

## **MSS June 2022 AMA-MSS Speakers 'Ruling**

**UPDATED: 01/15/2022, Midani S. & Stuard W.**

**Dear Candidates and AMA-MSS Leadership,**

In accordance with MSS IOP 6.5.3, your Speakers have established this document of Rulings so that all candidates have equal access to all guidelines. This document will be open to the AMA-MSS and specifically targeted towards individuals seeking candidacy for the positions of the AMA-MSS Vice Chair, Speaker, Vice Speaker, Section Delegate, Alternate Delegate, and At-Large Officer. Candidates who submit campaign materials by the deadline will receive a copy of this document, and a copy will be provided in the meeting Election Manual. Pursuant to MSS IOP 6.5.3, "Once released, the AMA-MSS Speakers reserve the right to issue addendums or announcements during the campaign period as needed. Any addendums or amendments to the election rules also shall be shared with all candidates."

This document outlines prior Speakers 'Rulings that remain in effect, new Speakers 'Rulings, and how your Speakers plan to enforce the rules. Remember that campaign rules outlined in the MSS Internal Operating Procedures (IOPs) are always in effect. This document clarifies some of those rules and procedures. Region Bylaws should be followed in all instances, but are superseded by the MSS IOPs and the Speakers 'Ruling. MSS IOP 4.4.5.2 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 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 Speakers 'Rulings and the MSS Internal Operating Procedures (IOP) underwent extensive review by the IOP/Election Task Force (ETF) called upon by the Medical Student Section. These Rulings were modified by your Speakers in consideration of recommendations by the Task Force, MSS Assembly, and other relevant stakeholders.

### **I. Deadline for Material Submission**

1. The deadline for submitting applications including materials to be included in the A-22 Election Guide is May 6, 2022 by 1:59 AM Central Time. We strongly encourage students to submit application materials ahead of time.
2. No new applications will be accepted after this deadline, although supporting materials may be accepted at the discretion of the AMA staff.

3. 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-22 meeting in future Speakers' communications.
4. Any candidates who run from the floor must submit completed application materials to AMA staff within 48 hours of being nominated.
5. If a candidate who is nominated from the floor would like to have their completed application materials uploaded to the AMA website for section reference, they must send these materials to AMA staff by 2 PM CT on the day of nomination.
6. Candidates who run from the floor will not have materials included in the official A-22 Election Guide.
7. Candidates who run from the floor will not be able to participate in the A-22 Candidate Forum if the nomination period follows the Candidate Forum.
8. Candidates who run from the floor must complete the requisite application materials and Conflict of Interest disclosures before they are eligible for election. These materials must be provided to the MSS Section Director at [mss@ama-assn.org](mailto:mss@ama-assn.org) at a time to be determined based on the election platform.

## **II. Campaign Period**

1. No campaigning for any other election besides those elections taking place at the upcoming meeting will be permitted. The official campaign period shall be defined as starting the first day the Speakers' Ruling is made available to MSS members. (MSS IOP 6.5.2.3, pg 7)
  - a. All activities related to announcement of candidacy, endorsement, or campaigning, including but not limited to communications, and speaking opportunities shall be limited to the campaign period defined above (MSS IOP 6.5.2.4, pg 7).
    - i. Permissible communication outside of the campaign period includes, but is not limited to:
      1. Discussing one's viability as a potential candidate with individual MSS members before deciding to declare candidacy.
      2. Assembling individuals to serve as a member's campaign manager team, should they decide to run.
        - a. Candidates cannot enlist more than two (2) members to serve as their campaign manager(s).
        - b. As part of these conversations, it is permissible for candidates to speak on their own behalf and announce their candidacy, for the purpose of recruiting these members to their campaign manager team, so long as their recruitment would not violate the two-member limit.
        - c. Members of a candidate's campaign manager team may not reach out on behalf of a candidate to other members outside of the campaign period.

3. Reaching out to current and previous MSS members individually for more information on the responsibilities of a position.
  - ii. Your Speakers' intent is to limit communication which could be interpreted as active campaigning or declaration of candidacy. Communication outside of the campaign period that is not permissible includes, but is not limited to:
    1. Creation of a Facebook campaign page.
    2. Posts to social media declaring candidacy or intent to run for an elected position.
    3. Distribution of campaign materials.
    4. Coordinated outreach to multiple parties with the intent of declaring candidacy or garnering support.
  - b. Members are encouraged to address questions about the permissibility of any communication to your Speakers and/or Chair of the Rules Committee prior to initiating said communication.
2. The Speakers' Ruling from the preceding national meeting is in effect until your Speakers release the new Ruling for the meeting.
3. Any dispute about a provision in this Ruling being inconsistent with the MSS IOPs or AMA Constitution and Bylaws will be resolved by your Governing Council and promptly addressed by your Speakers.

