERS) DECEMBER 8, 2023**

#### ***REGISTRATIONS ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 1, 2023***

The purpose of Party Day is for each political party to write a broad document outlining the party's philosophy and positions, to elect Party Leaders, and to appoint Party Whips. An agenda for Party Day follows on the next page. The names we use for the major parties are the Democrats and the Republicans.

Each year, a party modifies its platform to keep up with the changes in society and members' philosophies. Delegations that have written proposed platforms before Party Day should bring copies to distribute and discuss at the party rally. During Party Day, each party will have the majority of the day to establish a platform that addresses the needs of all members. Students should be mindful that targeted bills must be chosen later, on the basis of the party platform.

A platform must consist of at least eight major planks, or broad issue areas. All parties must address the same six core issues, based on delegation preferences. Each party may choose the topics for the remaining planks.

Once platforms are written, Party Leaders will be elected. Nominations will be taken from the floor, and each candidate should be allowed to address his or her party. Each school will receive two votes, and it may split those votes however it chooses, but may vote them only once. The top two voter-getters will become the Party Leaders.

The Party Leaders will then choose Party Whips. All delegates interested in serving as Whips for their parties should inform their Party Leaders.

For each party, four whips may be chosen. Whips may not come from the same school as a Party Leader, and all four whips must be from different schools.

Once chosen, Party Leaders and Whips should check with Model Congress staff and each other to raise any concerns or questions about the role of the parties at Congress.

### **Party Day Agenda**

8:45 am	Arrive, registration
9 am	Opening session
9:10 am	Break into groups, draft first plank of each party's platform
9:40 am	Draft second plank
10:10 am	Draft third plank
10:40 am	Draft fourth plank
11:10 am	Draft fifth plank
11:40 am	Draft sixth plank
12:10 pm	Draft seventh plank
12:40 pm	Draft eighth plank
1 pm	Elect party leaders, select whips
1:20 pm	Closing session
1:30 pm	Adjournment

**\*\*\*Important notes** – The day includes a working lunch. Teachers and students should either bring their lunch or be prepared to buy it from the café.

Also, each party may choose to structure its platform writing and election differently. For some, the selection of a temporary chair who moderates the debates may work best. For other parties, each school may send one temporary chair to the front of the room and each may take turns chairing one platform plank debate each. And some may find that breaking up into small working groups to hammer out specific language works best.

**Your students may choose to come to Party Day with draft platform language to propose. To the extent that this facilitates a collaborative platform-writing process, it can be helpful.**

**Every party must strike a balance between a level of consensus and a level of detail. A platform is an overview of a party's philosophy. It may be helpful to distinguish between such a philosophy and a specific legislative initiative it may later support or oppose.**



## NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS PARTY PLATFORM

*(USE AS MANY SHEETS AS NECESSARY TO LEGIBLY RECORD YOUR ENTIRE PLATFORM)*

Party Name \_\_\_\_\_

Issue	Party Philosophy

New Jersey  
Model Congress



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
PARTY ROSTER**

***(PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY SO WE CAN ACCURATELY CAPTURE  
YOUR NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION)***

**Party Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Party Leaders**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Party Whips**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**LEADERSHIP DAY**  
**(COMMITTEE AND OVERALL CHAIR SELECTION,**  
**FINAL PREPARATION FOR CONGRESS)**

**FEBRUARY 23, 2024**

***REGISTRATIONS ARE DUE BY JANUARY 19, 2024***

The purpose of the Leadership portion of this day is to select the students who will best serve the Model Congress as Chairs. Some personalities are suited to facilitate high quality and fair debate; others will find that their strongest contribution lies in participating and sparking such debate.

Before attending this day, students should be well versed in Parliamentary Procedures and be ready to take an active leadership role. At Leadership Day, students will have the chance to demonstrate their leadership abilities, debating skills and knowledge of procedures. The day will consist of three tests, and an agenda follows on the next page.

When students arrive at Leadership Day they will be given a written test on Parliamentary Procedure. The test will be a compilation of essay, multiple choice, fill in the blank and definition questions. The questions on the test will be taken directly from the Standing Rules section of this manual.

