



AMA election process - 2018

Introduction

Officers and four councils are elected by the American Medical Association (AMA) House of Delegates (HOD) at the Annual Meeting. Nominations for these offices are widely solicited throughout the Federation. Campaigns are often spirited and are conducted under rules established by the AMA-HOD, rules that may be modified from time to time. This democratic process allows delegates ample opportunity to become acquainted with the candidates and their views. The elections are by secret ballot and are conducted under the supervision of the Committee on Rules and Credentials and the chief teller, who are appointed by the speaker and vice speaker, who are responsible for overall administration of the elections.

Announcements of candidacy

Individuals intending to seek election at the next Annual Meeting should make their intentions known to the speakers, generally by providing the speakers' office (hod@ama-assn.org) with an electronic announcement "card" that includes any or all of the following elements and no more: the candidate's name, photograph, email address, URL, the office sought and a list of endorsing societies. The speakers will ensure that the information is posted on our AMA website (ama-assn.org/ama-elections) in a timely fashion, generally on the morning of the last day of a House of Delegates meeting or upon adjournment of the meeting. Announcements that include additional information (e.g., a brief resume or a slogan) will not be posted to the website as they are in violation of the rules. Printed announcements may not be distributed in the venue where the House of Delegates meets. The speakers may use additional means to make delegates aware of members intending to seek election. (G-610.020[2]) Only a single announcement of candidacy is allowed, after which active campaigning is not permitted until the AMA Board of Trustees (BOT) nominates candidates for AMA councils (approximately mid-April). Announcements are best prepared in a 16:9 format.

This rule provides a standard mechanism by which individuals can make known their intention to seek office. Printed announcements may not be distributed at an AMA-HOD meeting under any circumstance.

Nominations

Council nominations: The AMA-BOT solicits nominations for four elected councils: the Council on Constitution and Bylaws, Council on Medical Education, Council on Medical Service, and Council on Science and Public Health. The deadline for receipt of nominations is March 15 of each year, and the AMA-BOT announces council nominees after its April meeting. Council candidates who have announced their intent to seek election, including those seeking reelection, must submit the necessary nomination materials to the AMA-BOT Office by the deadline.

Officer nominations: Officers are nominated by their sponsoring societies; they are not nominated by the AMA-BOT. As a courtesy and to keep the headquarters informed, these candidates are asked to send a letter to the AMA's executive vice president announcing their intention to seek office.

Under AMA bylaws, a delegate may also nominate candidates for council and officer vacancies from the floor.

Conflict of interest disclosures

Under AMA-HOD policy, all candidates for election are required to complete a conflict of interest / disclosure of affiliations form prior to their election. Candidates should contact the Office of General Counsel (ogc@ama-assn.org) or the Office of House of Delegates Affairs (hod@ama-assn.org) for information on completing the form. Forms must be submitted by March 15 of the year in which the candidate is seeking election. Completed forms are posted in the “Members-only” section of our AMA website. The requirement applies to all candidates for election, including those nominated from the floor. (G-610.020[15])

Campaigns

Announcements of candidacy are considered separate and distinct from active campaigning. Active campaigns for AMA elective office may not begin until the AMA-BOT has announced the nominees for council seats after its April meeting. Active campaigning includes mass outreach activities such as letters or emails directed to all or a significant portion of the members of the AMA-HOD, communicated by *or on behalf of* the candidate. (G-610.020[3])

At the Opening Session of the Annual Meeting, each officer candidate in a contested election will give a two-minute self-nominating speech. The order of the speeches will be determined by lot. No speeches for unopposed candidates will be given, except for president-elect. When there is no contest for president-elect, the candidate will ask a delegate to place his or her name in nomination, and the election will then be by acclamation. When there are two or more candidates for the office of president-elect, a two-minute nominating speech will be given by a delegate. In addition, the speaker will schedule a debate in front of the AMA-HOD to be conducted by rules established by the speaker. (G-610.020[12])

There are no nominating or seconding speeches for council candidates; the chair of the AMA-BOT places their names in nomination at the Opening Session of the AMA-HOD, after which the speaker will call for additional nominations from the floor.

