

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION PRIVATE PRACTICE PHYSICIANS SECTION

Resolution: 9
(A-25)

Introduced by: Alex Shteynshlyuger, MD

Subject: Conflicts of Interest and Transparency at the PPPS—Let Members Decide

Referred to: PPPS Reference Committee
(xxxx, MD, Chair)

Whereas, the PPPS is a relatively new section that experienced growing pains, including violations of internal operating procedures during prior elections that required the removal of an unqualified nominee and suspending rules to fill the position without giving members adequate time to review nominee's conflicts of interest; and

Whereas, conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived, have a long-term detrimental institutional effect on the legitimacy of the PPPS, but at the same time members should be free to choose their elected representatives, ignoring conflicts of interest if they choose to do so; and

Whereas, currently close to 50 percent of the elected Governing Council have a conflict of interest, some obvious such as first-degree relatives with the same last name, others are less obvious such as two employees/contractors of the same practice (oakmedgroup.com) and the disqualified candidate at the last election was an employee/contractor of the same practice¹; and

Whereas, the qualification of the nominees for the position that they are running to represent is not entirely clear from the Conflict of Interest form, which is true of AMA positions in general; and

Whereas, organizations such as Optum Medical, Kaiser Permanente Group, Oak Street Health, Summit Medical, and Amazon Health (OneMedical) are formally organized as physician-owned private practices in many states that do not allow corporate practice of medicine but lack actual physician ownership or agency; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that our Private Practice Physicians Section (PPPS) will amend its internal operating procedures to adopt requirements that PPPS members who are eligible to vote and to serve on the Governing Council disclose:

1. Whether they are employed in or own/co-own a private practice from which they derive the majority of their income or personally generate fewer than or equal to 3,000 or more than 3,000 wRVU per year;
 2. Disclose (co-) ownership of the practice or management company (management service organization or equivalent) by non-physician entity(ies) or whether the practice or management company is a subsidiary of another entity or entities;
 3. Disclose the number of physicians and non-physician healthcare providers (nurse practitioners, physician assistants, etc.) the practice employs;
- (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

RESOLVED, that our PPPS amend its internal operating procedures to adopt requirements that the Chair of the PPPS Governing Council or an appointed designee must inform the full voting-

1 eligible membership of the PPPS by email or another electronic method about self-reported as
2 well as any perceived or actual conflicts of interest on the governing council that may result from
3 the election or re-election of the candidates nominated for election 1) at least 10 days before the
4 Business Meeting; 2) prior to the start of every business session as to inform members; and 3)
5 prior to every election session, including floor nominations;
6 (Directive to Take Action); and be it further
7

8 RESOLVED, that the nominees and present members of the PPPS Governing Council who are
9 eligible to vote and serve on the Governing Council disclose:

- 10 1. Any perceived conflicts of interest to other members of the Governing Council, including
11 any familial relations up to second degree relative (grandparent, second cousin, aunt,
12 uncle, niece, nephew, etc.) whether by blood, marriage, or adoption;
- 13 2. Any perceived conflicts of interest to other members of the Governing Council, including
14 any association with organizations in common with other members from which income is
15 derived, whether as employee, owner, or investor, except for publicly traded non-
16 healthcare companies or contractors that may share owners or management;
17 (Directive to Take Action); and be it further RESOLVED, that our American Medical Association
18 amend the criteria for all AMA elective offices, including Board of Directors, to require disclosure
19 of information relevant to members' understanding of potential conflicts of interest:
 - 20 1. Whether they are employed in an organization that is hospital-owned, government-run,
21 insurance-owned, non-physician investor-owned, or whether they own/co-own a private
22 practice from which they derive the majority of their income;
 - 23 2. Whether they personally generate fewer than or equal to 3,000 or more than 3,000
24 wRVU per year, excluding billing for supervision of residents, physician assistants, nurse
25 practitioners, etc. Optionally, they may also report total wRVUs as well during
26 supervision of residents, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, etc.
 - 27 3. Disclose (co-) ownership of the practice or management company (management service
28 organization or equivalent) by a non-physician entity or entities or whether the practice
29 or management company is a subsidiary of another entity or entities;
 - 30 4. Disclose the number of physicians and non-physician healthcare providers (nurse
31 practitioners, physician assistants, etc.) the practice employs;
32 (Directive to Take Action).
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Fiscal Note: (Assigned by HOD)

