

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
MEDICAL STUDENT SECTION

ANNUAL 2026 MEETING
SPEAKERS' RULING

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What's New

The Speakers' Ruling is updated at the start of each election cycle to ensure our meetings and elections proceed in accordance with MSS policies. The new Speakers' Ruling contains many changes, the most transformative of which are summarized below, though be sure to read through the entire Ruling, as many other important changes have been made.

Among the most significant changes is that **campaign social media accounts are no longer permitted for any MSS election**. This decision was made following years of conversations beginning well before the current GC took office. Most AMA sections, including the HOD, already forbid the use of social media for election campaigns, due to the challenge of enforcing campaigning rules and the disruptive potential for our organization's spirit of collaboration. The MSS IOPs allow the Speakers to permit campaign social media use, within certain limitations, but do not require them. After conversations with many stakeholders and consideration of many past election cycles, your Speakers have concluded that any potential benefits to the campaign process brought by campaign accounts are outweighed by the risks, and therefore going forward these accounts will no longer be permitted.

Additionally, your Speakers have carefully considered other longstanding challenges in the MSS election process, including the procedure for collecting, reviewing, and responding to allegations of election misconduct. Your Speakers have heard feedback that the threshold for what merits a report to election officials is unclear, and that in past policy cycles the response to reported misconduct was unclear or insufficient. Therefore, we have introduced substantial reforms to [Section 10 of the Speakers' Ruling](#). For example, the Rules Committee will have an earlier and more formal role in all investigations of election misconduct, no matter the severity. In addition, **all reports of misconduct, whether minor or severe, will require a confidential, written report**. Your Speakers' most important priority is ensuring a fair and transparent election process.

Going forward, "unofficial" or "off the record" reports will not be permitted. Reports will remain strictly confidential; while the contents of reports and investigations cannot be public, every report will be handled through the same process of review, and your Speakers will adhere to the prescribed process for all investigations. In the past, informal reports have often lacked appropriate documentation, leaving the Speakers unable to respond appropriately, and potentially leaving members feeling that their complaints were not heard or taken seriously. We emphasize that **these changes are not in response to any individual or campaign**, instead seeking to address feedback spanning multiple years to increase transparency and respond to concerns raised by MSS members. All reports will remain strictly confidential.

Changes have also been made to the process of registering and organizing campaign teams. **Candidates are now required to submit their final roster** of campaign team members no later than two weeks after the release of the Speakers' Ruling. Additionally, **all candidates and campaign team members must attend an orientation meeting organized by the Speakers and AMA Staff** to discuss the rules and procedures for campaigning before engaging in any campaign activity. Any member who does not attend the orientation meeting will not be eligible to serve on a campaign team for the 2026 Annual Meeting election cycle. In the past, campaign teams were reported informally - if they were reported at all - sometimes as little as days before the assembly meeting, making it difficult for members to understand who was and was not bound by the rules governing campaign team conduct, leading to cases where members were not certain which rules applied. **All candidates are ultimately responsible for the actions of their campaign team members**, and all candidates and

team members must certify that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the provisions of the Speakers' Ruling before they may engage in campaign activities.

There are other new changes to the ruling as well. All prospective candidates and campaign team members should carefully read the ruling, and approach the Speakers with any clarifying questions before beginning their campaign activities. Your Speakers greatly appreciate your attention and your energy, and we intend to create an election environment that is fair, unbiased, transparent, and conducive to the spirit of free debate and amicable cooperation that makes our MSS strong.

Good luck!

Andrew S. Bell
Speaker, Medical Student Section

Sweta Parjia
Vice Speaker, Medical Student Section

Preamble

Dear Candidates and AMA-MSS Members,

In accordance with [MSS IOP 6.5.3](#), your Speakers have established this ruling so that all candidates for election to office by the AMA-MSS have equal access to guidelines. The purpose of the Speakers' Ruling is to ensure that all candidates and MSS members are aware of the election procedures, timelines, and deadlines; as well as to protect the integrity of MSS elections by establishing fair and equal rules for election conduct. This document will be open to the AMA-MSS and specifically targeted towards individuals seeking candidacy for the positions of the **Vice Chair, Speaker, Vice Speaker, Section Delegate, Section Alternate Delegate, At-Large Officer, and DEI Officer**. Certain Regional elections will also occur during or shortly before or after A-26; however, candidates for those elections should refer to their Region bylaws and leadership for additional information. Candidates who submit campaign materials by the deadline will be briefed on the Ruling. Pursuant to [MSS IOP 6.5.3](#), "Once released, the AMA MSS Speakers reserve the right to issue addenda or announcements as needed, with all changes shared with all candidates."

This document outlines the new Speakers' Ruling and how your Speakers plan to enforce the rules. Campaign rules outlined in the MSS IOPs are always in effect. **Region Bylaws should be followed in all instances but are superseded by the MSS IOPs and the Speakers' Ruling.** [MSS IOP 4.4.5.3](#) charges your Speakers to "Provide for oversight and enforcement of the Campaign Rules...including responsibility for investigation of alleged infractions and reporting of substantiated infractions to the Assembly prior to balloting." Such Rulings ensure that elections held at the national meeting are in accordance with the Bylaws and procedures of our AMA and AMA-MSS IOPs. Clarifying your Speakers' interpretations of the MSS IOPs early allows candidates to campaign accordingly and avoids members misinterpreting ambiguous IOPs.

In order to receive the most up-to-date information, **candidates should contact your Speakers (mssspeaker2526@gmail.com & mssvicespeaker2526@gmail.com) once they have decided to seek candidacy.** Candidates are encouraged to ask your Speakers and/or the Chair of the Rules Committee to clarify any rules in the Speakers' Ruling in order to avoid misapplication of the rules. Misunderstanding a rule's application does not absolve the candidate from an infraction. The most recent compendium of MSS IOPs can be found [here](#). Any dispute about a provision in this Ruling being inconsistent with the MSS IOPs or AMA Constitution and Bylaws should be escalated to the MSS Chair and Speakers via email and will be resolved by your Governing Council and promptly addressed by your Speakers.