The second test of student ability on Leadership Day will be an observation of debating skills. Students will be broken into committees after the written test has been administered. Once in the committees each student will be randomly assigned several speaking positions in a debate about a predetermined piece of legislation. Students trying out for leadership roles should be aware that the purpose of this portion of the day is to get a sense of decorum, speaking ability and flexibility from the students.

The final test of ability is the chairing portion of the day. During debate each student applicant will be afforded a short amount of time to demonstrate his or her chairing ability. Students should bring a name placard with them when chairing and be prepared for any motion that may be made. Students may bring other supplies they may need such as a stopwatch, pen or list of rules. Students will also receive random assignments of difficult chairing scenarios, which will help judges evaluate their performances.

Students who have been selected as chairs can ask their teachers to obtain results on the Monday following Leadership Day.

### **Agenda for Leadership Day**

8:45 am	Registration and arrival
9 am	Opening session
9:15 am	Written test, parties break into groups to target bills and plan rallies
9:30 am	Break up into committees and begin chair rotations
12:30 pm	Advisors' Meeting
12:45 pm	Overall Chair try-outs
1:30 pm	Adjournment

NOTE: Students auditioning for a committee chair or overall leader position should be well versed in parliamentary procedure and confident in their ability to apply the rules to actual situations they may encounter while in the chairing position at Model Congress. During Leadership Day the chairs will be challenged with several difficult situations to demonstrate their ability to handle those situations appropriately. Below are some examples of situations potential chairs should be prepared for.

1. A committee has voted on and failed a bill. The sponsor of the bill feels that if the vote was taken again more people would vote in favor of the bill. The chair should know what motion would allow a vote to be retaken after legislation has been moved from the table, who could make such a motion, and what vote is needed for such a motion to pass.
2. A bill has been proposed and one of the committee members feels that it would violate states rights to pass such a bill at the national level. The chair should know what motion would allow the concerned member to express this sentiment, when such a motion would be in order, and what vote is needed for such a motion to pass.
3. A chair has made a decision to set the orders of the day in advance. There is a member of the committee who feels this is an unfair decision and would like the committee to change this decision. The chair should know what motion would allow the committee member to ask the committee to change this decision, when such a motion would be in order, how to implement the statement and vote, and what vote is needed to pass such a motion.
4. A controversial bill is to be debated and a group of Senators / Representatives have gathered outside of the committee door to take part in this debate. The chair should know who is allowed to enter a committee, who is allowed to take part in the debate in that committee, and who is allowed to vote on the legislation after debate has ended.

5. A bill has been moved to the table for debate. The sponsor has moved the legislation, it has been seconded, the preamble has been read, and the sponsor has presented her argument during the first five minutes of debate. She now has a list of changes that she would like to make to the legislation. The chair should know how the changes can be made.

There are numerous other difficult situations that may come up during Model Congress. Applicants for chairing and leadership positions should be equipped to deal with them appropriately and professionally to ensure the continuation of debate and a spirit of camaraderie within their potential committee.

### **Overall Chair Selection**

The purpose of the caucus portion of the day is to select the students who will best serve the Model Congress as House Speakers and Senate Presidents, and to allow for all student leaders to make final preparations for the Congress.

After the committee chair competition, Model Congress staff will select the candidates who will be invited to compete for overall chair. Candidates will be asked to deliver brief remarks to all participants in the Day, and they will then have an opportunity to chair and be observed by the entire group. Student participants may register their preferences, as may advisors. The Model Congress staff will also provide input, and the tests will be factored as well. The four students who have scored highest in the student, advisor, staff and test evaluations will be selected as Overall Chairs.

**A quick word on one of the most significant powers of any legislative leader—the ability to choose which bills ever see the light of day. If we have 250 bills at Congress, 25 sponsors will be lucky to have their bills debated on the floor of the full House or Senate. Overall leaders must carefully balance the high quality of a debate with whether or not it has been targeted by a party. School and party loyalty can never play a role in bill selection without compromising a chamber’s perception of a leader’s fairness.**

### **Party Leaders**

Party Leaders will meet on Leadership Day to finalize plans for the conference and to plan for the Party Caucus. Party Chairs and Whips will:

- ✓ Decide on targeted legislation – Parties must target five bills to pass the overall House or Senate, five bills to fail either in committee, full House or Senate, or by not being considered. They also must target two alternative targets to pass, and two alternative targets to fail. The alternatives can become important if the Model Congress staff needs to disallow any targeted bills, because no two parties may target the same bill to fail. Parties also may not target legislation sponsored by their party leaders or whips. IMPORTANT: Each party must submit a target bill form by the end of Caucus Day. On the form, the party must related each target to a plank from its platform.
- ✓ Decide their plans for researching and debating bills.
- ✓ Plan the Party Rally, held at the beginning of Model Congress.