Received: 3/2/2025

REFERENCES

1. <https://web.archive.org/web/20240718195356/https://oakmedgroup.com/providers/>

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

AMA Election Rules and Guiding Principles G-610.090

The Speaker and Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates are responsible for overall administration of our AMA elections, although balloting is conducted under the supervision of the chief teller and the Committee on Rules and Credentials. The Speaker and Vice Speaker will advise candidates on allowable activities and when appropriate will ensure that clarification of these rules is provided to all known candidates. The Speaker, in consultation with the Vice Speaker and the Election Committee, is responsible for declaring a violation of the rules.

Glossary of Election Terms

Active campaign window – Period of time after the Speaker's notice of the opening of active campaigning until the Election Session during the House of Delegates meeting at which elections are being held.

Active campaigning – Outreach by candidates or their surrogate(s), including but not limited to, members of their campaign team, to members of the House of Delegates with the goal of being elected by the AMA House of Delegates.

Announced candidate – Person who has indicated their intention to run for elected position; announcement can be made only by sending an electronic announcement card to the Speakers via the HOD office by email to hod@ama-assn.org.

Campaign manager(s) – Person(s) identified by the candidate to the HOD Office as the person(s) responsible for running the campaign.

Campaign team – Campaign manager(s) and/or staff identified by the candidate to the HOD Office.

Campaign-related – Any content that includes reference to an announced candidate in the context of their candidacy for an elected position within the AMA.

Digital – Relating to, using, or storing data or information in the form of digital signals; involving or relating to the use of computer technology; this includes, but is not limited to, social media and communication platforms.

Elected position(s) – Council or Officer position within the AMA elected by the House of Delegates of the AMA.

Endorsing group - Any group that wishes to endorse candidates other than the candidates they are eligible to sponsor. See definition of "Sponsoring Group."

Endorse - Any public acknowledgement by a candidate or members of a group of the group's support of a candidate. Internal discussions of support in a closed session of the group are not considered public for the purpose of this definition.

Featured – Identification of a candidate at an event by the host or organizer of the event, including but not limited to, written or verbal announcement of the candidate or their candidacy.

Sponsoring group

- Sponsoring group is an endorsing group that may offer endorsements to the delegate(s) and/or alternate delegate(s) representing that sponsoring group without the need to provide their endorsement process to the HOD Office.
- The association, society, AMA section, or other entity for which a prospective candidate serves as an AMA HOD delegate or alternate delegate as certified with the HOD office.
- The Section delegate and alternate delegate are the only individuals who may be sponsored by their respective AMA Section.
- Current trustees or Council members seeking re-election or election to president-elect may be sponsored by the delegation for which they served as an AMA HOD delegate or alternate delegate immediately prior to their election.

- Individuals may self-sponsor (self-nomination).

I. Guiding Principles

The following principles provide guidance on how House elections should be conducted and how the selection of AMA leaders should occur:

1. Our American Medical Association delegates should:
 - a. avail themselves of all available background information about candidates for elected positions in our AMA.
 - b. determine which candidates are best qualified to help the AMA achieve its mission.
 - c. make independent decisions when voting for candidates.
2. Any electioneering practices that distort the democratic processes of House elections, such as vote trading for the purpose of supporting candidates, are unacceptable. This principle applies between as well as within caucuses and delegations.
3. Candidates for elected positions should comply with the requirements and the spirit of House of Delegates 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 our 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.
7. Delegations and caucuses when evaluating candidates may provide information to their members encouraging open discussion regarding the candidates.
8. Delegations and caucuses should be a source of encouragement and assistance to qualified candidates. Nomination and endorsement should be based upon selecting the most qualified individuals to lead our AMA regardless of the number of positions up for election in a given race. Delegations and caucuses are reminded that all potential candidates may choose to run for office, with or without their endorsement and support.
9. Every state and specialty society delegation is encouraged to participate in a caucus, for the purposes of candidate review activities.