We welcome any questions about election campaigns or about the MSS Internal Operating Procedures at any time. To the maximum extent possible, the identity of any individual submitting questions, comments, reports, or concerns to the Speakers will be kept strictly confidential. Our highest priority is to support you, provide a level playing field, and to enforce the election rules in an impartial and transparent manner. We applaud you for dedicating your time and energy to furthering our section and cannot wait to see what you accomplish. Best of luck to all candidates!

Andrew S. Bell
Speaker, Medical Student Section

Sweta Parjia
Vice Speaker, Medical Student Section

Section 1: Definitions

- 1.1 The following abbreviations, when used in any place within the content of this document, shall be construed as though they were written out in full.

AMPAC	American Medical Political Action Committee
AMA	American Medical Association
GC	Governing Council
GRAF	Government Relations Advocacy Fellow
A-26	2026 Annual Meeting of the AMA-MSS
IOP	Internal Operating Procedures
MSS	Medical Student Section

- 1.2 Unless otherwise specified, the unqualified term "Speaker" shall refer only to the duly elected Speaker of the Governing Council of the Medical Student Section. **The current Speaker is Andrew Bell of Harvard Medical School.** Similarly, "Vice Speaker" shall refer only to the duly elected Vice Speaker of the Governing Council of the Medical Student Section. **The current Vice Speaker is Sweta Parjia of The University of California, San Diego School of Medicine.**
- 1.3 Unless otherwise specified, the unqualified term "Speakers" shall denote the Speaker and Vice Speaker as a collective entity and will be used for all instances in which the Speaker and Vice Speaker share authority to act upon their consensus, or in which they possess equal and independent authority to carry out the duties inscribed in the pertinent section.

Section 2: Deadline for Material Submission

- 2.1 The deadline for submitting applications including materials to be included in the A-26 MSS Election Website is **May 11, 2026, at 1:59 AM Central Time**. We strongly encourage students to submit application materials ahead of time.
- 2.2 Candidate application materials must strictly adhere to the word limit in the candidate application form. Candidate application materials exceeding the posted word limit will have words removed, starting from the bottom, until the materials conform with the posted limit.
 - 2.2.1 No applications will be accepted after this deadline for inclusion in the A-26 MSS Election Website posting, although supporting materials may be accepted at the discretion of the AMA staff. After this date, candidates must be nominated and run from the floor for any of the MSS positions that are up for election at the A-26 meeting.
- 2.3 Application materials including the conflict-of-interest forms and necessary school signatures from all candidates must be completed by the deadline communicated by the Speakers. If not completed by this time, a candidate cannot be included on the ballot.
- 2.4 Your Speakers will make every effort to include completed materials for candidates who choose to run off the floor at the Meeting, but no guarantee is made that candidates who submit materials after the deadline will have their materials posted by the time of the election, provided that they are received and approved by MSS staff.
- 2.5 Any candidate who intends to run from the floor will not be able to participate in the A-26 Candidate Forum if the nomination period follows the Candidate Forum.

Section 3: Eligibility

- 3.1 MSS members are term-limited to a combined 3 years of service on the Governing Council and as AMA Council Student Members. ([MSS IOP 4.7.2](#))
 - 3.1.1 This is inclusive of a maximum of 2 years on the same AMA council, 1 year maximum in the same Governing Council position, and a maximum of 2 years in any combination of Governing Council positions, excluding those positions exempted by [MSS IOP 4.7.3](#).
- 3.2 The Chair and Medical Student Trustee are also beholden to the following rules that do not apply to the “elect” period:
 - 3.2.1 MSS members who serve on an AMA Council or in an AMA Liaison position may not also serve in a voting Governing Council position or as the Medical Student Trustee. ([MSS IOP 6.2.1](#))
 - 3.2.2 MSS members serving on Regional Executive Council, as Regional Delegate or Regional Alternate Delegate, or representatives from other organizations to the MSS Assembly are eligible to run, but cannot concurrently hold aforementioned roles if serving in a voting Governing Council position. ([MSS IOP 6.2.2](#))

Section 4: Campaign Period

- 4.1 No campaigning for any other election besides those elections taking place at the upcoming meeting will be permitted. **The official campaign period shall begin on the first day the Speakers' Ruling is made available to MSS members.** ([MSS IOP 6.5.2.3](#)) The information contained in this section pertains to campaigning for any elections taking place at or after the upcoming meeting (i.e. A-26 and beyond, unless and until they are superseded by a forthcoming Speakers' Ruling).
- 4.2 All activities related to announcement of candidacy, endorsement, or campaigning shall be limited to the campaign period defined above. ([MSS IOP 6.5.2.4](#))
- 4.2.1 **Permissible** communication outside of the campaign period is limited to:
- 4.2.1.1 Reaching out to current and previous MSS members who hold or have held a position for which an election is underway for more information on the responsibilities of that position.
 - 4.2.1.2 Reaching out individually to members to inquire whether a member would be interested in serving on a prospective campaign team, in the event that a candidate decides to formally run for election. As part of these conversations, it is permissible for candidates to announce their intent to run for the purpose of recruiting campaign team members.
 - 4.2.1.2.1 Members are asked to keep any such disclosures made by prospective candidates before the beginning of the campaign period confidential and to avoid disclosing a candidate's intent to run with any other member.
 - 4.2.1.3 Creation of permissible campaign materials as outlined in [Speakers' Ruling Section 6](#). However, campaign materials may not be accessible to members outside the campaign team until the campaign period begins.
- 4.2.2 Your Speakers' intent is to restrict communication which could be interpreted as active campaigning or declaration of candidacy outside of the campaign period. No campaign materials may be disseminated prior to the campaign period.
- 4.2.3 Communication **outside of the campaign period** that is **not permissible** includes, but is not limited to:
- 4.2.3.1 Any posts to personal social media accounts declaring candidacy or intent to run for an elected position.
 - 4.2.3.2 Distribution of campaign materials.
 - 4.2.3.3 Announcing or declaring one's candidacy for an election in any MSS-affiliated communication platform, regional, state, or local chapter meeting, except for outreach to individual MSS members for the explicit and sole purpose of preparing to assemble a campaign team, as outlined in [Speakers' Ruling 4.2.1.1](#).
 - 4.2.3.4 Members of a candidate's campaign team may not reach out on behalf of a candidate to other members outside of the campaign period.
 - 4.2.3.5 Any other communication not specifically excepted by [Speakers' Ruling 4.2.1](#).
- 4.3 The Speakers' Ruling from the preceding national meeting shall remain in effect until the Speakers release the new Ruling for the meeting.

