



Special meeting FAQs

On Friday April 3, 2020, your AMA Board of Trustees (BOT) made the very difficult decision to suspend the 2020 Annual Meeting of the House of Delegates (HOD). Many uncertainties remain as we move into the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is likely to put continued extraordinary stress on our patients, practices, training programs and the entire health care system. Visit the COVID-19 (2019 novel coronavirus) resource center for physicians for pertinent AMA information and advocacy regarding this pandemic.

While your BOT and speakers are continuing to monitor the situation, we anticipate convening a Special Meeting of the House of Delegates, to be conducted virtually, when conditions have improved and a quorum can reasonably be achieved. We are working with the management team to design a meeting that will ensure secure voting and protect participants' rights. While details have yet to be finalized, and are to some extent dependent upon evolving circumstances, we wish to provide as much information as possible, as early as available.

Who made this decision?

The decision to suspend a regular meeting of the HOD rests with our BOT (Bylaws 13.1.1). The decision was made April 3, 2020, after much deliberation during a virtual meeting of the BOT. The decision was based upon the continuing Covid-19 pandemic and the demands upon our physicians and health care system, combined with government mandates prohibiting large-scale gatherings in Chicago and continuing restrictions on travel throughout the country.

Does this mean there will be no HOD meeting until November?

The BOT will continue to monitor the evolving situation and anticipates convening a "Special Meeting" of the House of Delegates when conditions have improved. The date, time and purpose of the meeting will be determined by the Board. In the meantime, your speakers and the Board are working with the AMA management team to understand how best to execute a meeting that will ensure secure voting and protect participants' rights. Those details will be finalized over the next several weeks.

What is intended to be included in the special meeting?

The Special Meeting of the HOD will be a limited virtual meeting to conduct only essential business and transition leadership. The meeting will include the inauguration of our president-elect and election of new officers. Other business to be included has not yet been determined. Once the date and format of the special meeting are determined, the HOD will receive an official call to the meeting which will include the planned agenda and order of business.

What about resolutions?

Given the limited nature of the special meeting to consider only essential business, your speakers ask that delegations and individuals hold off on submitting resolutions at this time. For those wishing to submit resolutions, please be assured it is our intention to expand the scope of the planned November meeting of the House of Delegates to allow consideration of items beyond our usual focus at interim meetings on advocacy and legislation.

When will the special meeting occur?

These are uncertain times and the date of the special meeting has not been determined, but it will not be any earlier than June 6, 2020. The inflection point of the pandemic is unknown and we recognize that even once the worst of the pandemic is behind us that physicians need time to care for their patients and restore their practices. Planning for a special meeting has just begun, and our AMA has never held such a meeting before. We wish we could give you more details at this time, but that is simply not possible. The Bylaws require 20 days notice for the meeting, but it is our intention to provide at least 4-6 weeks notice. As we explore options for a virtual meeting, it is unlikely that travel would be necessary so we hope this shorter than usual notice will be adequate.

Should I keep June 6-10 blocked on my calendar?

Your speakers are aware that all of you have had June 6-10 blocked on your calendar for some time. While the details are not yet determined, given the limited nature of the intended virtual meeting we anticipate only portions of one or maybe two days will be needed. To limit disruption to your professional duties as much as possible for as many of you as possible, it is our intention to hold the meeting on a weekend. Given this, you should be able to reopen your calendar for Monday, June 8 through Wednesday, June 10 with confidence. In addition, no travel days need be blocked. As noted above, it would be premature for us to schedule the virtual meeting on the weekend of June 6-7 at this time, but if your schedule allows you may want to keep those dates open on your calendar in the event that it appears conditions are improving sufficiently that your BOT determines that we can anticipate convening the special meeting on that weekend. We will keep you informed and provide as much notice as possible once your BOT makes their decision regarding the date of the special meeting.

Should I cancel my travel plans for Chicago?

Yes, the in-person meeting scheduled for June 6-10, 2020 in Chicago will not take place. Most airlines and hotels have relaxed their cancellation policies. Individuals should contact their airlines and the hotel to cancel any reservations. If your hotel reservation was at the Hyatt Regency, meeting-related reservations have been cancelled by the hotel, and you should have

received an email to that effect from the Hyatt. If you have concerns or questions, contact Linda.Robinson@ama-assn.org.

What impact does this have upon pending HOD elections and current leadership?

AMA Bylaws (Chapter 13) provide that all elections be suspended and that those currently in office remain in their positions until the next meeting of the House of Delegates. This includes all officers and council members. Terms of office and maximum tenure are extended until the next meeting of the HOD.

Our rules disallow active campaigning by or on behalf of all candidates until your BOT announces its nominations, a step that has not yet been taken. The BOT felt that our profession and particularly our delegates and alternate delegates, the leaders within their medical communities, need to be focused on the Covid-19 pandemic rather than AMA campaigns. Pending Board action to call the special meeting, active campaigning by candidates—whether announced or not—is not permitted. Nominations will be announced, and active campaigning will be allowed several weeks before the date of the special meeting. All candidates will be notified and be given equal opportunity.

The extension of terms also applies to appointed councils. Current members' terms that are scheduled to end after 2020 Annual will continue until the end of the special meeting. Newly appointed members will begin their term at that time. Appointments will be announced at a later date, with the exception of certain medical student appointments to HOD councils which will be announced in the near future.