AGD ELECTION GUIDELINES

*(Amended House of Delegates in October 2020)*

I. It is in the best interest of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) for its leaders to be exemplary individuals. No candidate or his/her supporters may refer disparagingly to another candidate. All candidates should be promoted on the basis of positive attributes rather than on any negative characteristics of the opposing candidate. The AGD Credentials and Elections Committee (C&E) shall be the overseeing authority for all campaign activities, questions and complaints. In order to avoid potential interference or intimidation, the C&E shall be fully independent. “Independent” means the committee is free to act in its oversight functions throughout the organization without undue outside influence or coercion. All AGD elections should be conducted on a high ethical level. It is, therefore, imperative that all candidates agree to the following rules before beginning their campaigns for election.

II. Commitment to Guidelines

Candidates or their representative for any contested office shall meet via teleconference or other means as soon as possible after the deadline for filing for office has passed to discuss the spirit of the campaign to allow for a fair and transparent campaign. An agreement to abide by the AGD Election Guidelines will be signed by all campaigns in all elections. Thereafter or there upon, all parties for a contested office may agree to any variances, but they must do so in writing and those variances are only for that office for that year. No variance shall economically impact the candidates for the other offices. Staff shall send the changes that all candidates have agreed upon to each candidate for his or her signature. Once every candidate has approved and signed the changes, a copy will be sent to the chair of the Committee to be used in settling any discussions or disagreements that might arise during the campaign. All participants in the election process shall agree to the guidelines no matter what the status of their campaign. The aforementioned agreement, shall include, but not be limited to:

a. Nominating speeches

b. Candidates Forum

c. Reception(s)

d. Financing

e. Advertising

Copies of this agreement shall be signed by each candidate and distributed to each candidate along with the chairperson of the Committee. The C&E Committee shall be charged with enforcing the agreement.

III. Participation in the Campaign

a. Because of their possible wide reaching influence, members of the Executive Committee (EC), Past AGD Presidents, members of the Investment Committee, the Congressional Liaison, the Parliamentarian and the C&E are prohibited to participate in any way in someone else’s campaign, including but not limited to the following:

i. Making nominating speeches

ii. Pictures that expressly imply support of the candidate as deemed by the C&E. Pictures, such as where prohibited class AGD leaders are presenting awards, and are present in the background or as part of a larger group photo, are not subject to these restrictions.

iii. Quotations in printed material from the candidate

iv. Visiting caucuses with the candidate

v. Calling Delegates on behalf of the candidate

vi. Openly expressing opinions about the candidate or the process

vii. Open and outward support of a candidate throughout the election process. The exception to this is that if these individuals are serving as Delegates or Alternates, then they may ask questions of a candidate during a candidate’s visit to his/her regional caucus.

IV. Past AGD Presidents shall not participate in campaigns. Members of the Credentials and Elections Committee and the Parliamentarian to the HOD shall not participate in campaigns and are further prohibited from running for any AGD office. All other members not mentioned above may participate in the campaigns. Campaign committee members who are also Delegates and Alternates may submit questions to the C&E for the Candidates Forum and can participate in questions and answers of candidates while participating in their own caucus as a Delegate or Alternate.

V. Nominating Speeches:

a. A nominating speech shall be allotted for each candidate, which shall last no longer than two minutes. There will be no seconding speeches for any of the candidates. A “speech” is defined inclusive of a power point or other type of technologically enhanced presentation. All visual aid presentations must be approved by the C&E at least 45 days before presentation to the House of Delegates.

b. The nominating speech must be given by an AGD member. A candidate may choose to have members of the same region or outside of the candidate’s region to help run the campaign, endorse the candidate in an approved brochure, or travel with the candidate to the caucuses.

c. Candidates Speech: Each candidate will be asked to present a speech to the House of Delegates (HOD) lasting no longer than five minutes. “Present” means that a candidate, him or herself, whether in person or remotely, shall be the sole speaker in real time. A “speech” is defined inclusive of a power point or other type of technologically enhanced presentation. All visual aid presentations must be approved by the C&E at least 45 days before presentation to the House of Delegates.

VI. Candidates Forum:

a. There will be a Candidates Forum for contested offices. The Annual Meetings Council in consultation with both the Speaker of the House and the chair of the C&E Committee shall be charged with determining the appropriate time and location for this forum in consultation with the C&E Committee.

b. The Chairperson of C&E shall serve as moderator for the Candidates Forum.

c. Only Delegates and Alternate Delegates may submit questions for candidates to answer during the Candidates’ Forum. However, any member may request a Delegate or Alternate to ask a question. Delegates and Alternates will be asked to submit questions 30 days in advance of the HOD. Questions may be submitted in writing to the AGD office before the HOD. All questions submitted will be sorted by staff. Those submitting questions should specify to which office their questions apply (e.g., Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Speaker of the House, or Editor). Delegates and Alternates may submit questions at the House of Delegates annual meeting at the First Session of the HOD in receptacles provided by C&E.

d. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of C&E along with staff shall screen all questions to ensure appropriateness and proper grammar. They may combine similar questions.

e. A coin will be tossed to determine the initial order of the candidates for questioning. The order will rotate thereafter.

f. The moderator will then select questions and pose the same questions identifying the Delegate or Alternate posing the question to each candidate running for an identical office. All candidates for a particular contested office will be present when questions are presented, and will share alternatively the opportunity to answer first. Each candidate will be given an identical amount of time to answer all questions. No candidate may take more than two (2) minutes to answer a specific question.