Section 5: Campaigning & Campaign Teams

- 5.1 **Definition:** Campaigning includes, but is not limited to, discussing candidate platforms or displaying or distributing campaign materials, but does not include merely stating their candidacy for a position. ([MSS IOP 6.5.8.1](#))
- 5.2 **Candidate Information Session:** At a date determined by the Speakers, an informational session with incumbent student leaders may be advertised and hosted by the Speakers for interested candidates, even those required to maintain neutrality per [Speakers' Ruling 5.4.1](#).
- 5.2.1 The session's purpose shall be to allow potential candidates who would like to learn more about the position to which they intend to apply, though the session will be open to all members of the MSS.
- 5.2.2 Candidates may ask general questions about the respective roles during the informational session; however, such discussions must be limited to the position's roles and duties and may not encompass candidate viability or campaign strategy. Candidates and members may also use this time to ask questions about campaign rules; such questions should be directed to the Speakers unless otherwise instructed.
- 5.3 **Establishment of Campaign Teams**
- 5.3.1 Campaign team shall refer to those members of the MSS selected and duly certified, subject to the below requirements, by a candidate to become involved in the affairs and activities of a campaign.
- 5.3.2 Involvement may include, but is not limited to:
- 5.3.2.1 Making public endorsements of candidates; or
- 5.3.2.2 Holding meetings, formally or informally, in a group or individually with the purpose of planning and/or advising individual campaigns; or
- 5.3.2.3 Answering questions from members regarding a candidate's campaign platform and priorities on behalf for the candidate; or
- 5.3.2.4 Any other activity which might reasonably be construed as acting as a representative of the candidate or campaign.
- 5.3.3 Speaking in favor or in opposition of a candidate during a formal Region Candidate Forums, as outlined in [Speakers' Ruling 10.3](#), shall not in and of itself constitute involvement with the candidate's campaign. However, registered campaign team members must disclose their status prior to delivering testimony during candidate discussions.
- 5.3.4 **All members of a campaign team, including all candidates, are required to attend a mandatory election orientation meeting** scheduled by the Speakers at the beginning of the campaign period, where rules will be discussed and opportunities provided for questions and clarifications about election procedures.
- 5.3.4.1 It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that every member of their campaign team attends and actively participates in the mandatory orientation meeting. **Members who do not attend the meeting for any given election cycle are ineligible to serve on any campaign teams for that election cycle.**
- 5.3.4.2 Lack of knowledge of any provision within the Speakers' Ruling or relevant sections of the MSS IOPs shall not excuse any violation of election conduct policies. It is the responsibility of candidates to keep themselves and their teams informed about rules and expectations.
- 5.3.4.3 Any candidate who completes an application for election or otherwise decides to run for election after the date of the orientation meeting must contact the Speakers immediately to schedule a meeting for the candidate and/or any members of their campaign team, which must be registered by a deadline

communicated by the Speakers. Under no circumstance will campaigning be permitted by any member who has not attended an orientation meeting.

5.3.5 All candidates and campaign team members must certify in writing to the Speakers that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the full contents of the Speakers' Ruling and the MSS IOPs before undertaking any campaign-related activities. Engaging in any campaign activity before certifying the above to the Speakers is strictly prohibited.

5.3.6 Pursuant to the MSS IOPs, only current members of the MSS may be publicly involved with any candidate's campaign team. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.1](#)) It is the responsibility of each candidate running for an elected position to ensure that any MSS members involved in their campaign are familiar with the policies outlined in the Speakers' Ruling, codified in the MSS IOPs, and outlined in the AMA Constitution and Bylaws.

5.4 Restricted Members

5.4.1 **MSS GC members (including the Chair-elect and Immediate Past Chair), MSS Rules Committee members, MSS Region Chairs, Chairs Elect and Acting Chairs, the current AMA GRAF, the current student member of the AMA Board of Trustees, and incoming student members of the AMA Board of Trustees after having been elected** are **not** permitted to join a campaign, publicly endorse a candidate, or take any action that could be construed as involving themselves in any campaign(s) pursuant to [Speakers' Ruling 5.3.2](#). These AMA leaders must maintain absolute neutrality when it comes to campaigns and candidates.

5.4.1.1 Candidates may reach out to one of the aforementioned members who currently holds or formerly held their position of interest to ask questions about the role and responsibilities. However, they may **not** discuss their viability as a candidate or campaign strategy.

5.4.1.2 Candidates may not ask any of the aforementioned AMA-MSS leaders to connect them with individual MSS members for the purposes of campaigning.

5.4.1.3 Candidates may not suggest or imply to any MSS member that any of the aforementioned AMA-MSS leaders support their candidacy in any way.

5.4.1.4 The aforementioned AMA-MSS leaders are permitted to speak privately about their personal opinions of a candidate as long as:

5.4.1.4.1 The individual in question was not then conducting official MSS business at the time the comment is made; and

5.4.1.4.2 It is made clear prior to any comment that they are speaking as an individual and not in any official capacity; and

5.4.1.4.3 Discussions are strictly limited to private settings. Discussion of candidates for any election by any MSS member during any public event, whether live or virtual, is strictly prohibited.

5.4.1.5 Any AMA member, including those otherwise restricted by [Speakers' Ruling 5.4.1](#), may publicly endorse their own candidacy and be involved in their own campaign if they are running for a position, so long as they preface the endorsement with a statement that they are speaking as an individual and not in any official capacity as an AMA leader.