II. Guidelines for Candidacy for AMA Offices

1. Every effort should be made to have two or more candidates for each vacancy.
2. The Federation (in sponsoring candidates for leadership positions), the House of Delegates (in electing Council and Board members), and the Board, the Speakers, and the President (in appointing or nominating physicians for service on AMA Councils or in other leadership positions) should consider the need to enhance and promote diversity.

III. Candidate Announcement, Nominations and Open Positions

1. Individuals intending to seek election at the next Annual Meeting should make their intentions known to the Speakers by providing the Speaker's office with an electronic announcement "card" that includes any or all of the following elements and no more: the candidate's name, photograph, the office sought, the sponsoring group, if any, and a list of endorsing groups, if any. The Speakers will ensure that the information is posted on our AMA website 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) will not be posted to the website. Printed announcements may not be distributed to members of the House by any method.
2. Announcement cards of all known candidates will be projected on the last day of the Annual and Interim Meetings of our House of Delegates and posted on the AMA

website. Following each meeting, an “Official Candidate Notification” will be sent electronically to the House. It will include a list of all announced candidates and all potential newly opened positions which may open as a result of the election of any announced candidate. Additional notices will also be sent out with regular Speaker communications to the HOD and with the Speaker’s notice of the opening of active campaigning which generally follows the April Board meeting.

3. Candidates may notify the HOD Office of their intention to run for potential newly opened positions, as well as any scheduled open positions on the elected councils or the Board of Trustees, at any time by submitting an announcement card to the House Office. They will then be included in all subsequent projections of announcements before the House, “Official Candidate Notifications,” and in any campaign activity that had not yet been finalized. All previously announced candidates will continue to be included on each Official Candidate Notification. Any candidate may independently announce their candidacy after active campaigning is allowed, but no formal announcement from the HOD office will take place other than on Official Candidate Notifications.
 4. The Federation and members of the House of Delegates will be notified of unscheduled potential newly opened positions that may become available as a result of the election of announced candidates. Candidates will be allowed to announce their intention to run for these positions.
 5. If a potential newly opened position on the Board or a specified council does not open but there are other open positions for the same council or the Board, an election will proceed for the existing open seats. Candidates will be offered the opportunity to withdraw their nomination prior to the vote. If there are no scheduled open seats on the Board or specified council for which a potential newly opened position is announced and if the potential newly opened position does not open (ie., the individual with the unexpired term is not elected to the office they sought), no election for the position will be held. In the event that a prior election results in a newly opened position without a nominated candidate or more positions are open than nominated candidates, the unfilled positions would remain unfilled until the next annual meeting.
 6. Our AMA believes that:
 - a. specialty society candidates for our AMA House of Delegates elected offices should be listed in the pre-election materials available to the House as the representative of that society and not by the state in which the candidate resides.
 - b. elected specialty society members should be identified in that capacity while serving their term of office.
 - c. nothing in the above recommendations should preclude endorsement by any state delegation of the national specialty society candidate, if that state delegation should so choose.
 7. Our AMA requires completion of conflict of interest forms by all candidates for election to our AMA Board of Trustees and councils prior to their election. Conflict of interest forms must be submitted after an individual has announced their candidacy and before the active campaign window begins or, if not previously announced, within 24 hours of the conclusion of the HOD Opening Session. The HOD Office will post such information on the “Members Only” section of our AMA website before election by the House of Delegates, with links to the disclosure statements from relevant electronic documents.
 8. Candidates will be provided with a copy of the current election rules and will be required to attest to abiding by them. Candidates are responsible for any and all actions or inaction undertaken on their behalf that is campaign related.
- IV. Communications, Campaign Memorabilia and Literature
1. Active campaigning for an elected AMA position may not begin until the active campaign window opens as announced by the Speaker following the Spring Board of Trustees

meeting immediately preceding the meeting at which the election is scheduled to take place.