Guiding principles for AMA-HOD elections

The following principles have been adopted by the AMA-HOD (Policy G-610.021) and provide guidance on how elections should be conducted and how the selection of AMA leaders should occur:

1. AMA delegates should: (a) avail themselves of all available background information about candidates for elected positions in the AMA; (b) determine which candidates are best qualified to help the AMA achieve its mission; and (c) make independent decisions about which candidates to vote for.
2. Any electioneering practices that distort the democratic processes of the AMA-HOD elections, such as vote trading for the purpose of supporting candidates, are unacceptable.
3. Candidates for elected positions should comply with the requirements and the spirit of the AMA-HOD policy on campaigning and campaign spending.
4. Candidates and their sponsoring organizations should exercise restraint in campaign spending. Federation organizations should establish clear and detailed guidelines on the appropriate level of resources that should be allocated to the political campaigns of their members for AMA leadership positions.
5. Incumbency should not assure the re-election of an individual to an AMA leadership position.

6. Service in any AMA leadership position should not assure ascendancy to another leadership position.

Campaign rules

This listing of campaign rules reflects policies adopted by the AMA-HOD and procedures developed by the speakers to comply with AMA-HOD actions. Where AMA-HOD policies are listed, the relevant AMA policy number is listed in parentheses following the policy. The rules are listed in general categories. Questions and concerns may be directed to the speakers at hod@ama-assn.org.

Expenses, events, parties and other activities

1. Campaign expenditures and activities should be limited to reasonable levels necessary for adequate candidate exposure to the delegates. (G-610.020[10])

Campaign giveaways are covered separately; see ¶4 below.

2. Campaign parties are allowed only at the Annual Meeting. A state, specialty society, caucus or coalition may contribute to more than one party, but a candidate may be featured at only one party. Featured means: (a) being present in a receiving line, (b) appearing by name or in a picture on a poster or notice in or outside of the party venue, or (c) distributing stickers, buttons, etc. with the candidate's name on them. At these events, alcohol may be served only on a cash or no-host bar basis. (G-610.020[8])

A candidate may be featured at only one party at the Annual Meeting irrespective of who sponsors the event. Any particular society may, however, contribute to more than one party or campaign event, so long as a candidate is featured at only one event.

3. Campaign gifts may be distributed at only the Annual Meeting in the not-for-official-business bag and at one campaign party. Campaign gifts should only be distributed during the Annual Meeting and not mailed to delegates and alternate delegates in advance of the meeting. No other campaign memorabilia shall be distributed at any time. (G-610.020[10])
4. The speaker shall establish a limit on allowable expenditures for campaign-related gifts. In addition to these giveaway gifts, campaign memorabilia are allowed but are limited to a button, pin or sticker. (G-610.020[10])
 - The cost of stickers, pins or buttons will not be included in the spending limits. Stickers, pins and buttons should be simple and not be gifts in disguise.
 - For the 2018 Annual Meeting, each candidate is limited to spending no more than two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50) per delegate and alternate delegate for giveaways, including drawings or door prizes for items to be delivered either at the meeting or later. This limit applies for the entire year and is specifically intended to include the total cost of those items distributed in the bag at the Opening Session as well as any raffle or drawing conducted on behalf of a candidate. The aggregate limit for 2018 is \$3085 (617 delegates x 2 x \$2.50).
5. Candidates for AMA office should not attend meetings of the state medical societies unless officially invited and could accept reimbursement of travel expenses by the state society in accordance with the policies of the society. (G-610.020[13])

Literature and publicity

1. At the Interim Meeting, campaign-related expenditures and activities shall be discouraged. Large campaign receptions, luncheons, or other formal campaign activities and the distribution of campaign literature and gifts are prohibited at the Interim Meeting. It is permissible at the Interim Meeting for candidates seeking election at the next Annual Meeting to engage in individual outreach, such as small group meetings, including informal dinners, meant to familiarize others with a candidate's opinions and positions on issues. (G-610.020[6])

This rule prohibits campaign parties as well as the distribution of campaign literature and gifts at the Interim Meeting. Announcements of candidacy (see above) may occur at the Interim Meeting.