5.4.2 Any MSS member who is eligible to join a candidate's campaign team may only do so as an individual, and should not share their opinion in favor of or in opposition to any candidate while acting under any official leadership role on the Governing Council, in a Region, for a Standing Committee, or other organizational or society representative within or outside of the AMA-MSS. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.1](#))

5.4.2.1 This ruling shall apply to all MSS members serving in any state, regional, national, or other organizational position which could reasonably be interpreted as an authoritative or elected position, whether or not their role is considered restricted by [Speakers' Ruling 5.4.1](#).

5.4.3 Individuals restricted by [Speakers' Ruling 5.4.1](#) may not participate in any Regional Candidate Discussion, whether or not they are a member of the Region itself. This rule shall not apply to members of the MSS Governing Council when their participation is

required in service of their designated responsibilities as official election overseers; for example, in order to clarify a rule or procedure during a Regional Candidate Forum.

5.5 Other Campaign Rules:

5.5.1 The usage of physical campaign materials promoting candidates (e.g. buttons, stickers, paraphernalia, etc.) are disallowed. ([MSS IOP 6.5.5.2](#))

5.5.1.1 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. ([MSS IOP 6.5.5.2](#))

5.5.2 Pursuant to [MSS IOP 6.5.8.2](#), campaigning at MSS Regional, state, or official school chapter meetings prior to the AMA meeting at which the election occurs is prohibited.

5.5.3 Pursuant to [MSS IOP 6.5.6](#), the total expenditure per candidate per campaign shall not exceed \$200, including all monetary donations, but not including the candidate's travel to and lodging at the meeting at which the election is held.

5.5.4 Pursuant to [MSS IOP 6.5.11](#), receptions and/or hospitality shall not be used for promotion of candidates.

Section 6: Campaigning: Communications

- 6.1 The campaign communications procedures established in this section are covered by and superseded by [MSS IOP 6.5.7](#).
- 6.2 Your Speakers' guiding principle for online communications is to limit excessive campaign communications while ensuring easy access to the candidates' platforms. To this end, the following rules shall apply to all online communications for national elections:
- 6.2.1 **Individual Communications:** Candidates and campaign team members may reach out to individual MSS members to discuss their campaign but should be prudent and courteous regarding the number, length, and content of messages sent prior to the election, including but not limited to emails, phone calls, text messages, social media communications, and group chats. Non-electronic mailings by candidates or other organizations on behalf of a candidate are not permissible. ([MSS IOP 6.5.7.1](#) & [MSS IOP 6.5.7.2](#))
- 6.2.2 **Mass Communications:** No mode of MSS- or AMA-sponsored communication, including but not limited to the Open Forum, Virtual Reference Committee, AMA-MSS listservs, phone or email lists, GroupMe, or other mass communication methods shall be used for announcements of candidacy, endorsement, or campaigning. ([MSS IOP 6.5.7.3](#))
- 6.2.2.1 This also includes the AMA-MSS Updates GroupMe, AMA MSS Discord channels, any MSS national or Regional email lists, and any meeting-specific MSS or AMA communication platforms created, managed, or moderated by the MSS Governing Council or MSS Region Governing Boards in their capacity as officers and/or AMA staff (including MSS standing committee, MSS Region-wide, and MSS national meeting specific GroupMe chats).
- 6.2.2.2 Exceptions to this rule shall only be made for designated campaign events that are approved and coordinated by your current Speakers and open for participation by all AMA approved candidates.
- 6.2.2.3 Candidates are prohibited from being or requesting to be members of social media groups or other communication channels for official MSS bodies, including but not limited to those of Regions, standing committees, task forces, and convention committees, except for those in which a candidate is already a member requiring access to said communication channel for the performance of their routine tasks as a member. Candidates may not post any campaign messaging in any such outlets, regardless of whether or not they were members of the body prior to their campaign.
- 6.2.2.3.1 Candidates who are unsure of whether joining a group or posting in a group would be a violation should reach out to the Speakers for guidance.
- 6.2.2.4 Any MSS member is encouraged to address questions about the permissibility of any communication to your Speakers and/or Chair(s) of the Rules Committee prior to initiating said communication.
- 6.2.3 **Social Media:** The use of external social media pages; including, but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Twitter/X, or other social media applications, is not permitted for any regional or national MSS election.
- 6.2.4 **Public Announcements of Candidacy:**
- 6.2.4.1 After candidates have formally filed to run for election through the process described in [Speakers' Ruling Section 2](#), the Speakers may choose to make a single post in a dedicated channel of the MSS public GroupMe to announce the position for which they are running and/or share a poster containing the candidate's contact information and election platform, subject to the provisions of [Speakers' Ruling Section 8](#). All materials are subject to review by the Speakers in

- advance of their distribution.
- 6.2.5 Announcements from Campaign Team Members: Excluding those MSS members who are prohibited from campaign involvement (pursuant to [Speakers' Ruling 5.4.1](#)), MSS members may choose to share Speaker-created online candidate profiles on their personal social media pages, where they may elaborate with testimony and/or endorsement.
- 6.2.6 Endorsements: Campaign endorsements are limited to the following:
- 6.2.6.1 One (1) optional letter of endorsement by the Dean or Dean's representative from the candidate's medical school.
 - 6.2.6.2 One (1) optional letter of endorsement by leadership or staff of the state medical society from the state in which the candidate attends medical school.
 - 6.2.6.3 No more than three (3) letters of endorsement from MSS Regions or organizations (including any specialty organization possessing voting representation within the MSS).
 - 6.2.6.4 To avoid the possibility of an endorsement being called into question, the endorsing entity (except for individual MSS members) must at minimum:
 - 6.2.6.4.1 Follow the entity's Bylaws dictating official endorsement; and
 - 6.2.6.4.2 Take and document the results of an official vote; and
 - 6.2.6.4.3 Take and document quorum, including a list of local chapters represented, when the voting occurred. This documentation should be shared with the Speakers as soon as it is available.
- 6.2.7 No restriction will be made on endorsements by individual members of the MSS, provided that they are authored by eligible MSS members during the official campaign period, written freely and without duress or pressure by candidates and/or their campaign team members, and respectful of all candidates for election to any position. The Speakers reserve the right to amalgamate individual letters of support into a single document in order to facilitate legibility when uploading candidate profiles.
- 6.2.8 These optional letters of endorsement may be included in the MSS Election Website. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.1.1](#))
- 6.2.9 During any national meeting of the MSS, including but not limited to the Interim and Annual meetings, endorsement letters may only be publicly disseminated by members of the GC via the MSS Election Website and may only be publicly displayed at the candidate forum. Distribution by candidates or campaign team members during any portion of the meeting is expressly prohibited. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.1.2](#))