**The Party Rally held at the beginning of Model Congress is an invaluable opportunity to engage with and energize party members who can help debate and rally support for your party's targeted legislation. During Leadership Day, a plan should be made for how to best rally members.**



**Judging Criteria for Chairs**  
**Used to Select Committee Chairs and Overall Leaders on Leadership Day**

	Rate each student from 1 to 5 in the following categories: 1 = excellent 5 = Poor	Name:	Knowledge and Use of Rules	Maintains Order	Respected by Peers and Respects Peers	Maintains Professionalism	Remains Objective and Consistent	Maturity / Poise	Vocal Clarity / Level	Total	Recommended for Committee Chair	Recommended for Overall Leader
1.												
2.												
3.												
4.												
5.												
6.												
7.												
8.												
9.												
10.												
11.												
12.												
13.												
14.												
15.												

New Jersey  
Model Congress



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
TARGETED LEGISLATION REPORT**

**Party Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Targeted to Pass**

<i>Bill #</i>	<i>Committee</i>	<i>Preamble</i>	<i>Ties to which platform plank?</i>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____

**Alternate Targeted to Pass**

<i>Bill #</i>	<i>Committee</i>	<i>Preamble</i>	<i>Ties to which platform plank?</i>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____

**Targeted to Fail**

<i>Bill #</i>	<i>Committee</i>	<i>Preamble</i>	<i>Ties to which platform plank?</i>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____

**Alternate Targeted to Fail**

<i>Bill #</i>	<i>Committee</i>	<i>Preamble</i>	<i>Ties to which platform plank?</i>
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____

## NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS SAMPLE SCHEDULE

### First day of Congress

9 to 9:30 am	Registration
9:30 to 10	Opening session
10 to 10:30	Party rallies
	Meeting of committee chairs, House Speakers and Senate Presidents
10:30 to 12	Committee sessions
12 to 1 pm	Lunch
1 to 3:15	Committee sessions
3 to 3:30	Teachers meeting
3:30 to 4:30	Full House and Senate sessions
4:45 to 6	Dinner
6 to 8:30	Full House and Senate sessions
8:30 to 10:30	Social hour

### Second day of Congress

7:30 to 9 am	Breakfast
9 to 11:30	Committee sessions
11:30 to 12:30	Lunch
12:30 to 3:10 pm	Full House and Senate sessions
3:10 to 3:30	Dismissal

### \*\*\*A few important notes on preparing for Model Congress:

All schools should remain until Congress is formally adjourned and students are dismissed.

All students should bring to Congress:

- research and materials to debate his or her own bill,
- research and materials to debate the other bills in his or her assigned committee,
- a clear idea as to his or her party affiliation (please feel free to consult party platforms or any of the ideological spectrum questionnaires that are commonly available),
- **an understanding that both joke and evergreen bills never elevate debate, and our strong advice to both overall and committee chairs this year will be that these bills should be docketed last, in order to not lose committee members' interest. If you or your students wish to ensure that their bills will be debated, we strongly recommend you vary the topic or come up with a novel approach,**
- and clothing appropriate for walking between buildings (with a brief exception at the beginning of Social Hour, there will be no access to luggage on both days until busses arrive).

## New Jersey Model Congress



### MODEL CONGRESS RULES

The legislative process at Model Congress is governed by this set of standing rules, which are patterned after the standing rules of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives -- as well as a variety of long-established and customary practices.

