

Constitution Day 2023

Constitutional Law Scholarship Project Instructions

Constitution Day

On September 17, 1787, the delegates at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia signed the United States Constitution, establishing the laws of this country. Becoming a federal holiday in 2004, on Constitution Day we celebrate the U.S. Constitution, which is a vital component of the heritage of the United States, showcasing the success of a country of free people whose liberties and rights are protected by a Constitution.

The South Carolina Bar Association and its Young Lawyers Division, celebrate Constitution Day 2023 on Friday, September 15.

Constitution and the Law - Student Project Contest

Intended to be a fun and challenging experience, the Constitution and the Law - Student Contest offers an opportunity for South Carolina students in eleventh and twelfth grades, and their respective schools, to participate in the Constitution and the Law Student Contest and potentially earn a reward in recognition of their efforts.

Enclosed is the 2023 Constitution and the Law Student Contest Packet, which includes a detailed description of the contest, including eligibility and contest rules.

Contest Prompt

The United States Constitution was built upon the cornerstones of Democracy and works to promote and uphold the values of liberty, freedom, and justice for all. Through the law of this country, set in place by the Constitution, the United States, and those individual states within it, have created legal systems which strive to uphold and honor the values of this country. The South Carolina Bar invites students across the state to engage in experiential learning in order to learn more about our legal system and to gain a further understanding of the laws that it strives to uphold. By doing so, our hope is that students will be able to build trust in our institutions, respect for one another, and a willingness to collaborate to address the challenges that fight our nation.

Throughout this nation's history, our legal system, and the Constitution it strives to uphold, has not always been one which protects all people. There is a painful history of past injustice that has created, for many, a deeply ingrained distrust of this country's legal system and the overarching laws. As a result, our society, and the legal systems within, have undergone many transformations since the birth of this nation. While many of these transformations stemmed from the desire to protect citizens' rights, and instill order within our communities, they have resulted in a legal system that is so complex that, for many, it is difficult to understand. As with anything, a lack of understanding often leads to a lack of trust. To that end, we call on members of the legal profession to lead the way in teaching through word and

action, the ways in which our country's legal system, and those who operate within it, strive to make our communities better and uphold the true values of our Constitution.

As such, for this year's Constitution and the Law Student Contest, members of our legal community have worked hard to provide an opportunity for high school students across the state observe a court proceeding within their local courthouses in order to gain a knowledge and understanding of the legal system within their community. Following their courtroom experience, and their newly enhanced knowledge of our legal system, students are asked to create a project which explains how their experience challenged the ways in which they view our legal system, and those operating within it, specifically as it relates to the principles of civics, civility, and collaboration, which form the cornerstones of our democracy.

Contest Rules:

1. The Law Day Student Contest is a contest limited to students enrolled for the 2022 – 2023 school year in grades 11 and 12.
2. To participate in this project, students must first participate in one of the provided courtroom experiences.
 - a. Directions for participation in an in-person experience:
 - i. For each legal district, and for most counties, we have pinpointed a local attorney who has graciously agreed to give their time to help facilitate student observational experiences. These contacts have provided dates for student observation which we have included below. (While most courtrooms are open to the general public for observation, having an attorney contact to help direct students ensures that they get the most from their experience.)
 - ii. **Students must reach out to Taylor Currin (TCurrin@charlestoncounty.org) at least one week prior to the date they intend to observe**, in order to reserve their spot in an observational experience.
 - b. Directions for participation in virtual experience:
 - i. Please email Taylor Currin (TCurrin@charlestoncounty.org) in order to receive a link to a recorded courtroom trial or motions hearing.
 - ii. Or, you can visit <https://www.sccourts.org/scvideo/> and search through archived video recordings until you find a case recording you wish to view. If you choose this option, the recording must be at least 50 minutes long.
3. After the observational experience, students must compile a project which appropriately answers the provided prompt.
4. Projects may take the form of any medium you choose, as long as it adequately summarizes the prompt.