Section 7: Campaigning: Platform and Events

- 7.1 Campaign platforms or ideas are subject to review by the Speakers and may be deemed out of order if inappropriate.
- 7.2 Candidates running for any compensated position within our MSS, whether direct or indirect, cannot make campaign promises to redirect use of this compensation at any time or by any means.
- 7.3 At a date determined by the Speakers, a candidate forum will be advertised and hosted by the Speakers. ([MSS IOP 6.5.8.3.1](#))
 - 7.3.1 The Speakers will contact candidates regarding the date and time of the candidate forum at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled date.
 - 7.3.2 The Speakers will advertise the session and access information to MSS members over AMA-MSS communication channels.
- 7.4 At a date determined by the Speakers, a meet and greet session with candidates may be advertised and hosted by the Speakers.
 - 7.4.1 The Speakers will contact candidates regarding the date and time of the meet and greet at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled date.
 - 7.4.2 The Speakers will advertise the session and access information to MSS members over AMA-MSS communication channels.
- 7.5 At a date determined by the Speakers and Regions, Region candidate forums will be advertised and hosted by the Speakers and/or Regions, as outlined in [Speakers' Ruling 9.3](#).
- 7.6 At the discretion of and at a date determined by your Speakers, with at least 1 week notice, candidates may be invited to record a brief video to be reviewed by your Speakers and/or Rules Committee, to be included as part of their candidate profile.
 - 7.6.1 The video can be up to two minutes in length to address the MSS Assembly about their candidacy. Time limits for speaking will be strictly enforced. If a submitted video's length exceeds two minutes, only the first two minutes will be shared.
 - 7.6.2 The decision to permit campaign videos and/or posting of recorded messages to the AMA-MSS website is at the sole discretion of the Speakers and is subject to change until the campaign period deadline when campaign material postings are made to the AMA-MSS website.
- 7.7 **Candidates Unable to Attend the Assembly Meeting:** Candidates unable to attend the election and/or annual meetings in person shall be permitted to record video remarks not exceeding two minutes to be displayed during the election proceedings, regardless of any decision pertaining to [Speakers' Ruling 7.6](#). Any candidate who is unable to attend the meeting in person must inform the Speakers no later than two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of the meeting.
 - 7.7.1 For any candidate who has submitted a complete application for election, but who is not registered to attend the Annual Meeting, it shall be assumed that the candidate is not able to attend the meeting in person, unless the candidate communicates otherwise to the Speakers in advance of the deadline, and the candidate shall have the right to submit video remarks within the boundaries established by this Ruling.
 - 7.7.2 In the event that a candidate records a video message believing they will not be able to attend the meeting in person but subsequently becomes able to attend, and if video remarks were not solicited from all candidates in advance of the meeting, the candidate will be given the opportunity to deliver live remarks to the assembly, and their video will not be shown during the national candidate forum.
 - 7.7.3 No guarantee is made that any candidate who is registered for the meeting at the time of the deadline to inform the Speakers in [Speakers' Ruling 7.7](#) but subsequently cancels their registration and does not attend the meeting in person will be eligible to submit video

remarks as described in [Speakers' Ruling 7.5](#).

- 7.8 No guarantee is made that individuals who do not file for candidacy by the election deadline specified in Speakers' Ruling 2.1 or who run off the floor at the meeting will be eligible to submit video remarks as described in Speakers' Ruling 7.5.

Section 8: Joint Campaigns and Elections

- 8.1 In order to provide a fair campaign and election process for candidates, all candidates must campaign independently of one another.
- 8.2 Candidates are not permitted to endorse any other candidates or otherwise comment about other candidates for any election to other MSS members. For example, a candidate should not actively reach out to MSS members on behalf of another candidate.
- 8.3 Under no circumstance may a candidate for any position serve as a member of another candidate's campaign team for any concurrent election.
- 8.4 Campaign team members may be part of up to 2 (two) teams, as long as they are not supporting two candidates running for the same position, or either of any paired positions, including Section Delegate/Alternate Section Delegate and Speaker/Vice Speaker. For example, if a campaign member is managing a candidate for Section Delegate, they may not serve on the campaign teams of any other candidates for Section Delegate or Alternate Section Delegate.
 - 8.4.1 Campaign team members are not permitted to endorse or campaign for candidates for any position other than the campaign team(s) to which they belong. For example, a campaign team member should not actively reach out to MSS members on behalf of another candidate.