Like any legislative institution, a Model Congress committee (or Overall Chamber, which is considered a Committee of the Whole) is both a deliberative and a decision-making body. Its procedures must strike some balance between the opportunity to deliberate or debate and the need to decide. **Both imperatives require personal respect for all members. Disagreements should always be focused on legislation.**

#### **Rule I. Appointment of a Member to the Chair**

a. Both committee chairs, House Speakers, and Senate Presidents shall have been chosen in advance of the Congress. **All chairs serve in teams.**

b. From time to time, it may be necessary for a committee to choose a temporary chair, or a chair *pro tempore*. Such an action shall be approved by a majority of those who are present and voting in committee.

c. It shall be the responsibility of the chairs to enforce and interpret these rules, subject to a motion to appeal the decision of the chair. When such a motion is properly made, seconded **and recognized**, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The maker of the motion shall be entitled to no more than one minute to explain the reasons for the motion.
2. The chair will then have no more than one minute to explain the decision.
3. A vote of the committee is then taken. If a majority of those who are present and voting affirm the appeal, then the chair's decision shall be reversed. If not, then the chair's decision shall stand.
4. NOTE: A motion to appeal the decision of the chair shall not be considered in order if its purpose is to suspend or violate these rules.

d. It shall also be the responsibility of the chair to ensure that all remarks are germane to the bill being debated. If a speaker's remarks depart from the topic of the debate, the chair should remind the speaker to confine his or her remarks to the bill. If the speaker continues to depart from the topic of the debate, the chair may take back the floor and recognize a speaker who will address the bill.

**Rule II. Presentation of Credentials and Questions of Privilege**

- a. Only assigned members of a committee (who are listed in the Legislative Index) may vote on any question before that committee, including procedural matters. Guests are not permitted to vote.
- b. From time to time, a committee may host guests during a particular debate. Guests may include:
  1. party leaders or whips who have an interest in the legislation being considered by the committee;
  2. sponsors or co-sponsors of the legislation being considered by the committee; and
  3. other committee chairs, House Speakers, and Senate Presidents.
- c. Guests may not disrupt committee proceedings. At the discretion of the chairs, guests may be recognized to address the committee, if its members – who are responsible for voting on the legislation at hand – are given first preference. However, only committee members may vote.
- d. Unless a senator or representative falls into one of the three categories listed above, every member of the committee is required to be present for every part of his or her assigned committee meeting. Legislators who are not in attendance for a committee meeting, or who fall into one of these categories, shall be considered dilatory.

**Rule III. Oaths of Office**

Oaths of office may be administered during the Opening Session of the Model Congress.

**Rule IV. Commencement of Daily Sessions**

- a. For the purposes of the Model Congress, committees must strictly adhere to the published, scheduled sessions of the Congress, and therefore, motions to adjourn shall be considered out of order.
- b. Motions to recess shall be considered in order unless they are used excessively. They must be seconded and approved by a majority of the committee members who are present and voting. A recess may take one of two forms: either standing, during which the committee breaks for no more than ten minutes, and members may leave the room; or sitting, during which members remain in the committee chambers, and break for no more than five minutes. Chairs may call for a recess without a formal motion of the committee. A committee shall not take more than two recesses per day.

**Rule V. Suspension and Amendment of these Rules**

These rules may only be suspended or amended for the purpose of extending debate on a piece of legislation, for a maximum of 15 minutes. No other rule suspensions or amendments shall be considered in order. A second is required, and two-thirds vote of the committee members who are present and voting is required.

**Rule VI. Quorums**

The presence of a majority of the members of a committee is required to conduct business.

**Rule VII. Orders of the Day**

- a. It shall be the responsibility of the chairs to set the orders of the day for the committee.
- b. Chairs must strike a careful balance between committee interests, the potential quality of the debate, and Party prerogatives.
- c. A motion to change the orders of the day shall be made and seconded only when the committee is not debating legislation, and may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the committee members who are present and voting.

