



**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
OTOLARYNGOLOGY-
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY**

**GUIDELINES ON ELECTION COMMUNICATIONS,
INCLUDING CAMPAIGNING**

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery and its Foundation (“Academy”) support an election process that nominates a slate of outstanding candidates, each of whom has the potential to lead the society in alignment with the Strategic Plan. The Academy provides all candidates with equal opportunities to state their experience for fulfilling that fiduciary role. Personal or partisan campaign activities are explicitly prohibited.

It is a violation of Academy policy for candidates for office to engage in personal campaigning. Candidates are also prohibited from asking others to campaign on their behalf. This includes engaging in all forms of personal communications, including, but not limited to, mail, flyers, phone calls, and all forms of electronic media (including, but not limited to, Twitter, Doximity, LinkedIn, Facebook, ENTConnect, email, text messaging, etc.), that could be construed as campaigning.

A candidate who engages in a personal campaign or who knowingly grants permission to others to conduct a campaign on their behalf will be immediately investigated with the possibility of disqualification.

The AAO-HNS is the sole entity for sharing information concerning all candidates running for elected positions and provides an appropriate venue to introduce candidates in an equitable manner to the AAO-HNS membership. The rationale is to foster election of the most qualified candidate for office rather than his/her campaigning efforts or style.

An Ad Hoc Task Force for Election Oversight is charged with developing and maintaining these guidelines. This body oversees the adjudication process for election violations, including charges of personal campaigning. The Task Force comprises, at a minimum, the Academy President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President (who will serve as the Chair), Chair of the Ethics Committee, and the EVP/CEO.

Authorized Election Communication Activities by Slated Candidates

a. Official Statement

Each candidate is required to submit to the Academy an official candidate statement authored by the candidate in support of his/her candidacy and in response to a set of questions developed by the Board of Governors (BOG) Nominee Platform Work Group, and in the below-specified format. Once all statements for a specific position have been received and approved, (by or before the deadline), they will be posted collectively to the Academy’s website and will remain there throughout the election period. Membership will be notified via e-mail, ENTConnect Open Forum, and on the Academy’s website home page of such posting. These postings will have a link that will take members directly to the

candidate election materials. Candidates may not disseminate any organized campaigns by letters, emails, or other correspondence or materials in support of their candidacy.

The Official Statement:

- Must be typewritten and submitted in a Word-format file
- Word count for official statements is as follows:
 - President-Elect / 500 words maximum
 - Secretary-Treasurer Elect / 500 words maximum
 - Director at Large / 200 words maximum
 - Nominating Committee / 200 words maximum
 - Audit Committee / 200 words maximum
- Must not include hyperlink(s)
- Candidates must submit an electronic copy via email of their official statement to the Academy office for review by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Task Force on Election Oversight and/or the Secretary-Treasurer, no later than the assigned deadline, generally in early February.

The version of the official statement submitted by the candidate to the Academy for posting on the website and publication in the *Bulletin* and dissemination must be in final form. No changes to the official statement will be allowed after it is submitted to the Academy by the candidate. The Academy will not be responsible for errors in the final version of the official statement submitted by the candidate.

b. Candidates are prohibited from soliciting, financing, or disseminating support letters authored by others, including other Academy members.

c. Candidates may give educational presentations or interviews at otolaryngologic meetings or in related publications. Timing and other elements of such should not have the appearance of campaigning for Academy office, may not contain any political or electioneering content, and the candidates must refrain from mentioning their candidacy, other candidates, or the election. If the candidate is mentioned during the introduction or presentation without mention of the other candidate(s) for the position, the candidate **must** mention the other nominees for that position and direct the attendees to the Academy website election page. Other presentations or interviews may also be permitted as long as they contain no reference to the current election.

c.1 Academy articles or publications (e.g., in the *Bulletin* or *Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery*, committee reports) authored by candidates which were already in preparation or scheduled prior to nomination and which would appear (in print or electronically) during the election cycle would continue on schedule and the nominee's authorship cited. However, references to the candidate's nomination for office are not allowed. Non-Academy publications appearing during the election cycle would be considered campaigning if there were references to the nominee's candidacy for office.

c.2 Outreach during the election cycle to current or past leadership of Otolaryngology societies (eg, local or state, other national specialty societies, Academy committees), or similar individual(s), relating to

one's candidacy or service in the position if elected, may be considered campaigning. For example, contacting leadership of a state Otolaryngology society or the chair of a committee for information relating to how the candidate might help on an issue if elected, is considered campaigning.

d. Distribution by candidates of flyers, trinkets, pins, ribbons, and other similar items in support of the candidate is prohibited.

e. Campaigns organized by candidates, including letter writing, telephone campaigns, e-mails, postings to chat rooms or their equivalent (except venues explicitly set up for this purpose by the Academy), and other forms of campaigns are prohibited. Mail, email or other electronic campaigns in support of or opposition to a candidate by individuals or organizations are prohibited and should be discouraged by candidates, and if identified by a candidate, reported to the Ad Hoc Task Force on Election Oversight which will determine what action, if any, is advisable. The Academy, as part of the election process, will remind and educate voting members that such actions are prohibited and, may be detrimental to a nominee's candidacy.

Candidate Sanctions for Failure to Comply with Regulations

Slated candidate(s), who are found, by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, to be in violation of the above regulations may, at the Committee's discretion, be subject to sanctions, including but not limited to, removal from the ballot and/or nullification of votes received. Preliminary complaints and investigation will be fielded by the Ad Hoc Task Force on Election Oversight and then communicated to the Executive Committee.

Publication of Election Guidelines

The Academy will inform the membership of the official, authorized, and recommended election activities identified herein by publishing an excerpt of this administrative regulation on election activities in the *Bulletin* in the earliest issue after the date that candidates are announced, in any issue which includes candidate position statements, in the issue that is mailed closest to the date on which the ballots are mailed, and by including the summary in the election voting packets.