Section 9: Region Involvement, Responsibilities, & Endorsements

- 9.1 **Restrictions:** All region members may engage in campaigns on behalf of themselves including Regional Governing Council members and Regional Delegates and Alternate Delegates as outlined in the Speakers' Ruling **except** the Regional Chair, Regional Chair-elect, members of the MSS GC, and the Student Trustee.
- 9.2 **Sharing Election Information:** The Speakers will ensure all available candidate information is promptly disseminated to Region Executive Councils. MSS Region Chairs or Acting Region Chairs must share the MSS Election Website in any and all Regional communication channels at least seven (7) business days prior to the MSS Meeting, and must share floor candidate information when it becomes available on the AMA website.
- 9.2.1.1 Campaign pages may not be disseminated in regional communication channels, unless the Region has voted to formally support that candidate pursuant to [Speakers' Ruling 9.4](#), in which case the Regional Chair may choose to share a candidate's campaign page in the body of a post announcing the endorsement pursuant to [Speakers' Ruling 9.4.3](#).
- 9.2.1.2 Any additional public testimony or discussion on the candidate by Region members on the Region Facebook or Instagram pages is restricted to the comments section of the initial post.
- 9.2.2 Region Chairs/Acting Region Chairs and Candidates should make every effort to move direct communication with MSS members that arises during Region Facebook or Instagram posts to their campaign page(s).
- 9.3 **Candidate Discussions & Forums:** If a candidate discussion and/or candidate forum is being held regarding candidates at the Region level, information regarding the structure of these forums and/or discussions must be relayed to your Speakers by MSS Region Chairs or Acting Region Chairs at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Region meetings.
- 9.3.1 The Speakers will contact candidates regarding the date and time of Region candidate forums at least seven (7) days in advance of the scheduled dates.
- 9.3.2 The Region Executive Council must advertise the forum and provide candidate information to Region members over all Region communication channels at least seven (7) days in advance of the forum.
- 9.3.3 Candidates, whose candidacy has been approved by the AMA, will be notified of the format of Region discussions by the Speakers and will be provided with instructions for attendance.
- 9.3.4 If a candidate is in attendance at their own Region meeting, they must leave said meeting during discussion of any candidates for the position they are running for. Members of a candidate's campaign team may attend their own Region meeting but must disclose their position during discussions.
- 9.3.5 Candidates and their campaign team are prohibited from contacting Regions to request time to speak during their Region business and policy meetings.
- 9.3.6 One of the Speakers, Rules Committee Members, or other Governing Council Members at the discretion of the Speakers must be present at each Region candidate forum and for any vote on endorsement.
- 9.4 **Endorsements:** Regions may endorse any candidate including candidates from Regions outside their own, pursuant to Region Bylaws. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.2.1.1](#)) In order to maintain the collegiality of our section, Regions may not vote to oppose any candidate. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.2.3](#)) If a Region does not have Bylaws specifying quorum or rules dictating official support, MSS Region Chairs or Acting Region Chairs must contact the Speakers for guidance. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.2.1.1.1](#))

- 9.4.1 MSS Region Chairs or Acting Region Chairs must be sure that an official vote by the Region took place in accordance with the Region's Bylaws and rules dictating official support. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.2.1](#))
- 9.4.2 The endorsing Region must:
 - 9.4.2.1 Document that quorum was met when the voting occurred ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.2.1.2](#)); and
 - 9.4.2.2 Document the results of the vote pursuant to Region Bylaws. ([MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.2.1.3](#))
- 9.4.3 Upon endorsement of a candidate, the Chair or Acting Chair of the endorsing Region must inform the Speaker and Vice Speaker of the results of the vote(s), including the tally and documentation that quorum was met when the voting occurred per the Region's bylaws. Additionally, the Region Chair or Acting Chair should inform any region members not in attendance at the endorsement vote of the result of the vote using their region's GroupMe channel or main communication channel.
 - 9.4.3.1 Any posts concerning Region endorsements are limited to sharing the results of a vote with Region membership and may not directly or indirectly suggest any expectation for individual MSS members to vote in a certain way in the election.
- 9.4.4 Unless their respective Region has voted to endorse a candidate, MSS Region Chairs, Chairs-Elect or Acting Chairs may not endorse a candidate through any means of communication through which AMA members receive or may expect to receive official news from their MSS Region Chair, which includes, but is not limited to, email, telephone, Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, and GroupMe.
- 9.4.5 The Speakers may advertise Region endorsements of candidates at their discretion.

Section 10: Enforcement of Rules

- 10.1 **Reporting Infractions:** Alleged infractions, including but not necessarily limited to violations of the Speakers' Ruling, should be reported to the Speakers and AMA officials using the [MSS Election Incident Report](#) on the AMA Website.
- 10.1.1 The individuals responsible for carrying out investigation of the infraction, henceforth referred to as the **designated investigator(s)**, shall be the **Speaker and Vice Speaker**.
- 10.1.1.1 Per [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2.1](#), in the event where either the Speaker or Vice Speaker is a candidate for the election being investigated, the MSS Chair will designate one member of the Rules Committee as an investigator to examine the alleged infraction in conjunction with the remaining Speaker or Vice Speaker. Both investigators must agree for a reported infraction to be substantiated.
- 10.1.1.2 Per [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2.1](#), in the event where both the Speaker and Vice Speaker are candidates for the election being investigated, the MSS Chair will designate two (2) members of the Rules Committee as the investigators to examine the alleged infraction. Both investigators must agree for a reported infraction to be substantiated.
- 10.1.1.2.1 While the duly appointed members of the Rules Committee will inherit the authority of the designated investigator(s) to oversee the investigation, all communication to and from candidates and/or members of campaign teams, or any individuals who are not members of the Investigation Committee, shall be conducted by the MSS Chair or another member of the MSS Governing Council appointed by the Chair.
- 10.1.1.2.2 Under no circumstance will members of the Investigation Committee, apart from members of the MSS Governing Council, speak to or solicit information from any other party on matters related to an ongoing investigation. This shall be true even if both the Speaker and Vice Speaker are ineligible to serve on the Investigation Committee, as outlined in [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2.1](#).
- 10.1.2 Any member may speak with the designated investigator(s) about suspected rules violations before filing a formal report. This will allow the designated investigator(s) to clarify the applicable rules when assessing a potential infraction.
- 10.1.3 All alleged infractions must be reported to the Speakers using the [MSS Election Incident Report](#). The Speakers will share a link to the form with MSS members at the start of the campaign period.
- 10.1.3.1 The Speakers and/or their designated investigator(s) shall only initiate an investigation once a formal report has been received. "Unofficial" or verbal reports by members not wishing to make a formal report are not considered actionable and will be disregarded without prejudice by the Speakers.
- 10.1.3.2 Members may indicate the perceived level of severity of the alleged infraction in the report form. If a member is unsure as to whether an action constitutes a reportable offense, they are encouraged to submit a form detailing their observation(s) to the Speakers, who will review all available information and determine the appropriate response.
- 10.1.3.3 The act of completing a report form is understood not to be a hostile act toward any MSS member or campaign. Investigations shall be limited to the content of the report and any supporting information.

