

SpeechWire Electronic Balloting Guide

October 1, 2018 update

Electronic balloting will permit you to have your judges complete their ballots on computers, tablets or phones, and for you to notify them electronically of the rounds they are judging. This feature is relatively new as of Fall 2018, so some of the details in this document may change. However, the overall concept should remain about the same.

Before choosing to use electronic ballots, please make sure that you have thought about how your judges will connect to the internet to complete their ballots. Some judges may use devices that have their own internet access, but you should not assume this will be the majority, or even a goodly portion. Also, some areas of your school or campus may have poor cell coverage, making this difficult. Thus, many or most judges may need to get on a school network. You will need to consider how to get them access to the school network. You should also consider checking with your school to ensure the network will be up throughout your tournament, and that there are no limits on the number of users on the network or the number of users per access code. Lack of internet access will make electronic balloting impossible! Of course, SpeechWire support cannot troubleshoot your school's network.

Registering your judges' email addresses

Once electronic balloting has been activated for your tournament, you will need to have an email address entered for every judge that will take part in electronic balloting. As long as you are permitting judge information to be editing via the registration interface, attending schools will be able to enter an email address for each judge. Their interface looks something like this:

Code	Name	Email	Type
1	<input type="text" value="Ben Stewart"/>	<input type="text" value="support@speechwire.com"/>	Unspecified ▼
Notes (optional): <input type="text"/>			

In a similar fashion, you can also input your judges' email addresses via the manager's interface. Click the Teams button on your home page, then click the Judges button for a team. You will see an Email column in the table of judges. You can enter the email addresses there.

If you are running a NAUDL-affiliated urban debate tournament and have loaded judges from the NAUDL volunteer judge interface, the judges' email addresses should already be loaded.

Linking judges' email addresses to SpeechWire accounts for judging

Once the email addresses are in the system, they need to be linked to SpeechWire accounts in order for the judge to see ballots from the tournament. If a judge already has a SpeechWire account, or if they are a school coach with a SpeechWire coach account, it may already be linked automatically. If they don't have an account or if their address has not been linked in the tournament yet for whatever reason, a button will appear to link it, as is seen below.

1	Ben Stewart	SpeechWire Test Team	support@speechwire.com	LINKED
2	A Judge	SpeechWire Test Team	judge@judges.net	<input type="button" value="Link"/>

Once you click Link, if the judge already has a SpeechWire account, it will be internally linked internally so that the judge can receive ballots. If they don't have an account, they will be sent an email with a password that they can use to log in, as well as information on where to go and how to complete their ballots.

Releasing electronic ballots after you schedule a round

After a round has been scheduled, you should check the round to ensure it looks like all rooms have judges, and everything is the way you want it to be. Once you are ready, you can release the ballots and notify the judges which rounds they are judging.

First, you should release the e-ballots. On the home page, click Posting center. Then click "RELEASE e-ballots". A grid similar to this one will appear:

RELEASING E-BALLOTS

Grouping	Rd. 1	Rd. 2	Rd. 3	Rd. 4
JV Policy Debate	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Check the boxes for any rounds that you want to release, then click 'Perform release as checked'. This will release the ballots from that round into the appropriate judges' accounts at ballots.speechwire.com.

Next, you should send out the emails and text messages to the judges to let them know where they are judging. Judges will receive emails at the email address associated with them in the tournament, and any subscribed emails or phone numbers for that judge will be emailed or texted respectively.

To blast out these emails and texts, go to the home page and click Posting center. Click "BLAST out JUDGE alerts". A screen similar to the following will appear:

Blast out judge ballot pickup alerts

[Return to posting center](#)

[Return to home page](#)

What group of judges do you want to blast an alert to?

Do you want to restrict to one grouping only?

What round are you blasting for?

[Return to posting center](#)

[Return to home page](#)

Select which group (type) of judges you want to include in the blast, along with which competition grouping to blast assignments for, and which round to blast. Be careful -- if you blast out the wrong round at the wrong time, it could cause **immense confusion** among your judging pool. Once you click "Send blasts now", wait a moment for a confirmation that the judge blast is complete.