### **III. Campaigning: Campaign Teams and Involvement**

1. Pursuant to the MSS IOPs, only members of the MSS may be publicly involved with any candidate's campaign. This provision encompasses public endorsements, with exceptions outlined in MSS IOP 6.5.9.3 (pg 10).
  - a. 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.
2. Regions may provide public support for candidates as permitted by Region Bylaws. When speaking in official support of a candidate on behalf of an MSS Region, MSS Region Chairs must be sure that an official vote by the Region took place in accordance with the Region's Bylaws for quorum and rules dictating official support.
  - a. MSS Regions Chairs must ensure that Region endorsements occur in accordance with Region Bylaws when speaking in official support of a candidate on behalf of an MSS Region (MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.3.1)
  - b. The endorsing Region must:
    - i. Document that quorum was met when the voting occurred (MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.3.1.2)
    - ii. Document the results of the vote pursuant to Region Bylaws. (MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.3.1.3)

- c. If a Region does not have Bylaws specifying quorum or rules dictating official support, MSS Region Chairs must contact your Speakers for guidance. (MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.3.1.1)
- 3. Regions may endorse candidates from Regions outside their own, pursuant to Region Bylaws (MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.3). Endorsements may be posted on a candidate's Facebook campaign page or declared through Region communication channels ahead of voting at Assembly.
- 4. Upon endorsement of a candidate by a Region and at the approval of the MSS Region Chair, the endorsed candidate or a campaign team member may share a notice of official endorsement to the Facebook campaign page.
  - a. Announcement of endorsement by a Region shall be limited to one (1) post on the candidate's Facebook campaign page.
- 5. In order to maintain the collegiality of our section, Regions may not vote to oppose any candidate. (MSS IOP 6.5.9.3.3.3, pg 12)
- 6. MSS Standing Committee members, MSS Convention Committee members (excluding the Rules Committee), MSS Representatives and Liaisons to any AMA group or outside organization, AMPAC Student Advisory Board members, Region Delegates and Alternate Delegates, and Region Governing Council members except Chairs or Chairs-Elect can endorse candidates if they do not endorse a candidate while using or acting under the title of their respective leadership position. (MSS IOP 6.5.9.1)
  - a. These AMA leaders must maintain official neutrality when speaking in their leadership role, but they can endorse a candidate as an individual member of the MSS.
  - b. Endorsers must not reference current or past MSS leadership positions they hold while making endorsements.
- 7. MSS Governing Council (GC) members (including Chair-elect), MSS Rules Committee members, MSS Region Chairs, the current AMA GRAF, ~~and~~ the current MSS liaison and liaison-elect to the BOT, and MSS members who currently serve on an AMA Council or in an AMA Liaison position are not permitted to join a campaign or to publicly endorse a candidate. These AMA leaders must maintain absolute neutrality when it comes to campaigns and candidates.
  - a. Involvement in campaigns includes, but is not limited to, holding meetings, formally or informally, in a group or individually, to plan, advise, or discuss individual campaigns, unless all candidates are afforded equal access.
    - i. The campaign involvement of these MSS leaders shall be limited to candidate inquiries regarding election-related matters and AMA-related information so long as that information is made available to all MSS members who request it.
  - b. Public endorsement, as it pertains to campaigning shall include, but is not limited to:
    - i. Declaring support by clicking "like" and/or "follow" on a Facebook campaign page or stating support on any campaign webpage that is available to other AMA-MSS members (including Facebook campaign pages). This does not apply to your Speakers or A-22 Rules Committee,