- 10.1.3.4 Any report of misconduct involving improper communications or behavior by a member must be substantiated with any available evidence. Second-hand information, including testimony that a member “saw a message”, in the absence of proof (for example, a timestamped copy of the message) is not sufficient grounds to initiate a report. In certain circumstances, such as when such information is not accessible or there is reason to believe it was made unavailable, the designated investigator(s) may choose to inquire for further information before reaching a decision on whether an alleged infraction warrants an official investigation.
- 10.1.4 All reports, whether acted upon or not, shall be kept strictly confidential by the Speakers and/or their designated investigator(s). Under no circumstances will the identity of the individual submitting a report be shared with any MSS member not directly involved in the investigation, except if the result of the investigation is appealed to the MSS Governing Council as described in [Speakers’ Ruling 11.2.4](#), in which case the Governing Council will review the report and investigation. The designated investigator(s) will communicate the resolution of formal reports directly to all relevant parties.
- 10.1.5 Should the Speakers personally witness an infraction, so long as they are eligible to conduct investigations, they may decide to resolve the situation informally at their discretion. However, your Speakers may also decide to file a formal report. If the formal report is filed based on an infraction witnessed by only one of the Speakers, the witnessing Speaker or Vice Speaker will recuse themselves from the investigation and the other may continue to oversee the investigation. If both Speakers are witnesses to the infraction, the MSS Chair and the Chair of the Rules Committee will oversee the investigation, and the Speakers filing the report shall have no role in the investigation or adjudication of the violation.
- 10.2 **Investigation of Reported Infractions:** All reports deemed actionable by the Speakers and/or their designated investigator(s) shall receive a formal investigation, in accordance with the provisions of [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2](#) and the below guidelines:
- 10.2.1 **Establishment of an Investigation Committee:**
- 10.2.1.1 An Investigation Committee consisting of the MSS Speakers and Rules Committee shall be assembled by the designated investigator(s) to review the content of each report and determine the appropriate response. The MSS Speaker will serve as the Chair for any Investigation Committee. In the event the Speaker is ineligible to serve as Chair according to [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2.1](#), the Vice Speaker shall instead chair the Committee. If both Speakers are ineligible, the Chair of the Rules Committee will serve as Chair of the Investigation Committee under the authority and guidance of the Chair of the MSS Governing Council.
- 10.2.1.2 Any members of the Investigation Committee with identified or potential conflicts of interest, including personal relationships with accused candidate(s) or individual(s) reporting suspected misconduct, shall recuse themselves from all portions of the investigation pertaining to those individuals.
- 10.2.1.3 The Investigation Committee shall proceed with advice and guidance from AMA staff, including, as necessary, the Director of the MSS, the AMA Council on Ethical & Judicial Affairs, AMA Office of General Counsel, and/or other representatives from AMA leadership as determined by the Speaker, Vice Speaker, or MSS Chair.
- 10.2.2 **Responsibilities of the Investigation Committee:**
- 10.2.2.1 The Investigation Committee shall investigate the veracity and circumstances of the claims of misconduct alleged in the report as it deems appropriate, pursuant to [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2](#).
- 10.2.2.2 In cases requiring the Investigation Committee, via its MSS GC leader, to communicate with MSS Members - for instance, in order to obtain corroborating information - it shall ensure that no unnecessary information about the report or alleged offence is shared with any member outside the Investigation Committee. Names of individuals submitting reports are to be kept strictly confidential.

- 10.2.2.3 Any MSS member interviewed by an Investigation Committee must keep the contents of any communications strictly confidential. Sharing any information about reports of misconduct or involved individuals with other MSS members is considered a severe violation of the Speakers' Ruling, and is subject to remediation by the Speakers.
- 10.2.2.4 Per [MSS IOP 6.5.12.2.3](#), the Investigation Committee shall inform the accused candidate of the nature of the allegations by email and/or in writing, providing as much information as possible without in any way suggesting the identity of the reporting party. As with all communications between members of the Committee and external parties, only the Speakers or duly appointed members of the Governing Council overseeing the committee may reach out to any MSS members on behalf of the Investigation Committee.
- 10.2.2.5 The Investigation Committee shall not conclude its investigation until the candidate has had an opportunity to speak with the Committee, unless:
 - 10.2.2.5.1 The committee cannot arrange to meet with the candidate at a mutually acceptable time within one week of initial contact; or
 - 10.2.2.5.2 The election is scheduled to occur within one week, and the designated investigator(s) have made a good faith effort to arrange to speak with the candidate; or
 - 10.2.2.5.3 The strength of the evidence provided in the report or identified by the investigation is strong enough, **and** the nature of the alleged infraction is significant enough that a delay is likely to have immediate and profound consequences for the ability of the MSS to conduct a fair election. The Investigation Committee must attempt to urgently contact the candidate in such cases, and should reserve this option only for the most extreme cases. Execution of this clause of the Ruling shall be at the discretion of, and the sole responsibility of the Speaker, or other member of the MSS Governing Council according to Speakers' Ruling 10.1.1.
- 10.3 **Rebuttal Process:** [MSS IOP 6.5.12.3](#) describes the process for rebuttal of an investigation into alleged campaign misconduct, in which the alleged violator is given the opportunity to defend the actions in the alleged infraction before the Investigation Committee. This IOP, which is reproduced in the following sections, provides that:
 - 10.3.1 "Following their investigation, the investigators shall inform the alleged violator, Regional Chairs, and Acting Regional Chairs of the infraction in writing, including the results of the investigation of the alleged infraction.
 - 10.3.2 The alleged violator shall be offered an opportunity to rebut the alleged infraction in writing to the investigators. Regional Chairs and Acting Regional Chairs shall be offered the opportunity to provide comments on the alleged infraction in writing to the investigators.
 - 10.3.3 Following rebuttal and comments, the investigators shall determine whether the alleged infraction is substantiated and shall report their findings in writing to the alleged violator, Regional Chairs, and Acting Regional Chairs. For all individuals provided with the report, findings of an infraction investigation shall be kept confidential.
 - 10.3.4 Upon each substantiated infraction of the Campaign Rules, the candidate shall be given an official written notice from the investigators with the final decision authority.
 - 10.3.5 Following this, the investigators shall report substantiated infractions to the Assembly but shall not make any recommendations to the Assembly."
- 10.4 **Appeal Process:** [MSS IOP 6.5.12.4](#) describes the process for appeals of investigations of alleged misconduct, the text of which is reproduced verbatim in the following sections:
 - 10.4.1 "Appeals occur after a determination of whether an infraction is substantiated. Appeals focus on the process of the investigation or determination. Should a candidate feel that due process was not followed in either of these cases and that an appeal is warranted, they must submit this in writing to the Chair of the MSS within twenty-four (24) hours of being notified of the result and before the start of balloting.

