

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ORGANIZED MEDICAL STAFF SECTION

Resolution: 7
(June 2022)

Introduced by: Massachusetts Medical Society
Subject: Virtual Attendance at AMA Meetings
Referred to: OMSS Reference Committee
(xxxx, MD, Chair)

1 WHEREAS, The House of Delegates of the American Medical Association is the policy-making
2 instrument of the AMA and deliberations at its Sections contribute significantly to that process;
3 and
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5 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic compelled communications among AMA delegates and
6 sections participants to discuss resolutions and policy issues be done through virtual means;
7 and
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9 WHEREAS, There were concerns that strictly virtual interaction could dilute the sharing of ideas
10 and shaping of policy because of lack of face-to-face interaction; and
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12 WHEREAS, Meetings through the time of the COVID-19 pandemic to date have been
13 reasonably successful, albeit at times cumbersome and somewhat restrictive of the number of
14 policies discussed; and
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16 WHEREAS, Testimony and deliberation of proposed policies in the virtual Forum space has
17 expanded, with slow but ongoing acceptance and participation of members particularly of
18 sections, and is likely to continue to be an integral venue of sections, but to date do not include
19 the formal business meeting, including voting on section actions, in most instances; and
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21 WHEREAS, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) acknowledged the
22 necessity and value of virtual medical interactions by virtue of an executive order allowing 100
23 percent of reimbursement of virtual visits at the level of an in-office visit, and this has been
24 continued into 2022 with expectation that some level of payment for virtual medical visits will
25 become a part of standard reimbursement policy by CMS and private insurers going forward, a
26 measure of society's acceptance of this form of communication; and
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28 WHEREAS, Although patients' satisfaction with virtual visits is varied, a significant percentage
29 are supportive of the virtual alternative; and
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31 WHEREAS, The vagaries and concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic does not have a
32 defined ending and other similar health concerns may arise from time to time; and
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34 WHEREAS, The cost of attending AMA meetings, both in expense and time, is significant and
35 likely serves as a barrier to participation of a significant number of potential
36 Delegates/Representatives; and
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38 WHEREAS, The AMA seeks to maintain and enlarge its membership to ensure it maximizes its
39 representation of various medical interests, including maximizing equity, as well as thereby

1 fortifying its position and influence as the primary advocate for medical interests in the United
2 States and abroad; and
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4 WHEREAS, Membership gaps such as physicians in mid-practice, as well as under-represented
5 section of society, in part result from conflicting demands such as time taken from family and
6 practice concerns, as well as economic burdens; and
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8 WHEREAS, Some members with impairments/disabilities find it difficult to navigate AMA
9 meetings in person; and
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11 WHEREAS, Despite anticipated logistical difficulties, the option to attend AMA meetings with full
12 participation, including testimony and voting, would be highly desirable to increase member
13 retention, attract new members, and increase member active participation; therefore be it
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15 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association expend the format of Section meetings to
16 include official participation via virtual, as well as in-person, attendance at Section Meetings,
17 with procedures to include voting as well as testimony and educational presentations, and
18 ensure equity and full access to meaningful interaction of those accredited but not physically
19 present, starting at the Interim 2022 Meeting (Directive to Take Action); and be it further
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21 RESOLVED, That our AMA study the experience of Sections that include virtual participation in
22 business meetings with voting privileges, with the goal of expanding House of Delegates
23 meetings to include virtual participation with those privileges as an option to in-person
24 attendance at its meeting and reference committees, and report back to the HOD by Interim
25 2023 (Directive to Take Action); and be it further
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27 RESOLVED, That this resolution be forwarded to the AMA House of Delegates for consideration
28 at its Annual 2022 Meeting (Directive to Take Action).

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 5/13/2022

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Meetings of the House of Delegates (B-2.12)

2.12.1 Regular Meetings of the House of Delegates. The House of Delegates shall meet twice annually, at an Annual Meeting and an Interim Meeting.

2.12.1.1 Business of Interim Meeting. The business of an Interim Meeting shall be focused on advocacy and legislation. Resolutions pertaining to ethics, and opinions and reports of the Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs, may also be considered at an Interim Meeting. Other business requiring action prior to the following Annual Meeting may also be considered at an Interim Meeting. In addition, any other business may be considered at an Interim Meeting by majority vote of delegates present and voting.

2.12.2 Special Meetings of the House of Delegates. Special Meetings of the House of Delegates shall be called by the Speaker on written or electronic request by one-third of the members of the House of Delegates, or on request of a majority of the Board of Trustees. When a special meeting is called, the Executive Vice President of the AMA shall mail a notice to the last known address of each member of the House of Delegates at least 20 days before the special meeting is to be held. The notice shall specify the time and place of meeting and the purpose for which it is called, and the House of Delegates shall consider no business except that for which the meeting is called.

2.12.3 Locations. The House of Delegates shall meet in cities selected by the Board of Trustees.

2.12.3.1 Invitation from Constituent Association. A constituent association desiring a meeting within its borders shall submit an invitation in writing, together with significant data, to the Board of Trustees. The dates and the city selected may be changed by action of the Board of Trustees at any time, but not later than 60 days prior to the dates selected for that meeting.

2.12.4 Meetings.

2.12.4.1 Open. The House of Delegates may meet in an open meeting to which any person may be admitted. By majority vote of delegates present and voting, an open meeting may be moved into either a closed or an executive meeting.

2.12.4.2 Closed. A closed meeting shall be restricted to members of the AMA, and to employees of the AMA and of organizations represented in the House of Delegates.

2.12.4.3 Executive. An executive meeting shall be limited to the members of the House of Delegates and to such employees of the AMA necessary for its functioning.

Business Meeting (B-7.0.6)

There shall be a Business Meeting of members of each Section. The Business Meeting shall be held on a day prior to each Annual and Interim Meeting of the House of Delegates.

7.0.6.1 Purpose. The purposes of the Business Meeting shall be:

7.0.6.1.1 To hear such reports as may be appropriate.

7.0.6.1.2 To consider other business and vote upon such matters as may properly come before the meeting.

7.0.6.1.3 To adopt resolutions for submission by the Section to the House of Delegates.

7.0.6.1.4 To hold elections.

7.0.6.2 Meeting Procedure.

7.0.6.2.1 The Business Meeting shall be open to all members of the AMA.

7.0.6.2.2 Only duly selected representatives who are AMA members shall have the right to vote at the Business Meeting.

7.0.6.2.3 The Business Meeting shall be conducted pursuant to rules of procedure adopted by the Governing Council. The rules of procedure may specify the rights and privileges of Section members, including any limitations on participation or vote.