- who may “like” and/or “follow” each Facebook campaign page for the purpose of monitoring compliance to rulings.
- ii. Speaking publicly in favor of or in opposition to any candidate.
- iii. Any action that could be construed as using a leadership position to influence the election as determined by your Speakers.
- c. Unless their respective Region has voted to endorse a candidate, MSS Region Chairs may not endorse a candidate through any means of communication through which AMA members receive official news from their MSS Region Chair, which includes, but is not limited to, email, telephone, Facebook, Twitter, and GroupMe.
- d. The above AMA leaders 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 as an AMA leader.
- e. Candidates may not suggest or imply to any MSS member that any of the above AMA leaders supports their candidacy in any way.
- f. Candidates may not communicate with any of the above AMA leaders asking to connect them with individual MSS members for the purposes of campaigning.
- 8. AMA leaders including MSS Region Chairs are encouraged to make information about candidates available to their Region giving equal time to all candidates.
  - a. If a discussion is being held regarding candidates at the Region level, information regarding the structure of these discussions must be relayed to your Speakers by MSS Region Chairs fourteen (14) days prior to the Region meetings.
    - i. Candidates will be notified of the format of Region discussions by your Speakers and will be provided with instructions for signing up to attend.
  - b. If a candidate is in attendance at their own Region meeting, they must leave said meeting during discussion of candidates.
  - c. Candidates and their campaign team are prohibited from contacting Regions to request time to speak during their Region business and policy meetings.
- 9. AMA leaders including MSS Region Chairs are not prevented by the MSS IOPs from speaking privately about their personal opinions of a candidate as long as it is clear they are speaking as an individual.
- 10. The usage of buttons and/or stickers, or having paraphernalia promoting candidates visible during an AMA meeting is not permitted by any MSS member.
  - a. This includes, but is not limited to, virtual backgrounds and video chat names.
- 11. Pursuant to MSS IOP’s, Campaigning at MSS Regional, state, or official school section meetings prior to the AMA meeting at which the election occurs is prohibited.
  - a. The candidate’s own Medical Student Region, state, or school section meetings are an exception to this rule.

#### **IV. Campaigning: Communications**

1. Campaign communications procedures are covered by MSS IOP 6.5.7 (pg 9).

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, we have the following rules for online communications for national elections:
  - a. Candidates should be prudent and courteous regarding the number, length, and content of messages sent prior to the election, including but not limited to email, social media profiles, phone calls, text message, and group chats. (MSS IOP 6.5.7.2, pg 9)
  - b. No mode of MSS- or AMA-sponsored communication, including but not limited to listservs, phone or email lists, or other mass communication methods (e.g. GroupMe, Facebook, etc.) shall be used for announcements of candidacy, endorsement, or campaigning. (MSS IOP 6.5.7.3, pg 9)
    - i. This includes the AMA Med Students Facebook page, 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, excluding the exception in Speakers' Ruling Section IV-g. This does not include social media channels created internally by state or campus MSS leadership or other individual MSS members.
    - ii. Exceptions to this rule shall only be made for campaign events that are hosted by your current Speakers and open for participation by all candidates who have submitted their applications prior to the deadline.
  - c. No campaign websites or web pages will be permitted for campaign promotion, with the exception of a Facebook page for each campaign or any candidate-specific materials uploaded to the AMA website.
    - i. Aside from a Facebook campaign page, candidates may not create a campaign page or channel on any other communication platform or social media channel. Aside from methods used to manage their campaign team, they may only use other communication platforms or social media channels to reach out to individual MSS members.
    - ii. Pursuant to MSS IOP 6.5.7.4, candidates using campaign-specific social media accounts can only invite MSS members to follow said accounts.
    - iii. All candidates shall include a statement in the "About" section asking that only MSS members "like" the page.
    - iv. All candidates shall include a pinned post to the top of their Facebook candidate page asking that only MSS members "like" the page.
    - v. In the event that a candidate becomes aware of a non-MSS individual liking their respective Facebook candidate page, the candidate or campaign team may notify your Speakers for additional guidance to resolve the problem.
    - vi. In the event that your Speakers are informed of a non-MSS individual liking a Facebook candidate page, your Speakers will notify the campaign

team with expected resolution to the best of the candidate's ability within 48 hours of notification.