**Rule VIII. Papers – Withdrawal, Printing, Reading of, and Reference**

- a. Each committee member is required to bring his or her own copy of the bills scheduled to be considered in his or her assigned committee.
  - b. The sponsor must present any technical changes, modifications, or added bills to the committee prior to the commencement of debate.
  - c. If a sponsor must present modifications or bill copies, which are not included in the member's bill packets, it is the sponsor's responsibility to provide sufficient copies for the committee.
  - d. Copies of bills chosen by the overall chairs to be considered by the full House and Senate, which include all amendments made in committee, will be provided to senators and representatives during the overall sessions.
- 

**Rule IX. The Debating Process**

- a. Every Model Congress debate shall be subject to the same essential conditions under which a committee considers legislation, which are sometimes called "time agreements:"
  1. Opening statements – A chair will ask the sponsor to move his or her bill—but not to take it off the table unless the committee previously put it on the table. Frequently called "structured debate," opening statements are then made by four members of the committee – primary pro, primary con (four minutes each), secondary pro, and secondary con (three minutes each). These statements lay the groundwork for the debate that follows, describing the purposes and provisions of the legislation, the state of current law and the developments that make new legislation desirable or necessary, and the major points of controversy. Legislation is not open to amendment, and the previous question may not be moved or tabled, until these opening statements are completed.
  2. Debate – Frequently called "general debate." The chair will allot equal amounts of time to the pro and con position. Each speaker will have the floor for two minutes. If time allows, before the final vote, the sponsor may be granted the option of a two-minute summation.

Debate on a piece of legislation should not exceed thirty minutes, unless these rules are suspended.

- b. Before the sponsor of legislation takes the floor and begins the opening statement period of a debate, he or she must move the legislation, and describe any technical amendments or modifications. It must be seconded.

- c. **Motions to object to the consideration of the question will be considered out of order. Members are absolutely free to make their own determinations on whether any bill is repugnant or, in their opinion, violates the Constitution. But as the legislative branch of federal government, we will respect the separation of powers that assigns the resolution of Constitutional questions to the Supreme Court.**
- d. Points of query and inquiry – A chair shall ask speakers whether they wish to address points of query and inquiry during or after the conclusion of their remarks, and whether they will accept limited or unlimited points. When a speaker chooses to accept only limited points, the chair must ask the speaker whether he or she will accept points of query and inquiry from the recognized member. In either case, questions may be addressed to a speaker in one of the following two forms:
  - 1. Point of query – This is a series of two or three questions, which the chair may recognize if there are no points of inquiry on the floor.
  - 2. Point of inquiry – This is a single question, which takes precedence over any points of query that have been raised.
- e. Questions of order – Questions of order about rules or procedures are in order at any time, and do not require a second. When a point of order is raised, the chair shall stop debate, ask the member to rise and state his or her point, and act on the question of order.
- f. Points of privilege – A member may use this motion to ask the chair to be excused from the committee chamber, to be readmitted, or to confer quietly with another member.
- g. Points of information – A member may rise on this point in order to ask the chair for a piece of information, such as the time remaining in debate, but which does not influence the debate.
- h. Yielding – Any member who has the floor may yield the remainder of his or her time to another member, however, members may silently let speakers know they are seeking a yield. A chair should not acknowledge the presence of a yield request until a speaker expresses an intention to yield. Offers to accept yielded time should not be acknowledged by the chair.
- i. Motions to lay on the table and take up from the table – After the four opening remarks are completed, any member may rise to move that the matter before the committee be tabled. This motion may not be debated, and must be approved by a majority of the present and voting members of the committee. The legislation can then be taken off the table, by a motion to take off the table, at any time during the remainder of the committee’s proceedings. This motion also requires a majority vote of the committee members present and voting.
- j. Moving the previous question – Any matter before a committee may be brought to a final vote by moving the previous question. The motion must be seconded, and two-thirds of the present committee members must approve the motion. This motion is only in order during general debate.

#### **Rule X. The Amending Process**

- a. It is through the amending process that senators and representatives have an opportunity to influence the content of legislation before the vote on final passage occurs.
- b. Every proposed amendment must be relevant and germane to the legislation being considered. No amendment may change the preamble or intention of the legislation.
- c. An amendment must be submitted to the clerk in writing, and may take one of the following forms:

1. to insert additional language in the legislation without altering anything already in the legislation;
  2. to strike out language from the bill without inserting anything in place; or
  3. to strike out language from the bill and insert different language instead.
- d. Friendly amendments – After an amendment is properly made, the clerk shall read the proposed change in language. The chair will ask the sponsor of the legislation whether the amendment is friendly, in which case it automatically becomes part of the legislation.
  - e. Unfriendly amendments -- If an amendment is found unfriendly by the sponsor of the legislation, it may be seconded.
  - f. The sponsor of the amendment shall then have one minute to explain the reasons for offering the amendment. The sponsor of the main bill will then have one minute to explain why the amendment is unfriendly.
  - g. The chair will then take a vote on whether to continue debate on the amendment. A majority vote is required to continue debate.
  - h. When an amendment is debated, the debate may take place for not more than fifteen minutes, with members taking the floor for not more than two minutes each. The chair will allot equal amounts of time to the pro and con positions. After the conclusion of debate, a vote on the amendment will be taken. If a majority of the present members favor the amendment, it shall be adopted. If not, the amendments shall fail. In either event, debate on the main legislation may then resume.

