The rules governing the Department Contest are the same as those that regulate the National Contest.

THE DEPARTMENT PRIZES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
First Prize $1,000*
Second Prize $800
Third Prize $700
Fourth Prize $600

* The first place winner receives the state prize of $1,000 and then receives a $2,000 scholarship upon participation in the first round of the National Contest. The state oratorical champion will automatically advance into the National American Legion Oratorical Competition. See the National Contest brochure for further details.

The National Finals Contest will be held April 17-19, 2020, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

ORGANIZATION
The contest will be under the direct supervision of the American Legion Oratorical Committee, appointed by the Department Commander. Final authority on all issues raised shall remain with the Committee.

The State has been divided into four Zones as follows:
Zone 1 – Districts 1, 2, 3
Zone 2 – Districts 4, 5
Zone 3 – Districts 6, 7, 8
Zone 4 -- Districts 9, 10

Elimination contests will be held in the schools, Districts, and Zones in the order named. The Zone winners will compete in the State Finals to be held on Sunday, March 1, 2020, at the Marlborough High School in Marlborough.

Each Department (state) of the American Legion is responsible for all arrangements for Department Contests.

Each Department can enter only one contestant into the National First Round Contest.

23 October 2019 version
SCHEDULE OF 2020 CONTESTS

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS
DECEMBER 31, 2019

Contestants are to be selected by the school principals in any manner they deem suitable to represent the school. The name(s) shall be certified by the principal to the Oratorical Committee, postmarked no later than December 31, 2018, on a form that will be supplied to the school. Any American Legion Post may sponsor as many contestants from a school as they wish.

DISTRICT CONTESTS
2 JANUARY 2020 TO 31 JANUARY 2020

The first contest that a contestant enters, sponsored by the American Legion, is the District Contest. School authorities and contestants will be notified through the mail as well as the Department web site as to where these contests will be held. All contestants should be prepared to enter this contest by January 2, 2020.

ZONE CONTESTS
1 FEBRUARY 2020 TO 29 FEBRUARY 2020

The top two contestants in the District Contests next enter the Zone contest, of which there are four. Zone winners must be certified to the Oratorical Committee no later than February 29, 2020.

DEPARTMENT CONTEST
1 MARCH 2020

The four winners from the Zone Contests will compete for the Department Oratorical Championship.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible participants in the contest shall be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States. All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of 20 years on the date of the national contest who is presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school), commencing with grade nine and terminating with grade 12. Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of the contest.

High school students that graduate early during the school year are eligible to compete if they are not enrolled in a college, university, trade school or other institution of higher learning at the time of the department finals contest.

Contestants must either be legally domiciled within or attend an educational institution within the department (state) where they enter competition. Contestants can enter competition in only one department.

PREPARED ORATION

All contestants shall be required to deliver a prepared oration, which must be the original effort of each contestant, and must require not less than eight (8) nor more than ten (10) minutes for delivery.

The prepared oration must be based on some phase or phases of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. Failure to do this may result in disqualification. The same subject is to be used for the prepared oration throughout all contests.

The contestant may choose their own topic or they may select a title similar to topics which follow:

An American Citizen’s Rights and Responsibilities Under the Constitution
Our Constitution – Worth Having, Worth Defending
The Constitution In A Changing World
The Constitution In Our Everyday Life
The Bill of Rights – Reciprocal Rights and Duties
The Constitution – Guardian of People’s Rights

Contestants may have in their possession a copy of their prepared oration in the first holding room. The copy may be in electronic or paper form. They may consult the copy of their prepared oration, until they exit the holding room in order to begin the contest, at which time the copy of the prepared oration will be surrendered to the contest official who is monitoring the first holding room.

THE ASSIGNED TOPIC DISCOURSE FEATURE

The assigned topic discourse must not consume less than three (3) minutes or more than five (5) minutes for delivery. The purpose of the assigned topic discourse is to test the speaker’s knowledge of the subject, the extent of his or her research, and the ability to discuss the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution.

Each contestant speaks on the same assigned topic which shall be drawn by the contest official in full view of the audience immediately before the last speaker begins delivery of his/her prepared oration, and will be made known to the audience and each contestant approximately five minutes prior to the time of delivery.
ASSIGNED TOPICS FOR 2020
UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

AMENDMENT XII
The Electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at
least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as
President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons
voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists
they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the
President of the Senate; — The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of
Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted; — The person having the greatest number
of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and
if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of
those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in
choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum
for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall
be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice
shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as
in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President. — The person having the greatest number of
votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors
appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the
Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of
the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall
be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

AMENDMENT XX
Section. 1. The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of
Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if
this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.
Section. 2. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day
of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.
Section. 3. If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice
President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning
of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a
President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a
Vice President elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to
act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.
Section. 4. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of
Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of
the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall
have devolved upon them.
Section. 5. Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.
Section. 6. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the
legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

AMENDMENT XXIV
Section. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice
President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied
or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.
Section. 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXVII
No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election
of Representatives shall have intervened.
JUDGING

The State Contest shall be judged by five judges. The District and Zone Contests shall be judged by three or five judges. Under no condition shall a judge be used for more than one contest in the same year. The decision of the judges shall be final.