- a. For written materials including essays, poems, or short stories: materials are limited to 800 – 1200 words in length and should be typed, double-spaced on white paper.
 - b. For recorded materials including poetry, speeches, songs, or other forms of recorded materials: material is limited to 5 – 8 minutes in length. Recordings must be provided in a form that is easily accessible on any computer.
 - c. For physical materials including various types of art: you must be able to take a photograph or video of the physical object, and send it in in a form that is easily accessible on any computer.
 - d. For students who wish to present their project using a medium other than those listed above, please reach out to Megan Feltham (megan.feltham@mgclaw.com) to gain approval.
5. You must provide somewhere within your submission whether the student watched the virtual courtroom experience, or observed in person. If the student observed in-person, please state when and where.
 6. All projects must be completed entirely by the student, without the assistance of others. If we discover a project is not the sole and original work of the student, the project will be disqualified.
 7. Members of the Community Law Week Committee will review the submitted projects and make a selection of a winner in each grade, solely at the Committee's discretion. Each winner will receive \$2,500.
 8. Projects CANNOT be returned. Students should therefore make a copy of their projects prior to submission.

Counties are divided into judicial circuits in our state. South Carolina has 15 judicial circuits. There are multiple courthouses in each circuit. Please make yourself aware ahead of time of what courthouse you will need to go to for your chosen court date.

- 1st Circuit (Calhoun, Orangeburg, and Dorchester County)
 - Orangeburg: 9/25 week; 10/16 week
 - Dorchester: 9/25 week; 10/16 week
 - Calhoun: 9/26-9/29 days
- 2nd Circuit (Aiken, Barnwell, and Bamberg County)
 - Bamberg: 9/25 week
 - Aiken: 10/23 week; day of 10/31
 - Barnwell: 10/16 week

- 3rd Circuit (Sumter, Lee, Williamsburg, Clarendon County)
 - Sumter: 9/25 week; 10/16 week
 - Lee: 9/18 week
 - Williamsburg: 10/23 week
 - Clarendon: 10/23 week

- 4th Circuit (Chesterfield, Marlboro, Dillion, and Darlington County)
 - Chesterfield: 9/18 week; 10/16 week
 - Marlboro: 10/23 week;
 - Dillion: 10/16 week
 - Darlington: Day of 10/31

- 5th Circuit (Richland and Kershaw County)
 - Richland:9/25 week; 10/16 week; 10/23 week; Day of 10/31
 - Kershaw: 9/18 week; 9/25 week; day of 10/31

- 6th Circuit (Lancaster, Chester, and Fairfield County)
 - Lancaster: 9/25 week; 10/23 week
 - Chester: day of 10/31
 - Fairfield: 10/16 week

- 7th Circuit (Spartanburg and Cherokee County)
 - Spartanburg: 9/25 week; 10/16 week; day of 10/31
 - Cherokee: 10/23 week

- 8th Circuit (Abbeville, Laurens, Greenwood, and Newberry County)
 - Abbeville: 9/25 week
 - Laurens: 10/16 week
 - Greenwood: 10/16 week; day of 10/31
 - Newberry: 10/23 week

- 9th Circuit (Charleston and Berkeley County)
 - Charleston: 9/18-9/20 days; 10/16 week
 - Berkeley: 9/25 week; 10/23 week

- 10th Circuit (Oconee, Anderson County)
 - Oconee: 9/25 week; 10/16 week
 - Anderson: 9/18 week 10/16 week; 10/23 week

- 11th Circuit (Saluda, Edgefield, McCormick, and Lexington County)

- Saluda: N/A
- Edgefield: 10/16 week
- McCormick: 9/25 week
- Lexington: 9/18 week; 9/25 week; 10/23 week

- 12th Circuit (Florence and Marion County)
 - Florence: 10/16 week; 10/23 week
 - Marion: 9/25 week

- 13th Circuit (Greenville and Pickens County)
 - Greenville: 9/18 week; 9/25 week; 10/16 week; 10/23 week
 - Pickens: 10/9 week; day of 10/31

- 14th Circuit (Allendale, Hampton, Colleton, Beaufort, and Jasper County)
 - Allendale: 10/23 week
 - Hampton: 9/18 week;
 - Beaufort: 9/25 week; 10/16 week
 - Colleton: 10/16 week
 - Jasper: 9/25 week; day of 10/31

- 15th Circuit (Horry and Georgetown County)
 - Georgetown: 9/25 week; day of 10/31
 - Horry: 9/18 week; 10/16 week