VII. Candidates Reception:

a. The only entertaining permitted by the candidates will be in the Candidate’s Reception Room designated by the AGD so that the candidates may have informal dialogue with those who have decision-making roles within the organization. The Candidate’s Reception Room shall be open only for formal entertaining during the time designated by the AGD.

b. All candidates will select the menu and equally fund the cost of the Candidate’s Reception if they choose to participate in the reception.

c. All signs must be approved by C&E in consultation with AGD Meeting Services Department as to size, number, appropriateness, and location.

d. The same provisions apply to both contested and uncontested candidates.

VIII. Candidate Activity: Acceptable activity in the furtherance of a campaign shall include:

a. The distribution of biographical, issue-oriented, and contact information on the candidate to the AGD, regional, and constituent leaders and the appearance of the candidate at regional caucuses held in conjunction with the AGD Annual Meeting. Use of any social media must be first approved by C&E. All such materials must to be approved by the C&E Committee prior to distribution. (See X)

b. Commentary and/or biographical information will be posted on an “Election/Candidates” page on the AGD website. Each Candidate will be given relatively the same amount of space. Candidates are prohibited from having a personal campaign website. The C&E must approve all commentary and/or biographical information concerning the candidate before it is posted. Staff will upload the information.

c. Commentary and/or biographical information will be printed in one edition of *AGD Impact* so that side by side comparisons can be made, so long as materials are submitted to meet publication deadlines.

d. A candidate shall not contact a Delegate or Alternate by phone unless the Delegate or Alternate contacts the candidate first. A candidate may not solicit a Delegate or Alternate’s phone number. A candidate may contact a Delegate or Alternate by mail, commercial delivery, electronic or other digital style delivery. If the method of contact is via e-mail, then such e-mails shall be sent a first time, and then a second and final time with an interval of thirty (30) days between the two e-mails, contingent upon the declaration of candidacies. AGD staff shall send out the e-mails, of all candidates for an office, on the same day, again subject to the declaration of candidacy. The timing of the e-mails shall be determined per the provisions of Section II herein. Mail and electronic or other digital style delivery pieces may be sent out by the candidates or their representatives, but no more than two mail pieces and two electronic or other digital style deliveries may be sent to any individual Delegate or Alternate.

e. A member will formally declare his or her candidacy for that year’s election to constituent officers, Regional Directors, members of the Board and council and committee chairs not earlier than July 1 of the year in which the election is held at the AGD HOD. Notwithstanding this section, all AGD officers are primarily subject to the provisions of the AGD Bylaws, Chapter IX, Section 1(B)4, which states "*An AGD officer must declare for a new office between June 1 and June 30 of that year’s HOD, and resign his or her current office effective at the close of the annual meeting pursuant Chapter IX, Section 1, paragraph D. Once an AGD officer declares for a new office, said resignation is irrevocable."* Such notice may contain biographical and issue oriented information on his or her candidacy. A member shall not formally declare a candidacy or circulate petitions earlier than June 1 for incumbent officers running for another office or July 1st for all other candidates, of the year in which the election is held at the AGD HOD. Nothing in these guidelines, including the filing deadline for other candidates, shall prohibit a candidate who makes a valid declaration of candidacy from campaigning, subject to all provisions of these guidelines.

f. The term "declare" in Chapter IX, Section 1(B)4 means making a written or electronic communication to the AGD Board and officers, Regional Directors, council and committee chairs and constituent officers.

g. The requirement for a candidate to "present" a "petition" in Chapter IX, Section 1(B)2 means that the candidate shall, via electronic or other mechanical means, transmit a petition to the AGD Secretary, with a copy to the AGD Executive Director.

IX. All information (including electronic) to be circulated to the Delegates and Alternate delegates must be approved by C&E prior to distribution to the Delegates and Alternates. This does not include the verbal portion of the candidate’s speech.

X. Staff Responsibilities:

a. Staff shall transmit all items which C&E must review to C&E within one (1) work day of staff receiving it from a candidate. Staff shall acknowledge receipt of the candidate’s materials as articulated in Section XI(i) below by electronic means and confirming the numerical sequence. (e.g., “Received Submission 1, item 1) Staff may also be used to aid in forwarding e-mails to Delegates. Staff are not to be used to develop brochures, make phone calls to delegates, or order supplies.

b. Staff will regularly update information on the website about each candidate and will be responsible for sending out regular e-mails through the *AGD In Action* to encourage members to go to each candidate’s campaign information housed on the AGD website.

