



Physicians Caring for Texans

**295.013 Election Process:** The Texas Medical Association recognizes the following election process:

The Texas Medical Association House of Delegates holds at-large elections for the association's president-elect (who serves the following year as president and the year after as immediate past president), secretary/treasurer, speaker and vice speaker of the house, the nine at-large members and the young physician member of the Board of Trustees, a councilor for each district, and delegates and alternate delegates to the American Medical Association. The house confirms district elections of vice councilors.

#### Nominations

Members of the house and county medical societies receive advance information on elective positions to be filled at the next annual session and the protocol for nominations. Candidates and/or those who will nominate candidates will notify House of Delegates staff at TMA headquarters as soon as possible so that the names of candidates seeking election or reelection can be distributed to members of the house and county medical societies.

Nominations are accepted on the floor of the house whether or not prior notification of intent to seek election has been received or published. All candidates nominated from the floor must complete the required candidate information as stated in the TMA Election Process. Candidates are encouraged to complete this information in advance and send it to House of Delegates staff at TMA headquarters at least one week before the opening session of the meeting at which the election is to be held. Candidates nominated from the floor will complete the requisite information onsite and provide the information as soon as practicable to be distributed to the house prior to the election.

#### Guidelines

The intent of the following guidelines is to encourage fair, open, and equitable campaigning by: (1) specifying permitted and prohibited election related activities; (2) fostering opportunities for candidates to educate their colleagues about the issues; (3) informing voters about candidate experiences and views; (4) keeping costs down; and (5) maintaining dignified and courteous conduct appropriate to the image of the medical profession. The TMA Election Process with campaign guidelines is posted on the TMA website at <http://www.texmed.org/HOD>.

Campaigns are often spirited and your House of Delegates speaker and vice speaker expect candidates to state their positions and plans for TMA directly and positively.

Campaign expenditures and activities should be limited to prudent and reasonable levels necessary for adequate candidate exposure to delegates. Mindful that access to resources is not equal, candidates and their sponsoring organizations should exercise restraint in campaign spending.

The nominating county society, caucus, or individual should send a candidate announcement to house members by email or U.S. mail before annual session rather than distribute announcement cards to delegate seats at the meetings. Candidates may make personal phone calls and send letters. Including the initial announcement and one follow up, a maximum of two mass communications (an impersonal, one-way email or mail communication to all or part of the house membership, sponsored by or on behalf of a candidate) may be used for campaign purposes.

Candidates may make use of personal websites, blogs, social media, videos, etc. One of the two permitted mass emails may be used to communicate links to a candidate's electronic campaign material; this email must start with "TMA Campaign" in the subject line. TMA will post links to candidate websites on its website.

Candidates may display one 24"x36" poster in the Credentials Committee area at the entrance to the House of Delegates meeting; TMA provides easels. Candidates may not distribute any other campaign materials at the meeting.

Candidates will provide information as requested by the speakers including a candidate profile form. TMA publishes candidate information in the Handbook for Delegates and on the TMA website, eliminating the need for campaign literature. TMA will send an announcement indicating where house members can find candidate information.

Any candidate for at-large trustee or any office that includes an ex officio seat on the TMA Board of Trustees (president, president-elect, secretary/treasurer, and speaker and vice speaker of the House of Delegates) shall provide full disclosure of affiliations on a form developed by the speaker of the house by the time of the election.

TMA will host a forum for candidates at the annual session.

Candidates for TMA office should not attend meetings of county medical societies unless officially invited. Candidates may accept reimbursement of travel expenses by the county society in accordance with the policies of the society.

### Compliance

Each candidate is provided a copy of these guidelines and is expected to abide by them. Candidates are to inform those involved in their campaign efforts about the guidelines by sending a copy or by calling attention to the guidelines in the Election Process posted on the TMA website.

When candidates or their supporters are unclear about whether an intended campaign action is permitted, before taking action, they should seek the opinion of the speaker of the House of Delegates by contacting house staff at TMA headquarters. The speaker, in consultation with the vice speaker and the association's immediate past president, will respond with a ruling concerning the proper interpretation of the guidelines and inform all candidates in order to maintain a level playing field.

Any violation by a candidate or supporter of which the speaker becomes aware will be investigated. Should the speaker, vice speaker, and immediate past president rule that a violation has occurred, the speaker will make an announcement at the house meeting.

### Elections

TMA elections are held on the second day of the annual session at a time determined and published by the speakers in advance.

As provided in TMA Bylaws, all elections are by secret ballot and a majority of the votes cast are necessary to elect. When there are three or more nominees for a single position, the candidate receiving the least number of votes on each ballot shall be dropped until one of the said nominees receives a majority vote. When there is only one nomination, vote may be by acclamation.

The house will hold a run-off election to fill any vacancy that cannot be filled because of a tie vote.

With the exception of delegates and alternate delegates to AMA, elected candidates assume office at the adjournment of the House of Delegates meeting at the annual session. AMA delegates and alternate delegates assume office on Jan. 1 of the year following their election except those who are elected to fill vacancies, in which case they assume office at the adjournment of the annual session (SPKR Rep. 1-A-12; amended SPKR Rep. 1-A-17; amended SPKR Rep. 2-A-18).