Replacing judges

You may need to replace judges after you complete the blast. If so, you can blast a single judge their new assignment. After replacing a judge via the Judge replacement tool, there should be a button provided to blast the judge immediately:

Blast the new judge?

If you replace a judge via the Schematic viewer and detailed judge assigner, you will also see a link in the debate/section viewer to blast the round assignment to the judge(s) in the round:

Judge

According to the manager's specifications, there should be 1 judge in this section.

[1 Ben Stewart \(SpeechWire Test Team\)](#) **Oct. 1, 2018 9:02 AM** ([Blast round assignment\(s\)](#))

If you have already released the e-ballots for the round, and you place a new "digital" judge into a round, it should immediately appear in their account at ballots.speechwire.com.

How judges access their e-ballots

Judges can access their ballots by going to the SpeechWire e-balloting website, which is at:

ballots.speechwire.com

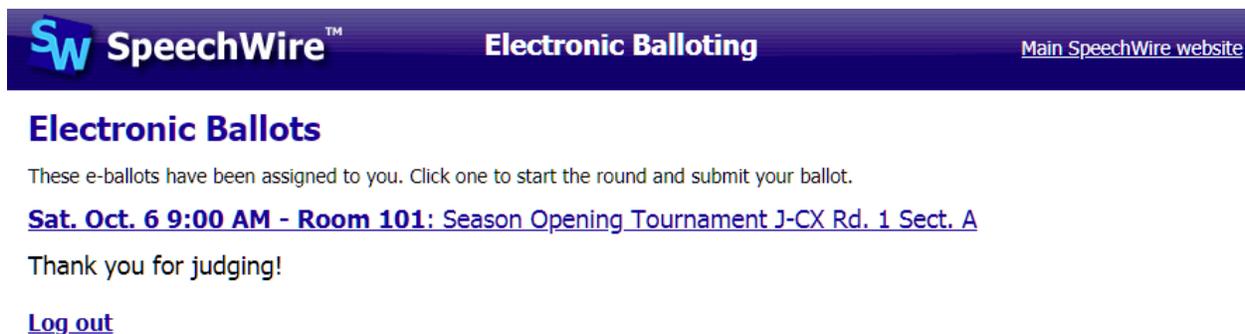
There is also a link in the normal SpeechWire coach accounts to the e-balloting login, but they can bypass that step by just going to ballots.speechwire.com directly.

Once on the website, they need to type in their email address and the password on their SpeechWire account. (For coaches, this is the same as their SpeechWire coach account.)



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the SpeechWire logo, the text "Electronic Balloting", and a link to the "Main SpeechWire website". Below the bar is the heading "E-Balloting: Log in to your SpeechWire account". The instructions read: "Please enter your SpeechWire account email address and account password and click 'Log in'. If you have forgotten your password, click 'Forgot password?'". There are two input fields: "Email address:" and "Password:". Below the fields are two buttons: "Log in" and "Forgot password?".

Once a judge logs in, they will see any ballots that they have been assigned on their home page:



The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the SpeechWire logo, the text "Electronic Balloting", and a link to the "Main SpeechWire website". Below the bar is the heading "Electronic Ballots". The text reads: "These e-ballots have been assigned to you. Click one to start the round and submit your ballot." Below this is a link: "[Sat. Oct. 6 9:00 AM - Room 101: Season Opening Tournament J-CX Rd. 1 Sect. A](#)". Below the link is the text "Thank you for judging!". At the bottom is a link: "[Log out](#)".

The judge will then click or tap the round that they are currently judging. If they have not yet started the round, a large highlighted link will offer them the chance to mark that the round has begun. They should do this once they are in the room with the competitors and the round is actually starting. This lets the tab room know that the room has started and that they don't need to worry about what's happening there.