#### **Rule XI. The Voting Process**

- a. After the time limit for a piece of legislation has elapsed, or the committee has moved to end debate on the previous question, a vote on the legislation shall be taken. Motions to vote are unnecessary, since the legislation has already been moved at the beginning of a debate.
- b. Members shall remain silent during the voting process.
- c. Prior to a final vote, the clerk or chair shall read the preamble before the committee.
- d. Committee chairs will use a roll call vote to record each committee member's vote on all main legislation. For procedural votes, and in the full House and Senate, the chair will call for all members who are in favor of the question to indicate by raising their hands, or saying "aye". When the chair has finished counting the "aye" votes, he or she will call for all members who are opposed to the question to indicate by raising their hands, or saying "nay."
- e. The chair shall vote only to make or break a tie.
- f. Except on procedural matters, on which there shall be no abstentions, the chair will then call for all members who wish to abstain to indicate their preference. Abstentions shall be recorded in the final vote count, but do not change the number of votes required for approval of a question.
- g. The chair will then announce the vote. A question is carried when it receives the required majority of the votes that are cast – those members who choose to vote yes or no – and not the total majority of the committee's members.



- h. Motion to divide the chamber – After a particularly close vote, or one in which the outcome is questioned, any member may call for a division of the chamber. No second is necessary. The chair shall then call for members to restate their votes, usually by standing. This motion is simply to clarify the outcome of a vote – abstentions are still permitted except on procedural matters.
  - i. **When legislation is slated to take effect less than 90 days following passage, it is considered emergency legislation, and it must be approved by a two-thirds vote. Legislation that will take effect 90 or more days following passage is regular order and requires a simple majority vote.**
  - j. **When legislation takes the form of a Constitutional amendment, it must be approved by a two-thirds vote of both the committee and the full house.**
- 

#### **Rule XII. Reconsideration**

Occasionally, the committee may prefer to reconsider a decision it has reached. In such cases, a motion to reconsider may be made, but only by a member who voted with the majority of the committee on the original vote. The chair may grant the motion's sponsor one minute to explain the reasons for the motion, and one minute to a member who opposes the motion. This motion must be seconded, and approved by a majority of the present committee members. When a motion to reconsider is approved, the committee shall debate the legislation again, and take a new vote at the conclusion of the debate.

#### **Rule XIII. Bills, Resolutions, and Preambles Thereto**

- a. Legislation shall take one of the following three forms:
  - 1. a bill is the way in which Congress creates a public policy that alters or creates new national law; or
  - 2. a resolution is an expression of the will or opinion of Congress, and may urge some other entity to take a specific action, but it does not by itself carry the force of law.
  - 3. an amendment to the Constitution.
- b. The preamble of legislation shall take one of the following three forms:
  - 1. a bill should begin with the phrase "BE IT ENACTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES ASSEMBLED;" or
  - 2. a resolution and an amendment should begin with the phrase, "BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES ASSEMBLED."

**Rule XIV. Precedence of Motions**

The chair shall accept motions according to the following order of precedence:

	Vote?	2 <sup>nd</sup> ?
a. Points of privilege,	None	No
b. Motions to change the orders of the day,	2/3	Yes
c. Motions to appeal the decision of the chair,	Majority	Yes
d. Motions to suspend the rules,	2/3	Yes
e. Points of order,	None	No
f. Points of information,	None	No
g. Points of inquiry,	None	No
h. Points of query,	None	No
i. Motions to lay on the table,	Majority	No
j. Motions to take off the table,	Majority	No
k. Motions to the previous question,	2/3	Yes
l. Motions to amend,	Majority	Yes
m. Motions to reconsider,	Majority	Yes
n. Motions to recess, and	Majority	Yes
o. Motions to divide the chamber.	None	No

**Rule XVI. Appointment of Committees**

Members shall be assigned to committees based on the issue area of their legislation.