2. An announced candidate may discuss their candidacy on an individual basis in private conversations after the announcement of candidacy until the active campaigning period begins. Prior to the active campaigning period, no other individual may discuss the candidacy except in private conversations with the announced candidate on an individual basis. This rule does not prohibit any candidate from discussions for the purpose of forming a campaign team or from a campaign team discussing a candidate or campaign strategy. This rule also does not prohibit persons not associated with a campaign from discussing candidates in private conversations.
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 will provide a link to the AMA Candidates' Page, but links to personal, professional or campaign related websites will not be allowed. The Election Manual provides an equal opportunity for each candidate to present the material they consider important to bring before the members of the House of Delegates and should relieve the need for the additional expenditures incurred in making non-scheduled telephone calls and duplicative mailings. 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.
4. Our AMA Office of House of Delegates Affairs will provide an opportunity for all announced candidates to submit material to the HOD office which will then be sent electronically by the HOD Office in a single communication to all delegates and alternates. Parameters regarding content and deadlines for submission will be established by the Speaker and communicated to all announced candidates.
5. An AMA Candidates' Page will be created on our AMA website or other appropriate website to allow each candidate the opportunity to post campaign materials. Parameters for the site will be established by the Speaker and communicated to candidates.
6. Campaign expenditures and activities should be limited to reasonable levels necessary for adequate candidate exposure to the delegates. Campaign memorabilia and giveaways that include a candidate's name or likeness may not be distributed at any time.
7. Active campaigning via mass outreach to delegates by candidates or on behalf of the candidate by any method is prohibited. A reduction in the volume of telephone calls and personal electronic communication from candidates and on behalf of candidates is encouraged. No part of this rule shall be interpreted to limit developing or communicating within a campaign team. Electronic messages must include a simple mechanism to allow recipients to opt out of receiving future messages.
8. Printed and digital campaign materials may not be distributed to members of the House other than by the HOD office candidate email and on the AMA Candidates' Page.
9. Displays of campaign posters, signs, and literature in public areas of the venue at which Annual Meetings are held are prohibited because they detract from the dignity of the position being sought and are unsightly. Campaign posters may be displayed at a single campaign reception at which the candidate is featured. No campaign literature shall be distributed in the House of Delegates and no mass outreach electronic messages shall be transmitted after the opening session of the House of Delegates.
10. Campaign stickers, pins, buttons and similar campaign materials are disallowed. This rule will not apply for pins for AMPAC, the AMA Foundation, specialty societies, state and regional delegations and health related causes that do not include any candidate identifier. These pins should be small, not worn on the badge and distributed only to

members of the designated group. General distribution of any pin, button or sticker is disallowed.

11. Candidates and campaigns may not produce a personal campaign-related website or other digital campaign-related content. Candidates may not direct to personal or professional websites as a method of campaigning other than to the AMA Candidates' Page.

V. Group Dinners and Meetings

1. Candidates for our AMA office should not attend meetings of 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.
2. At any AMA meeting convened prior to the time period for active campaigning, campaign-related expenditures and activities shall be discouraged. Large campaign receptions, luncheons, other formal campaign activities and the distribution of campaign literature and gifts are prohibited. It is permissible for candidates seeking election to engage in individual outreach meant to familiarize others with a candidate's opinions and positions on issues.
3. Each participant in group dinners, if attended by an announced candidate in a currently contested election, must pay their own share of the expenses, with the exception that societies and delegations may cover the expense for their own members. This rule would not disallow societies from paying for their own members or delegations gathering together with each individual or delegation paying their own expense. Gatherings of 4 or fewer delegates or alternates are exempt from this rule.