- vii. Your Speaker, Vice Speaker, and the Chair of the Rules Committee reserve the right to become an administrator of the campaign page in order to monitor adherence to the rules.
- d. When sharing a Facebook campaign page on a candidate's or campaign team members personal page, please make sure to include a statement in the post on your personal page stating that only MSS members should "like" the page.
- e. Candidates may share a link to the candidate's Facebook campaign page along with a description of their platform on their personal pages to announce their candidacy, but otherwise will restrict all campaign-related material to their campaign pages.
- f. Candidates may have their Facebook campaign page shared once to each respective Region Facebook page, subject to approval by the MSS Region Chair and pursuant to Region Bylaws. Candidates may share their own campaign page to their respective Region. Otherwise, the campaign page must be shared by a Region member from the corresponding Region.
  - i. The post may contain personal testimony by the posting member.
  - ii. GC members, their designees, and administrators of Region Facebook pages have the duty to delete any additional posts of a campaign page made beyond the original post.
  - iii. Any additional public testimony or discussion on the candidate by Region members on the Region Facebook pages is restricted to the comments section of the initial post.
  - iv. Candidates should make every effort to move direct communication with MSS members that arises during Region Facebook posts to their campaign page.
  - v. Any member of the Region may share a candidate's campaign page, with the exception of the MSS Region Chair, unless the Region has voted to formally support that candidate pursuant to Speakers' Ruling Section III-2.
- g. MSS Region Chairs must share the candidate packet to their respective Region Facebook page within seven (7) business days of the MSS Meeting.
- h. Individual MSS members who are not prohibited from campaign involvement (pursuant to Speakers' Ruling Section III) may share candidate pages on their personal Facebook pages, where they may elaborate with testimony and/or endorsement.
- i. The following items may be displayed on Facebook campaign pages:
  - i. One (1) optional letter of endorsement by the Dean or Dean's representative from the candidate's medical school
  - ii. 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
  - iii. Any letters of endorsement of MSS members, Regions or organizations (including any specialty organization with voting representation within the

MSS). To comply with this provision and avoid the possibility of an endorsement being called into question, the endorsing entity must at minimum do the following:

1. Follow the entity's Bylaws dictating official endorsement,
2. Take and document the results of an official vote, and
3. Document that quorum was met when the voting occurred.
- iv. No other letters of endorsement will be permitted.

## **V. Campaigning: Events and Speeches**

1. At a date determined by your Speakers, a candidate forum will be advertised and hosted by your Speakers.
  - a. Your Speakers will contact candidates regarding the date and time of the candidate forum at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled date.
  - b. Your Speakers will advertise the session and access information to MSS members over AMA-MSS communication channels.
2. At a date determined by your Speakers, with at least 1 week notice, candidates will be invited to record a video reviewed by your Speakers-and/or Rules Committee.
  - a. 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. (MSS IOP 6.4, pg 7)
  - b. The candidate videos will be posted on the AMA-MSS website.

## **VI. Campaigning: Platform**

1. Campaign platforms or ideas are subject to review by your Speakers, and may be deemed out of order if inappropriate.
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.

## **VII. Joint Campaigns and Elections**

1. In order to provide a fair campaign and election process for candidates, your Speakers require that all candidates campaign independently of one another.
2. No joint campaign materials nor joint campaign social media pages for joint candidate tickets will be permitted.
3. Candidates are not permitted to endorse any other candidates or serve on other campaign teams. This includes speaking to other MSS members, in a formal capacity, about other candidates or clicking "like" and/or "follow" on other campaign webpages.



For example, a candidate should not actively reach out to MSS members on behalf of another candidate.

4. Campaign managers will be limited to serving on one (1) candidate's team.
  - a. Campaign managers are not permitted to endorse candidates other than their own.
  - b. This includes speaking to other MSS members, in a formal capacity, about candidates they are not managing or clicking "like" and/or "follow" on other campaign webpages. For example, a campaign manager should not actively reach out to MSS members on behalf of another candidate.

## **VIII. Enforcement of Rules**

1. Alleged infractions, including but not necessarily limited to violations of the Campaign Rules, should be reported in writing to the MSS Speakers, or to any member of the MSS Rules Committee within 48 hours of initial identification of an alleged infraction. The individuals responsible for carrying out investigation of the infraction, from here as the designated investigator(s), are appointed according to MSS IOP 6.5.13 (pg 12).
  - a. The designated investigator(s) may include your Speakers, the Rules Committee, or AMA Staff, depending on the nature of the investigation.
  - b. Any member may speak with the designated investigator, or to any member of the Rules Committee, about suspected rules violations before filing a formal report. This will allow the designated investigator(s) to clarify the interpretation of the rules when assessing a potential infraction.
  - c. When the designated investigator(s), the MSS Speakers, or a member of the Rules Committee receives an allegation against a candidate or campaign, said investigator(s) may choose to consider and remedy the infraction informally, depending on the gravity of the accusation as judged by the designated investigator(s).
    - i. A formal report for an alleged infraction will result in an investigation and the return of a final verdict from the designated investigator(s) as laid out in VIII-2a.
    - ii. Allegations in writing which explicitly state that they are not formal reports will be defined as an informal report and will not be counted towards a formal infraction against a candidate, unless deemed to be a major infraction by your Speakers.
    - iii. The designated investigator(s) are not required to communicate the resolution of informal reports directly to all relevant campaigns.
  - d. The designated investigator(s) will keep all reports of alleged infractions, whether formal or informal, in strict confidence to protect the participation of MSS members in this process.