CONTEST REGULATIONS

Dress – Uniforms are not permitted. Appropriate business attire is required for all contestants. Contestants may not wear awards and medals from previous competitions.

Copies of the Prepared Oration – Contestants participating in the State Finals shall submit to the State Chairman a neatly printed copy of their prepared oration. Titles of orations must be shown.

Order of Appearance – Contestants shall draw for the order in which they appear, the drawing to be conducted by the Chairman, who will introduce the speakers as Number 1, Number 2, etc.

Notes and Lecterns – The use of notes, amplification, lectern, or speaker’s stand by contestants, or prompting in any manner, is not permitted.

Language – All contestants at each contest level are required to speak in the English language. It is acceptable to utilize or incorporate short phrases of a foreign language into the prepared oration and/or assigned topic in order to develop the argument, establish a point, etc. The vast majority of the prepared oration and/or assigned topic must be delivered in the English language.

Songs – The singing of a song in any language is not permitted and will result in the immediate disqualification of the contestant. The contestant may, however, quote a verse(s) of a song provided proper attribution is made.

Quotations – In both the prepared oration and the assigned topic discourse, quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than 10 words in length, the author’s name must be given in the manuscript and cited orally.

HINTS, TIPS, AND UPDATES

Contestants are encouraged to visit the American Legion Department of Massachusetts web site at http://www.masslegion.org/ for hints, tips, and the latest updates, especially to the contest schedules. When you reach the Department web site, click on Programs→Americanism→Oratorical to reach the Oratorical page. The Chairman will post all updates on the Oratorical page as soon as they are available. Contestants are also encouraged to visit the American Legion National web site at http://www.legion.org/oratorical for further information including videos of the top three finalists in previous years’ National contests delivering their orations [URL for videos is https://www.legion.org/oratorical/videos ]
THE ORATORICAL COMMITTEE

Chairman – Robert C. Johnson, P.O. Box 1130, Groton, MA 01450
Cell 617-513-4484 chairman@maoratorical.org

Vice Chairman – Isaac Mass, 248 Green River Rd., Greenfield, MA 01301
Home 413-774-0123 isaacmass@gmail.com

ZONE CHAIRMAN

Zone 1 – Delfo Barabani Jr, 155 Langevin St., Chicopee, MA 01020
Home 413-530-2849 353vet111@gmail.com

Zone 2 – Robert C. Johnson, P.O. Box 1130, Groton, MA 01450
Cell 617-513-4484 chairman@maoratorical.org

Zone 3 – Theodore Butler, 48 School St., Middleton, MA 01949
Home 978-774-7874 cvsbutler@comcast.net

Zone 4 – TBA

DISTRICT CHAIRMAN

District 1 (Berkshire County)
Kevin Hamel
Home 413-281-8397 hamelsnick@yahoo.com

District 2 (Franklin & Hampshire Counties)
Isaac Mass, 248 Green River Rd., Greenfield, MA 01301
Home 413-774-0123 isaacmass@gmail.com

District 3 (Hampden County)
Delfo Barabani Jr, P.O. Box 81, Chicopee, MA 01020
Home 413-530-2849 353vet111@gmail.com

District 4 (Worcester County)
Lisa McPhee, 157 Water St., Clinton, MA 01510
Home 978-230-6208 lredsox1964@aol.com

District 5 (Middlesex County)
Robert C. Johnson, P.O. Box 1130, Groton, MA 01450
Cell 617-513-4484 chairman@maoratorical.org

District 6 (Norfolk County)
Wendy Eng, 49 Payne St., Quincy, MA
Home 617-584-0079

District 7 (Suffolk County)
William Chisholm, 115 Eutaw St., E. Boston, MA 02128
Home 339-226-1029 bigbillwjc@yahoo.com

District 8 (Essex County)
Theodore Butler, 48 School St., Middleton, MA 01949
Home 978-774-7874 cvsbutler@comcast.net

District 9 (Bristol County)
Priscilla Fonseca
Home 508-994-4751

District 10 (Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes & Nantucket Counties)
David Sillars
Home 508-264-3545 sillyman505@hotmail.com
2020 AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS, ORATORICAL CONTEST
CERTIFICATION OF HIGH SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

Student’s Name: ____________________________________________________________

Sponsored by American Legion Post No.: ___________ District: _________________

Street Address: __________________________________________________________________________

City: ____________________________________________________________________________

County: __________________________ State: _______ Zip Code: _________________

Date of Birth: ________________________ Age: __________ Sex: __________

E-mail Address: __________________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: __________________________________________________________________________

Parent’s Name: __________________________________________________________________________

Name and Location of High School Contestant Now Attends:

________________________________________________________________________________________

Grade: __________________________

The principal of the high school must certify the contestant’s age and the fact that they attend the particular
school by signing this form:

Principal: __________________________________________________________________________

The high school principal is authorized to select one or more school representative(s) in any manner deemed
satisfactory. This application must be filled out completely and mailed, not later than 31 December 2019, to
Robert C. Johnson, P.O. Box 1130, Groton, MA 01450. Applicants are also encouraged to send a copy of the
completed and signed application as a readable PDF file to chairman@maoratorical.org as a backup, particularly
if applying close to the deadline date.