VI. Interview Rules

Candidates and interviewers must comply with the following rules:

1. Groups wishing to conduct interviews must designate their interviewing coordinator and provide the individual's contact information to the Office of House of Delegates Affairs. The Speaker's Office will collect contact information for groups wishing to conduct interviews as well as for candidates and their campaign teams and will provide the information to both groups. Groups must indicate whether they wish to interview in-person or virtually and for which contest by the deadlines designated by the speaker.
2. Any formal questioning of an announced candidate, excluding a written questionnaire, is an interview and subject to the rules for interviews.
3. Interviews may be arranged between the parties once active campaigning is allowed.
4. Groups conducting interviews with announced candidates for a given office must offer an interview to all announced candidates at the time the group's interview schedule is finalized.
 - a. A sponsoring group may meet with an announced candidate who is a member of their group during the active campaign window without meeting with other candidates for the same office.
 - b. Interviewing groups may, but are not required to, interview persons who become announced candidates during the active campaign window. Should an interview be offered to such a candidate, all other announced candidates for the same office (even those previously interviewed) must be afforded the same opportunity and medium.
 - c. Any campaign-related presentation to an assembly by an announced candidate, with or without being followed by a discussion, question and answer session, or a vote of the assembly regarding the candidate, is an interview and subject to the rules on in-person interviews. No portion of this rule shall be interpreted to mean that a candidate acting in their current formal capacity would be unable to present or discuss matters pertaining to that formal capacity with any group.
5. Groups may elect to conduct interviews virtually or in-person.
6. In-person interviews may be conducted between Friday and Monday of the meeting at which elections will take place.

7. Virtual interviews are subject to the following constraints:
 - a. Interviews may be conducted only during a 9-14 day window (preferably across two separate weekends) as designated by the Speaker beginning at least two weeks but not more than six (6) weeks prior to the scheduled Opening Session of the House of Delegates meeting at which elections will take place.
 - b. Interviews conducted on weeknights must be scheduled between 5 pm and 10 pm or on weekends between 8am and 10 pm based on the candidate's local time, unless another mutually acceptable time outside these hours is arranged.
 - c. Caucuses and delegations scheduling interviews for candidates within the parameters above must offer alternatives to those candidates who have conflicts with the scheduled time.
8. Recording of interviews is allowed only with the knowledge and consent of the candidate.
9. Interviews are recommended to be recorded with consent of all participating individuals and disseminated to the interviewing group members when all are not able to be present for the interview.
10. Recordings of interviews may be shared only among members of the group conducting the interview.
11. A candidate is free to decline any interview request.
12. In consultation with the Election Committee, the Speaker, or where the Speaker is in a contested election, the Vice Speaker, may issue special rules for interviews to address unexpected situations.
13. The Speakers are encouraged to continue recorded virtual interviews of announced candidates in contested races, to be posted on the AMA website.

VII. Campaign Receptions

1. Our AMA will sponsor the AMA Candidate Reception which will be open to all candidates and all meeting attendees. Any candidate may elect to be "featured" at the AMA Candidate Reception. There will not be a receiving line at the AMA Candidate Reception. The rules regarding cash bars only at campaign receptions and limiting each candidate to be featured at a single reception will apply to the AMA Candidate Reception.
2. A state, specialty society, caucus, coalition, etc. may contribute to more than one party. However, a candidate may be featured at only one party, which includes: (a) being present in a receiving line, or (b) appearing by name or in a picture on a poster or notice in or outside of the party venue. At these events, alcohol may be served only on a cash or no-host bar basis.

VIII. Election Process

1. At the Opening Session of the Annual Meeting, officer candidates in a contested election will give a two-minute self-nominating speech, with the order of speeches 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 their 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 nomination speech will be given by a delegate. In addition, the Speaker of the House of Delegates will schedule a debate in front of the AMA-HOD to be conducted by rules established by the Speaker or, in the event of a conflict, the Vice Speaker.
2. Nominating speeches for unopposed candidates for office, except for President-elect, will not be heard.
3. AMA elections will be held on Tuesday at each Annual Meeting.
4. Voting for all elected positions including runoffs will be conducted electronically during an Election Session to be arranged by the Speaker.

