



**Questions and Answers for 2025-2026 High School Mock Trial
Case, with Notes of Changes in Updated Case Document:
*State v. VanSteenburg***

- (1) For 2024-2025, our competition began using the impeachment by omission rule rather than invention of fact. See CT Mock Trial Rules, Rule 4.1 (“teams are not allowed to create new facts that are not set forth in the witness statements or exhibits or that are reasonably inferred from the facts set forth therein. . . This rule may be enforced by impeachment pursuant to Rule 4.1b.”). To that end, Stipulation 3 was useful last year as it read in relevant part: “Each witness was given an opportunity to update or amend his/her statement shortly before trial, and no changes were made. If asked, a witness must acknowledge signing the document(s) and must attest to the content of the documents(s) and the date(s) indicated thereon.” There is no similar stipulation this year, but Rule 4.1 is still in effect. Accordingly, should there be a stipulation stating that witnesses were given an opportunity before trial to update/amend their statements, and no changes were made?

Stipulation No. 3 now reads: "Each witness was given an opportunity to update or amend his/her statement shortly before trial, and no changes were made. If asked, a witness must acknowledge signing the document(s) and must attest to the content of the documents(s) and the date(s) indicated thereon. All statements were notarized on the day which they were signed."

- (2) Stipulation No. 10 reads: “Exhibit 5 and Exhibit 5A are the same document, except that certain information has been redacted from Exhibit 5A.” Stipulation 9 also discusses Exhibit 5. On the

one hand, however, Exhibit 5A has a line that reads: “Post removed by Nic/Niki VanSteenburg on July 5, 2024 02:49 a.m.” On the other hand, Exhibit 5 does not have such sentence. Are both Exhibit 5 and Exhibit 5A both supposed to have/not have such sentence?

Exhibit 5A has been changed in response to his question. It now reads:
"Post Edited by Nic/Niki VanSteenburg on July 5, 2024 02:49 a.m."

(3) Lines 73-74 of Dr. Rodriguez’s Affidavit (P. 19) reads: “At the time of writing this report in summer of 2025. . . .” however, the affidavit is dated 10/17/2024 and the Autopsy report is dated 7/6/2024. Is the affidavit supposed to say “summer of 2025”?

The date on line 74 has been changed from 2025 to 2024.

(4) In the defendant's affidavit (P. 40) in the paragraph starting at Line 183, it states that the defendant purchased a small lock box after the death of Huda. However, in the testimony of Kris Seeley, specifically on page 26 starting at line 124, it indicates that a strong box was found under the defendant's bed at the time that Seeley was dispatched to Huda's house. Is this a purposeful contradiction indicating that one of them is lying or is that a mistake of timing?

The existing problem answers this question in all respects.

(5) In the Taylor Williams Statement, the sentence at p.41-42, lines 42-44, repeats.

This was a typo and one of the repeated sentences has been deleted.
("When the day finally came, she was late, which was peculiar.")