- 10.4.2 The Governing Council, excluding investigators and candidates for the election being investigated, shall promptly convene to review the appeal and determine whether the previous decision should be reversed prior to the start of balloting. Whenever possible, an appeal should be completed prior to the results of the investigation being released to the Assembly.”
- 10.5 **Communication of Results of Investigation:** [MSS IOP 6.5.12.3.1](#) establishes that “following their investigation, the investigators shall inform the alleged violator, Regional Chairs, and Acting Regional Chairs of the infraction in writing, including the results of the investigation of the alleged infraction.”
- 10.5.1 As with any external communication on behalf of the Investigation Committee, only the member of the MSS Governing Council overseeing the committee is permitted to communicate with Regional leaders or other MSS members on behalf of the committee.
- 10.5.2 The MSS GC will then ensure that the investigation was performed in good faith and the investigator(s)’ ruling was appropriate.
- 10.5.3 This will require a majority vote of the GC, with the recusal of the Chair.
- 10.5.4 The identity of the reporter and any members who give testimony to the Governing Council will remain anonymous.
- 10.6 **Infractions by Campaign Team Members:**
- 10.6.1 In submitting the name of an MSS member as a member of a campaign team, candidates acknowledge that they have personally reviewed the contents of the Speakers’ Ruling with their team members. Candidates are encouraged to exercise caution and clarify any questions regarding campaign rules with the Speaker and Vice Speaker prior to submitting their team roster.
- 10.6.2 Candidates are responsible for the actions of any registered members of their campaign team. Any reported infraction by a member of a candidate’s campaign team will be considered as an infraction by the candidate and will be investigated and resolved accordingly, whether or not the candidate himself or herself is determined to have had any prior knowledge of the infraction.
- 10.6.3 All members of a campaign team, including all candidates, are required to attend a mandatory election orientation meeting scheduled by the Speakers at the beginning of the campaign period, where rules will be discussed and opportunities provided for questions.
- 10.6.3.1 It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that every member of their campaign team attends and actively participates in the mandatory orientation meeting. Members who do not attend the meeting for any given election cycle are ineligible to serve on any campaign teams for that election cycle.
- 10.6.3.2 Lack of knowledge of any provision within the Speakers’ Ruling or relevant sections of the MSS IOPs shall not excuse any violation of election conduct policies. It is the responsibility of candidates to keep themselves and their teams informed about rules and expectations.
- 10.6.4 All candidates and campaign team members must certify in writing that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the full contents of the Speakers’ Ruling and the MSS IOPs before undertaking any campaign-related activities.

Section 11: MSS Assembly Meeting

- 11.1 Any rules of procedure not specifically outlined in this Speakers' Ruling, the MSS IOPs, or the AMA Constitution and Bylaws default to the parliamentary authority used by the AMA House of Delegates - the current edition of The American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, as outlined in [AMA Bylaws 11.1](#).
- 11.1.1 Further communication regarding business of our MSS meeting will be provided to the section in a timely manner, pending decisions from the greater AMA.
- 11.2 All elections shall proceed according to the provisions in [MSS IOP 6.6 & 6.7](#).
- 11.2.1 **Voter Eligibility:** Credentialed MSS members acting as MSS Delegates for the meeting will be eligible to vote.
- 11.2.2 **Method of Voting:** When there is no contest, a majority vote without ballot shall elect. All other elections shall be by ballot.
 - 11.2.2.1 All contested elections shall use instant runoff voting without separate runoff elections.
 - 11.2.2.1.1 The ballot shall give voters the option of ranking candidates in order of preference.
 - 11.2.2.1.2 If a candidate receives a simple majority of first preferences, that candidate is elected.
 - 11.2.2.1.3 If no candidate receives a majority of first preferences, an instant runoff re-tabulation shall be performed. The instant runoff re-tabulation shall be conducted in rounds. In each round, each voter's ballot shall count as a single vote for whichever continuing candidate the voter has ranked highest. The candidate with the fewest votes after each round shall be eliminated until only two (2) candidates remain, with the candidate then receiving the greatest number of votes being elected.
- 11.2.3 No ballots may be cast after the expiration of the voting period. Upon receipt of the election results, the Presiding Officer will announce the results to the Assembly.
- 11.2.4 **Appeals:** Appeals of the election process and results must be made in writing to the Assembly's Presiding Officer no later than two (2) hours after the official announcement of the final results.
 - 11.2.4.1 Any appeal of the process of ballot(s) distribution will be considered by the Rules Committee. Consideration of such appeals and merits of said appeals will be determined in whatever manner the committee deems necessary. The results of the committee's recommendations must be forwarded in writing by the Committee Chair to the Assembly's Presiding Officer.
 - 11.2.4.2 Any appeal of the ballot processing, tabulation, and announcement of results, shall be considered by the Credentials Committee. Consideration of such appeals and merits of said appeals will be determined in whatever manner the committee deems necessary. The results of the committee's recommendations must be forwarded in writing by the Committee Chair to the Assembly's Presiding Officer.
 - 11.2.4.3 No person who is a candidate in the election being appealed may participate in any part of the appeals process.
 - 11.2.4.4 The Governing Council will consider the appeals report(s) from the Committee(s) dealing with the matter. Final decision on the election results will be the jurisdiction of the Governing Council.