5. All delegates eligible to vote must be seated within the House at the time appointed to cast their electronic votes.
 6. The final vote count of all secret ballots of the House of Delegates shall be made public and part of the official proceedings of the House.
 7. The Speaker is encouraged to consider means to reduce the time spent during the HOD meeting on personal points by candidates after election results are announced, including collecting written personal points from candidates to be shared electronically with the House after the meeting or imposing time limits on such comments.
- IX. Election Committee
1. In accordance with Bylaw 2.13.7, the Speaker shall appoint an Election Committee of 9 individuals for 1-year terms (maximum tenure of 4 consecutive terms and a lifetime maximum tenure of 8 terms) to report to the Speaker. These individuals would agree not to be directly involved in a campaign during their tenure and would be appointed from various regions, specialties, sections, and interest groups. The primary role of the committee would be to work with the Speakers to adjudicate any election complaint. Additional roles to be determined by the Speaker and could include monitoring election reforms, considering future campaign modifications and responding to requests from the Speaker for input on election issues that arise. The Speaker and Vice Speaker shall be full members of the Election Committee.
- X. Campaign Complaint Reporting, Validation and Resolution Process
1. Campaign violation complaints should be directed to the Speaker, the Vice Speaker, or the AMA General Counsel and should include the following details:
 - a. The name of the person(s) thought to have violated the rules
 - b. The date of the alleged violation and the location if relevant
 - c. The specific violation being alleged (i.e., the way the rules were violated)
 - d. The materials, if any, that violate the rules; original materials are preferred over copies. Where necessary, arrangements for collection of these materials will be made.
 2. Campaign violation complaints will be investigated by the Election Committee or a subcommittee thereof with the option of including the Office of General Counsel or the Director of the House of Delegates.
 - a. The Committee will collectively determine whether a campaign violation has occurred. As part of the investigation process the Election Committee or its subcommittee shall inform the candidate of the complaint filed and give the candidate the opportunity to respond to the allegation.
 - b. If the complaint implicates a delegation or caucus, the Election Committee or its subcommittee shall inform the chair of the implicated delegation or caucus of the complaint filed and give the implicated delegation or caucus chair(s) the opportunity to answer to the allegation as a part of the investigative process.
 - c. For validated complaints, the Committee will determine appropriate penalties, which may include an announcement of the violation by the Speaker to the House.
 - d. Committee members with a conflict of interest may participate in discussions but must recuse themselves from decisions regarding the merits of the complaint or penalties.
 - e. Deliberations of the Election Committee shall be confidential.
 - f. The Speaker shall include a summary of the Election Committee's activities in "Official Candidate Notifications" sent to the House, following each meeting at which an election was held. Details may be provided at the discretion of the Election Committee and must be provided when the penalty includes an announcement about the violator to the House.
 3. A record of all complaints and the results of the validation and the resolution processes, including penalties, shall be maintained by our AMA Office of General Counsel and kept confidential.

4. The Election Committee will review the Campaign Complaint Reporting, Validation and Resolution Process as implemented and make further recommendations to the House as necessary.

XI. Endorsements

1. Our American Medical Association requires all groups that endorse candidates turn in information about their endorsement process, the deadline, and a staff contact for applications in a timely and streamlined manner.
2. Our AMA will then post this information on the election website in a timely manner, with the information being easily digestible and accessible.
3. Our AMA will not allow any group that fails to provide this information in a timely manner to offer an endorsement during that election cycle.
4. Our AMA will create a specific period (similar to virtual elections) during which endorsements may be sought.

Citation: Speakers Rep. 3, I-23; Modified: Res. 609, A-24; Modified: CCB Rep. 3, A-24;
Modified: Speakers Rep. 1, I-24; Modified: Speakers Rep. 02, I-24