**New Jersey  
Model Congress**



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
AMENDMENT PROPOSAL FORM**

Bill # \_\_\_\_\_

Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Preamble \_\_\_\_\_

Which sections?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Fill out as many or as few sections as apply.*

Strike out the following language from the existing bill:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Replace with the following language:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Add the following new sections:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS MODEL CONGRESS COMMITTEES

The committees of the House and the Senate play an essential and serious role in the legislative process, as they select the small percentage of the bills introduced each Congress, which, in their judgment, deserve the attention of the full House or Senate as a whole.

Model Congress committees are the equivalent of the standing committees of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives. For our purposes, however, they are grouped together to achieve an optimal size for each overall chamber.

As per Model Congress Rule XVI, the Model Congress staff will assign students to committees based on the issue area of their legislation. Legislation must be submitted with an appropriate committee preference; however, the Model Congress staff will make the final committee assignments.

Once the Legislative Index is published (typically around Leadership Day), senators and representatives can learn their official committee assignments. They should then obtain from their advisor a copy of all the legislation assigned to their committee, so they can prepare research and arguments necessary for high-quality committee debates.

The Model Congress Senate and House will be divided into a combination of the following committees, depending on the size of each committee and the number of bills reported to it:

### **Senate**

Committee on Armed Services	SARM
Committee on Foreign Relations	
Committee on Veterans Affairs	

Committee on Environment and Public Works	SENV
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources	
Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry	

Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions	SHEA
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Committee on the Judiciary	SJUD
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Committee on Finance	SFIN
Committee on the Budget	
Committee on Appropriations	

Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation	SCOM
Committee on Governmental Affairs	
Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship	

**House**

Committee on Science	HSCI
Committee on Resources	
Committee on Agriculture	
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure	
Committee on Ways and Means	HWAY
Committee on Appropriations	
Committee on the Budget	
Committee on Financial Services	
Committee on the Judiciary	HJUD
Committee on International Relations	HINT
Committee on Veterans Affairs	
Committee on Armed Forces	
Committee on Education and the Workforce	HEDU
Committee on Small Business	
Committee on Energy and Commerce	HENG
Committee on Government Reform	



## **NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS**

### **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

There are several awards given at Model Congress each year. Students will be recognized for their achievements during the opening and closing ceremonies at the Congress.

<b>Award</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Outstanding Delegate	Students will be selected from each committee who have exhibited excellence in debating, knowledge of the program and overall contribution to the committee. A personalized certificate will be awarded for their efforts.
Legislation Passed	Students will be recognized for sponsoring legislation that has passed out of Committee and the Full House or Senate. A personalized certificate will be awarded for their efforts.
Party Chairs	Students will be elected by their peers at Lee Atwater Day for leading their party in platform formation, choosing targeted legislation, and attempting to complete party goals. Leaders who have completed party goals will be awarded an embossed gavel. Leaders who have not met their goals will be awarded a personalized certificate for their efforts.
Party Whips	Students will be selected by their Party Chairs at Party Day. Whips are recognized for their efforts in helping parties to set targets and fulfill their goals. Whips will be recognized with a personalized certificate for their efforts.
Committee Chairs	Students are selected at Leadership/Caucus Day as the best-qualified applicants in light of good chairing ability, debate skills and leadership qualities. Committee Chairs will be recognized with personalized certificates for their efforts.
Overall Chairs	Students are selected at Leadership/Caucus Day. Students who have portrayed excellence in chairing ability, debate skills and leadership qualities are selected for this position. They will be recognized with embossed gavels for their efforts.