2. Displays of campaign posters, signs and literature are prohibited in public areas of hotels in which Annual Meetings are held because they detract from the dignity of the position being sought and are unsightly. Campaign posters may be displayed at campaign parties, and campaign literature may be distributed in the not-for-official-business bag for members of the AMA-HOD. (G-610.020[9])
3. An election manual containing information on all candidates for election shall continue to be developed annually, with distribution limited to publication on our AMA website, typically on the Web pages associated with the meeting at which elections will occur. The election manual provides an equal opportunity for each candidate to present the material he or she considers important to bring before the members of the AMA-HOD. The election manual serves as a mechanism to reduce the number of telephone calls, mailings and other messages members of the House of Delegates receive from or on behalf of candidates. (G-610.020[4])
4. A reduction in the volume of telephone calls from candidates, and literature and letters by or on behalf of candidates is encouraged. The use of electronic messages to contact electors should also be minimized, and if used, must allow recipients to opt out of receiving future messages. (G-610.020[5])
5. No campaign literature shall be distributed and no mass outreach electronic messages shall be transmitted after the Opening Session of the Annual Meeting. (G-610.020[9])
6. Upon request, the AMA Office of House of Delegates Affairs will furnish a candidate with a file (typically a spreadsheet) containing the names and mailing addresses of members of the AMA-HOD, members of AMA councils and the board of trustees, and (if requested) other groups such as state and specialty society executives. The file may be used only for the mailing of a single announcement of candidacy or the mailing of campaign-related material(s) after the AMA-BOT has announced council nominations (approximately mid-April), at which point active campaigning is permitted. The Office of House of Delegates affairs does not provide email addresses for any purpose.

The file may not be used for mailing holiday cards, letters or other materials, even if not campaign-oriented; or inviting members of the AMA-HOD to events, other than invitations to campaign receptions or parties that will take place in conjunction with the Annual Meeting and that are mailed during the time allowed for active campaigning. Such other use constitutes a violation of the rules.

Interviews and presentations

1. The speakers' office shall coordinate the scheduling of candidate interviews for general officer positions (trustee, president-elect, speaker and vice speaker). (G-610.020[11]) Interviews are scheduled as follows:
 - Interviews will be scheduled only for officer candidates in contested elections.
 - Interviews will be scheduled from noon on Friday to 6 p.m. on Monday, the night before the election. On these days interview sessions may be scheduled from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., except for

times when the AMA-HOD or reference committees are in session and except for when the usual hospitality suites are open.

- Interviews coordinated by the speakers' office will be scheduled for 10 minutes. Each candidate will be given one open 10-minute period of time between each interview. Caucus staff should advise the speakers' office of the time slot during which they wish for their interview session to be scheduled as well as the location of the interviews. We will honor these requests as much as possible.
- The speakers' office will prepare and distribute the initial schedule of interviews.

After the initial schedule is released, adjustments or revisions must be arranged with the caucus staff and/or other candidates affected.

- Groups wishing to arrange their own interviews are free to do so but must await release of the initial interview schedule. These interviews must be arranged with the candidates directly. The speakers' office can provide candidate contact information for this purpose.
2. Interviews of council candidates are arranged by the candidates and the entities conducting the interviews. The speakers' office can provide candidate contact information for this purpose.
 3. Every state and specialty society delegation is encouraged to participate in a regional caucus for the purposes of candidate review activities. (G-610.020[14])

Elections

The AMA elections are held on Tuesday of the Annual Meeting from 7:30 to 8:45 a.m. under the supervision of the Committee on Rules and Credentials and the chief teller. All delegates eligible to vote must be in line to vote at the time appointed for the close of polls. Poll hours will not be extended beyond the times posted.

Only credentialed delegates are permitted to cast a ballot. If a delegate cannot participate in the election, he or she may have a designated alternate delegate properly credentialed at the AMA registration desk prior to voting.

Candidates are listed on the ballot in alphabetical order by name only. AMA bylaws require simultaneous elections that call for the exact number of votes for each vacancy. Each ballot clearly states the number of votes that should be cast. Ballots containing more or fewer votes will be declared invalid by the chief teller. If a delegate makes a mistake and spoils the ballot, he or she should immediately signal a teller and request another ballot. A majority vote of the legal ballots cast is required for election.

If all of the vacancies are not filled on the first ballot, a runoff ballot will be distributed and collected by the tellers on the floor of the AMA-HOD. AMA bylaws dictate that if three or more members of the AMA-BOT or any council are still to be elected, the number of nominees in the runoff election shall be no more than twice the number of remaining vacancies less one. If two or fewer members of the AMA-BOT or council are still to be elected, the number of nominees in the runoff shall be no more than twice the number of remaining vacancies. In either case, the nominees in runoff elections are determined by retaining those who received the greater number of votes on the preceding ballot and eliminating the nominee(s) who received the fewest votes on the preceding ballot, except where there is a tie. This process will continue until all the vacancies are filled.

Those candidates who are elected officially take office at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

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