- e. The designated investigator(s) will communicate the resolution of formal reports directly to all relevant campaigns.
  - f. Should your Speakers be the witness to an infraction, so long as they are eligible to conduct investigations, they may decide to resolve the situation informally, regardless of history of previous infractions. However, should the need arise for your Speakers to file a formal report, the MSS Chair with the Rules Committee Chair will oversee the investigation and the Speakers filing the report shall have no role in the investigation or adjudication of the violation.
2. Should an investigation be required, the designated investigator(s), in conjunction with the Rules Committee, shall be fully responsible for its conduct in accordance with the MSS IOP 6.5.13.2 (pg 12) and the below guidelines:
- a. All formal reports will require investigation.
  - b. The designated investigator(s) will inform the candidate of the nature of the allegations by email and/or in writing, providing as much information as possible without directly or indirectly revealing the identity of the reporting party.
  - c. The designated investigator(s) will ascertain the candidate's interpretation of the rules with his/her account of the actions reported.
  - d. The designated investigator(s) will obtain a list of people the candidate would like to be interviewed in the investigation.
  - e. The designated investigator(s) will not proceed with an investigation until the candidate has had an opportunity to speak with the investigator(s), unless:
    - i. The candidate cannot speak with the investigator(s) within one week of initial contact, or
    - ii. The election is scheduled to occur within one week.
  - f. For any concern about the validities and impartiality of the investigation conducted by the designated investigator(s):
    - i. The MSS GC will then ensure that the investigation was done in good faith and the investigator(s) 'ruling was appropriate.
    - ii. The reporter and those who give testimony to the GC will remain anonymous.
    - iii. The accused will have the opportunity to speak to the GC only on the validity and impartiality of the investigative process.
  - g. For campaign violations that involve the inappropriate campaigning by MSS members, your Speakers will determine the gravity of the allegations involved as either minor or major infractions.
    - i. For an infraction deemed to be minor, such as inadvertent or unintentional mistakes, your Speakers would rather not penalize candidates for actions beyond their control.
    - ii. A written warning preserving the anonymity of the offending party will be sent to all known candidates involved in the election.
    - iii. Any infraction made by an MSS member deemed major (including, but not limited to, campaigning using any official AMA mode of communications such as listservs or campaigning for a candidate outside of the campaign period), or any subsequent violation by an individual that

has already received a warning, will be dealt with as a major infraction via formal investigation as previously described in this section.

- h. Any infraction made by a member of a candidate's campaign manager team will be considered as an infraction by the candidate, and will be dealt with via formal investigation as previously described in this section.
- i. Campaign managers shall be identified in writing to the MSS Speakers within 48 hours following campaign manager selection. This information will be forwarded to the Chair of the Rules Committee upon their selection.

## **IX. MSS Assembly Meeting**

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 (hereafter AIP).
  - a. Further communication regarding business of our MSS meeting will be provided to the section in a timely manner, pending decisions from the greater AMA
2. Election Voting:
  - a. In the case of a tie between two candidates, a second round of voting will commence immediately after.
  - b. If a tie persists in the second round of voting, the presiding officer will allow candidates the opportunity to give one-minute responses to one or more questions as determined by the Governing Council. A third round of voting will commence immediately after one-minute responses.
  - c. If a tie persists after 3 rounds of voting, pursuant to the MSS IOPs, your Speaker will cast a tie breaking vote (MSS IOP 10.6.3, pg 29).

If you have any questions about this Speakers 'Ruling, please feel free to email your Speakers at any time. We welcome any questions about election campaigns or about the MSS Internal Operating Procedures. Our highest priority is to support you, provide a level playing field for all candidates, 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 of the candidates!