New Jersey  
Model Congress



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
OUTSTANDING DELEGATE NOMINATION FORM**

*Please give us as much information as you have about the student. We understand that it is impossible to know exact information on all students, but the more information we have, the easier it will be to identify students.*

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Leadership Position \_\_\_\_\_

Observations? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Years in Attendance \_\_\_\_\_

Previous/Other Observations

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Leadership Positions

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





## **NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS EXPECTATIONS FOR DRESS AND CONDUCT**

1. Students will adhere to all school rules.
2. Students will behave in a professional manner.
3. Students will treat all other students with respect and dignity.
4. Students will regard all advisors with respect.
5. Students will attend all scheduled events.
6. Students will adhere to the Expectations of Dress and Conduct as well as the Standing Rules at all times, but particularly during organized meetings.
7. Students will dress professionally and in a manner appropriate to the modeling of Congressmen and Congresswomen.
8. Men will wear a suit, or a sport jacket with pants, shirt and tie.
9. Women will wear a pantsuit, dress pants and top, skirt and top, or dress.
10. Sweaters, sweatshirts, T-shirts, jeans, shorts, and sneakers are NOT appropriate.
11. Students will not damage or remove the property of other students, advisors, the facility or the Model Congress.
9. Students will be held accountable for damage intentionally caused.
10. Students will adhere to quiet hours in the hotel and be mindful of other guests.
11. Students will not possess or use alcohol or illegal substances.
12. Students will not use tobacco products in public buildings and according to school rules.
13. Delegation advisors in conference with Model Congress Staff will address students who violate these expectations.

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Emergency Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Model Congress Coordinator's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

New Jersey  
Model Congress



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
PARTY DAY REGISTRATION FORM**

**December 8, 2023  
State House Annex, Trenton**

*Please return by December 1, 2023 to the Model Congress office or [rasmussenmicah@gmail.com](mailto:rasmussenmicah@gmail.com):  
17 Hill Road  
Allentown, New Jersey 08501*

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Best contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Which six issues would your delegation most desire to see all parties address in their platforms?  
(please list in order of preference)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

New Jersey  
Model Congress



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
LEADERSHIP DAY REGISTRATION FORM**

**February 23, 2024  
State House Annex, Trenton**

*Please return by January 19, 2024 to the Model Congress office or [rasmussenmicah@gmail.com](mailto:rasmussenmicah@gmail.com):  
17 Hill Road, Allentown, New Jersey 08501*

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Best phone number to reach you, including night before/email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please clearly print the names of the students who will compete:

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\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Party Leaders and Whips attending

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of Committee Chair candidates attending

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of candidates who wish to compete for Overall chairs

Please clearly print the names of students who would like to compete for House Speaker or Senate President, if selected:

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**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
REGISTRATION FORM A FOR MODEL CONGRESS**

**March 14 and 15, 2024  
Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey**

*Please return by January 19, 2024 to the Model Congress office or to  
rasmussenmicah@gmail.com:  
17 Hill Road, Allentown, New Jersey 08501*

*The following materials must be attached to this form, in order to be registered:*

- All bills
- Conduct forms (on page 34)
- Purchase order or check to cover all student and chaperone fees
- As many copies of Registration Form B as you need to list all students and chaperones

Enclosed is check or purchase order number: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS.**

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students attending: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$200\* if sent by 1/20, \$210 if late = \_\_\_\_\_

Number of chaperones attending: \_\_\_\_\_ X \$200\* if sent by 1/20, \$210 if late = \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of rooms for students: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of rooms for chaperones: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\$150 for schools not staying at the hotel, using the shuttle bus or for social hour**



**NEW JERSEY MODEL CONGRESS  
REGISTRATION FORM B FOR MODEL CONGRESS**

**March 14 and 15, 2024  
Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey**

*Use as many copies of this form as you need to list all students and chaperones.*

*Please attach to Registration Form A and return to the Model Congress office by  
January 19, 2024 or to [rasmussenmicah@gmail.com](mailto:rasmussenmicah@gmail.com):  
17 Hill Road, Allentown, New Jersey 08501*

Name of school: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_ total pages

- Print names of students in groups of four, according to hotel room assignments.
- Please include an asterisk for every student who has not submitted a bill.
- Rooms listed with less than four students will be compressed within your delegation.
- If chaperones are requesting a solo room assignment, an extra fee may be required.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>HOME PHONE</u>	<u>M/F/CHAPERONE</u>
-------------	-------------------	----------------------

This is room number \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ total rooms for your school

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

This is room number \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ total rooms for your school

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

This is room number \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ total rooms for your school

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____