XI. Campaign Materials:

a. All candidates and their supporters are prohibited from using AGD stationery including business cards, and envelopes, issued by the HQ office in supporting a particular candidate for office. Constituent and component AGD stationery may be used only if specifically authorized by the governing body of the particular constituent or component. Individual candidates are prohibited from utilizing component, constituent or AGD stationery in their campaign letters signed by themselves. The use of the AGD logo is permitted in any and all campaign materials.

b. Campaign “Giveaways” of any kind are not allowed. There shall be no packaged food or other gifts distributed by the candidates to anyone as part of the candidates’ campaigns.

c. There will be no items mailed by the candidates other than printed materials approved by C&E.

d. Approved badges or pins, may be used to further a candidate’s campaign.

e. All campaign materials need to be submitted for approval.

f. Badges, pins, or other campaign items must be sent physically for approval. In the event that a sample cannot be sent, then a picture showing the full detail of the campaign item must be submitted to the C&E for approval. Once approved these will be divulged, by staff, to the other candidates of a contested office.

g. There shall be no delineated restrictions on when or where approved campaign materials and associated paraphernalia is distributed with the exception of the HOD floor, where staff will place all materials prior to the commencement of the First Session of the HOD and unless otherwise noted in these guidelines or other HOD or Board policy. Each candidate shall certify in writing that they are providing a minimum of 270 collated approved materials to be distributed accounting for all seated in the HOD. Candidates are limited to 3 collated items.

h. Candidates must submit a proof copy of all campaign materials, including those that are electronic only to the C&E Committee at least 45 days before the HOD for an initial review. All materials shall be numerically described. (e.g., Submission 1, item 1, etc.) Materials not submitted by the 45-day deadline may not be used. C&E must inform the candidates whether their materials have been approved or require revision within 15 days of their receipt by C&E, but no later than 30 days before the annual meeting. If a candidate’s materials do not pass inspection, that candidate will have until 14 days before the annual meeting to revise the materials and resubmit them to the C&E Committee for approval. If materials requiring revision have not been resubmitted by the 14-day deadline, they may not be used. If a candidate is unable to revise some or all of his or her materials to the satisfaction of C&E by the 14-day deadline, he or she may not use the materials that C&E has not approved.

i. In reviewing candidates’ materials, the C&E shall enforce the following:

i. Campaign materials may not use the likeness of an incumbent officer (unless the candidate is an incumbent officer.

ii. Campaign materials may not include endorsements from existing officers, DCs, Past AGD Presidents, the Parliamentarian or any member of C&E.

iii. Existing officers, DCs, the Parliamentarian, Past AGD Presidents or any member of the C&E may not endorse a candidate or participate in a candidate’s campaign, nor may pictures of such individuals be displayed in a candidate’s campaign literature.

XII. Financing

a. Candidates are only permitted to accept funding from the following sources:

i. The treasury of their own region;

ii. The constituent and component AGD treasuries within their own region;

iii. Private individual donations;

iv. Their own private funds.

b. No corporate donations of any kind may be utilized. This provision does not exclude donations from a dentist’s own personally incorporated practice.

XIII. Oversight

a. The C&E shall be charged with the implementation and monitoring of these guidelines.

b. Upon receipt of a written complaint or upon initiation of its own review of campaign related material, the Chairperson of the C&E Committee, in conjunction with the Committee as a whole, shall determine if a violation of the guidelines has occurred.

c. Upon determination that a violation has occurred by a majority vote (for purposes of this provision, the majority will be three votes of the five committee members) the Chairperson shall forward a written letter to the candidate, notifying the candidate of the violation. Upon a second offense, the AGD President shall announce from the podium immediately after the candidate makes his or her speech during the First Session of the HOD that said candidate has twice violated the guidelines. Upon third or subsequent offenses, a written statement notifying Delegates of the number of campaign violations shall be handed to each Delegate as he or she receives their ballot.

d. If it is determined by the Appeals Task Force that a C&E member has violated these guidelines in a significant manner, they will be replaced immediately by the President. Notification will be sent to the Delegates of the replacement.

e. Any candidate so adjudicated shall have automatic right of appeal to the Appeals Task Force through expedited appeal via electronic meeting or other timely means.

f. All complaints and responses must be in writing and copies retained in a C&E file by the Executive Director.

g. The C&E will certify in writing to the Executive Director at the conclusion of the election and after review of any issues or appeals that a fair election was held.

XIV Appeal Task Force

a. This task force, appointed by the President, shall be made up of three (3) Past Presidents, who are at least five (5) years removed from being Immediate Past President.

b. All candidates shall approve of the task force prior to the beginning of the election. If additional task force members are required due to candidates' lack of approval of the aforementioned Past Presidents, the President shall appoint a former AGD Trustee who is not nor ever has been an AGD officer.

c. The three (3) Presidents should, each be from a Region which has no candidates participating in elections for the year in question.

d. The task force will dissolve after certification of a fair election by the C&E after the conclusion of the annual meeting.

e. The chair shall be specified by the appointing individual.

f. Both the C&E, and/or the Appeal Task Force may seek counsel from the AGD attorney if they desire.

XV. Appeals:

a. A candidate has the right to appeal a decision of C&E through expedited appeal via electronic meeting.

b. The Appeal Task Force will make the final decisions on all appeals. They may do this with the guidance of the AGD’s legal counsel if they choose.”