



**Health Law and Policy Program**  
**Eleventh Annual National Health Law Writing Competition**

**2026 Rules and Requirements**

1. Papers must address and analyze health law and/or food/drug/device law issues. Papers that analyze antitrust or tax laws, employee benefits and/or labor considerations in the health care industry are eligible. By contrast, a paper that focuses mainly on analysis of intellectual property or environmental laws/statutes, even if relating to health or the health care industry, will not be eligible. Please reach out to [health@wcl.american.edu](mailto:health@wcl.american.edu) with questions or for clarification.
2. Current (academic school year 2025-2026) 2L, 3L, and 4L (evening/part-time) JD and LL.M. students enrolled in a U.S. law school at the time of paper submission are eligible to participate. [Please note that for those law students who are graduating in December 2025, your paper will only be eligible if you submit it in the portal prior to your December graduation date]. The paper submission portal will open on **Monday, December 8, 2025.**
3. Papers must adhere to the following requirements:
  - a. Endnotes; no footnotes;
  - b. Page length between a minimum of 15 and maximum of 25 pages (***exclusive of the endnotes***);
  - c. Page numbers at the bottom of each page;
  - d. One-inch margins;
  - e. 12-point Times New Roman font;

- f. Double-spaced;
  - g. Blue Book style citations;
  - h. The title of the paper at the top of the first page (no table of contents, cover page, abstract, charts, graphs, diagrams or illustrations); and
  - i. No name or other identifying information on the paper.
4. Only one eligible student may write the submitted paper (i.e., no teams or assistance by others).
5. A student may submit a paper that he/she wrote in connection with law school coursework, provided that the paper is wholly the work product of the student. ***A student may submit more than one paper.***
6. The use of artificial intelligence or chatbot mechanisms (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT, Bing AI, Jasper Chat, or similar platforms) to generate, research, write, or develop any portion of the submitted paper is strictly prohibited. Students may use grammar and spell check tools. AUWCL reserves the right to screen submissions for AI-generated content using available detection tools. Any contestant found to have used AI in the creation of their work product—either in whole or in part—will be disqualified from the competition. If such use is discovered after a winner is announced and the prize awarded, the contestant must forfeit their winning designation and return the prize. In this case, AUWCL will select a new winner from the remaining eligible submissions. By submitting a paper, contestants affirm that the work is entirely their own and has not been generated through unauthorized AI tools.

7. The deadline for submission of the Official Entry Form and the paper (in pdf format) is **Midnight ET on Sunday, May 3, 2026** using the online entry system found at:  
[https://american.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_6AmCcEPW5i47Obs](https://american.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6AmCcEPW5i47Obs)
8. The paper may not have already been published in any manner. Please note, however, that students are permitted to submit a paper that is pending publication, so long as it has not been published as of May 3, 2026. If the paper will be appearing in a publication after May 3, 2026, the student may submit the paper for this competition, so long as it is wholly the work product of the student.
9. Judges will use the following criteria to evaluate each eligible entry:
  - a. Originality/ Timeliness
  - b. Depth of Legal Research
  - c. Depth of Legal Analysis
  - d. Clarity and Writing Quality
  - e. Overall Impact
10. Prizes will be awarded in the categories of first place, second place, third place, and, at the judges' discretion, honorable mention. The competition prizes are generously sponsored by American University Washington College of Law alumni. A select panel of impartial judges will evaluate the papers and determine the winners, in the panel's sole discretion. The panel reserves the

right to decline to award the prizes if not merited by the papers submitted. The panel's decisions are final.

11. Winners will be notified by email in **June 2026**.
12. Winners must submit a Social Security number, a mailing address, and any other documentation that is requested by AUWCL. Students who do not have a Social Security number due to foreign status who otherwise meet the Competition Rules and Requirements are welcome to participate in the Competition but are not eligible to receive the monetary prizes.
13. Authors retain all ownership rights to their work submitted to the AUWCL National Health Law Writing Competition. However, by submitting a paper, authors grant AUWCL permission to publish the title of the paper, along with the author's name, law school, and any selected excerpts or testimonials, in materials related to the Competition.
14. All students who submit an eligible entry will receive a Certificate of Participation electronically in Summer 2026. Students who receive a prize will also receive a hardcopy version of the certificate, to be mailed to the address provided on the entry form.
15. These Rules and Requirements may be clarified or modified at any time prior to the Competition deadline. Please check the Competition webpage for updates.

**Any paper that fails to meet all aspects of the Rules and Requirements will be disqualified. These criteria will be strictly enforced.**