



American Culinary Federation Chef Educator of the Year 2027 Regional Qualifier Guidelines

Updated August 11, 2026

Preparing for the Competition

All Chefs selected to compete at the 2027 Regional Qualifier will follow the following guidelines:

CEOY

- Present a demonstration on the correct or classic preparation of:
 - Bearnaise Sauce – 5 egg yolk batch
 - -or-
 - Pastry Cream – 1 quart finished sauce

General Guidelines

- Competitors have ten (10) minutes for set-up, twenty (20) minutes for demonstration, ten (10) minutes for a q & a period, and ten (10) minutes for clean-up.
- Competitors are required to submit a HACCP report for all food items brought into the competition kitchen (consisting of temperature logs while food is in production and transport); this will be provided to the judges upon entering the kitchen at the stated competition start time.

Packets for the Judges

- Competitors must provide three (3) judges packets. The packets must be presented in packet form upon entering the kitchen at the designated competition start time. The packets should be prepared using 12pt, Times New Roman font and be stapled in the upper left-hand corner of the packet. Please do not use binders or report covers that may inhibit easy access and reference for the judges. At a minimum, each packet will include the following (in this order):
 - **A cover page** with your photo (in Professional Chef attire, including toque), name, email, certification, address, cell phone, and place of employment
 - **A one-page resume**
 - **A one-page presentation recipe**
 - **A one-page list of 10 key points for success** that you will cover in your presentation. Each point must describe what you do and why it is recommended.

Ingredient Guidelines

- Competitors must bring their own food items, ingredients, and equipment.
- Your preparation must be made by hand whisking with no assistance.
- Eggs must be separated during your presentation, saving the egg whites for examination.
- Clarified Butter and finished reduction can be prepared in advance, however, you must show how to prepare the reduction. The completed reduction and clarified butter must be strained as part of your presentation.
- Prepare the finished product for the cool-down process, but reserve a small portion for judges' tasting.

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Competition Kitchen

- A kitchen diagram and a list of equipment provided will be sent to each competitor by the ACF national office once the kitchen design has been established. This will include the refrigeration and freezer space available and the number of electrical outlets.
- Competitors must bring their own tools, cookware, small specialty equipment, and chinaware.
- Please keep in mind that you will be limited to the number of outlets provided and the use of power strips will not be allowed.
- Competitors should choose equipment that can be supported by the number of outlets and wattage provided. Time will not be adjusted for equipment malfunctions that result from the provided wattage being overrun.
- The amount of space available is limited so only bring in the appropriate amount of equipment.

Timeline and Guidance

Window	Timing	Guidance
Set Up Window	10 Minutes	Chefs can move into their stations and set up for effective execution; no cooking may occur in this window. However, water may be set to heat, immersion circulators can be turned on, and products may be unwrapped for initial preparations.
Presentation Window	20 Minutes	All production leading to service of the menu must be executed within this window, including all technical skills, knife cuts, cooking and fabrication.
Q & A Window	10 Minutes	You will be required to answer selected questions from the judging panel.
Clean Up Window	10 Minutes	Chefs are to leave at the conclusion of this window with the kitchen in the same condition as it was when they entered their set-up window. All remaining food items should be displayed and labeled for judging.

Uniform

Competitors must wear the following:

- Chef coat
- Black pants
- Kitchen-appropriate black shoes or clogs
- Chef toque
- Full apron



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Judging Process

- Competitors will be evaluated by a panel of distinguished chefs.
- After the “set-up window” time is complete, competitors will not be allowed to leave the competition kitchen. All dishes and equipment will need to remain in the kitchen until after the cooking window is closed. Any infractions of this rule will result in loss of points or disqualification at the discretion of the judges. In the event a competitor requires additional product or equipment they will need to make a request to the lead judge.
- The lead judge will have the discretionary right to clear a viewing area with the intention of maintaining the integrity of the overall competition.
- All the judges’ decisions are final.

Presidential Wildcard (Effective June 2026)

In order for a competitor to move forward to the ACF National Championship from any of the ACF Region Qualifiers, they must score a minimum of a 70 Bronze Medal. In the event that there is no competitor who scores a 70 Bronze Medal in any given category, the highest scoring non-winning competitor from the other regions will move forward. This applies to all Region Qualifier Competitions.