Electronic ballot

Season Opening Tournament J-CX Rd. 1 Sect. A
Room 101, Sat. Oct. 6 at 9:00 AM

Debaters:

Aff/Pro: SpeechWire Tes AbCJ **Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe**

Neg/Con: SpeechWire Tes EaGa **Earl Willis and Gail Holland**

[Click here to start the round](#)

Please click the link above when the round begins so that the tab room knows that you have started the round.

[Return to home page](#)

After the judge clicks the link to start the round, the schematic on the tab room's interface will update with the time the round started.

Round 1 - 9:00 AM					Blast e-ballots	Replace a judge	Edit schematic
Sect.	Judge	Room	Started?	Competitors			
A	Ben Stewart ...	101	9:01 AM	SpeechWire Tes AbCJ Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe (AFF) (0-0)	SpeechWire Tes EaGa Earl Willis and Gail Holland (Neg) (0-0)		

Note the ellipsis next to the judge's name. This indicates that no reason for decision has been submitted yet. The fact that the debaters are highlighted in white, not gray, indicates no decision has been recorded yet.

Once the judge has started the round, they will see the e-ballot itself, which looks like this:

SpeechWire Tes AbCJ Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe

Side: Aff/Pro

Abbi Adkins: points Rank:

CJ Lowe: points Rank:

SpeechWire Tes EaGa Earl Willis and Gail Holland

Side: Neg/Con

Earl Willis: points Rank:

Gail Holland: points Rank:

Winning Debater(s)

- SpeechWire Tes AbCJ Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe
- SpeechWire Tes EaGa Earl Willis and Gail Holland

The judge will enter the points for each speaker, along with their rank (if applicable). They will also mark the winning debater and then click 'Save ballot'. This will lock in the debate result. They will not be able to change it once submitted -- if they make an error, they will need to consult with the tab room to have the tab room change it.

Below the decision portion of the ballot are boxes for a reason for decision as well as comments for each side in the debate.

Comments for SpeechWire Tes AbCJ Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe

Comments for SpeechWire Tes EaGa Earl Willis and Gail Holland

Reason for decision

The judge can enter comments during the debate and save them periodically as they go (to ensure they are not lost if the back button is accidentally clicked or the session times out, for instance). Additionally, comments do not lock when the decision does, so if a judge wants to add more comments later in the tournament, they can go back in and do so, although they won't be able to change their decision, of course. Judges can thus help keep the tournament moving by quickly rendering a decision, then putting in comments at their convenience.

If you are permitting low point wins, and a judge marks one, they will see a warning noting that they have marked a low point win. They can then either change the decision or submit the low point win.

After a judge submits a decision and RFD, the schematic will update on the tab room's side to indicate that the RFD is in and the debate will be highlighted in gray to show that the decision has been recorded.

Round 1 - 9:00 AM					Blast e-ballots	Replace a judge	Edit schematic
Sect.	Judge	Room	Started?	Competitors			
A	Ben Stewart RFD	101	9:01 AM	SpeechWire Tes AbCJ Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe (AFF) (1-0)	SpeechWire Tes EaGa Earl Willis and Gail Holland (Neg) (0-1)		

You can click "RFD" for a debate to see the judge's reason for decision and comments for the debate.

Paper judges

It's possible that not all judges will be able to complete electronic ballots for whatever reason. If you assign a debate to a judge that does not have an email address registered in the system, they will be denoted as a PAPER judge in the schematic:

Round 1 - 9:00 AM					Blast e-ballots	Replace a judge	Edit schematic
Sect.	Judge	Room	Started?	Competitors			
A	A Judge PAPER	101		SpeechWire Tes AbCJ Abbi Adkins and CJ Lowe (AFF) (0-0)	SpeechWire Tes EaGa Earl Willis and Gail Holland (Neg) (0-0)		

If you have paper judges, you can print ballots for your paper judges only in the Printing center.

Debate ballots...

Grouping: Round: Sort by: Hide e-ballots?

Optional note on ballots:

There is an option to hide e-ballots -- this will cause only the paper judges' ballots be printed out so that you can hand them out to them.