

Rules for AVMA Officer Election Campaigns

The following rules and procedures apply to all candidates for election to the offices of president, president-elect, and vice president.

A. Eligibility

The qualifications for eligibility for candidates for elected offices are established in the Bylaws (Article VI, § 12) and the Manual of the House of Delegates,

B. Campaign

The campaign begins with an official announcement by candidates during the candidate introduction portion of the Regular Annual Session of the House of Delegates (HOD). Any AVMA member in good standing may introduce a candidate. No other functions on behalf of candidates, including banquets, open houses, and receptions will be permitted at the official AVMA convention center or any official AVMA convention hotels during the Regular Annual Session of the HOD and Annual Convention.

Candidates may seek endorsements prior to the beginning of the official campaign (candidate introductions), however, voting commitments (securing votes) may not be sought nor endorsements announced until after the official campaign begins.

To enable all candidates to reach the officers and delegates of the Principal Veterinary Organizations and Constituent Allied Veterinary Organizations, the Veterinary Leadership Conference will include an opportunity for each candidate to speak during a general session.

During the campaign, candidates will be permitted access to the HOD section of AVMA Connections. No AVMA resources, including AVMA Connections, shall be used for campaigning by candidates or those considering candidacy prior to the beginning of the campaign.

Candidates are expected to adhere to the Officer Candidate Guidelines for Social Media.

C. Expenses, Funding, and Reimbursement

Candidates who have met the requirements for eligibility will be reimbursed by the AVMA for travel expenses per the Travel Policies (in the same manner as HOD members) for attendance at the Regular Annual Session and the Veterinary Leadership Conference and HOD Regular Winter Session.

State VMA and Allied Organizations may provide funding for candidates.

To familiarize them with AVMA leadership activities, candidates are invited to attend (and be reimbursed for AVMA-approved expenses) all in-person Board of Directors (BOD) meetings during the year of their candidacy. In addition, candidates will be given access to the landing page at AVMA Connections, and to the non-confidential portions of BOD in-person meeting business agendas and accompanying recommendations.

D. Influence and Endorsements

Influence and endorsements from other than AVMA members in good standing should be declined and reported to the AVMA Office of the Executive Vice President.

Members of the House Advisory Committee should refrain from campaigning for candidates, other than themselves, seeking AVMA officer positions elected by the House of Delegates. This direction does not speak to the HAC member's function as a delegate, to providing candidate information to the organization they represent, nor to discussing the candidates with House members.

The Board of Directors has adopted a policy that District Directors and officers should refrain from actively campaigning for candidates, other than themselves, seeking AVMA officer positions elected by the House of Delegates.

Employer or corporate-sponsor contribution of money, paid staff time, and funded travel for use in campaigning for office are not allowed.

The electronic Campaign Guide is distributed to all HOD members and provides the same space for each candidate to enter background information and to make a statement to voters. Professional literature publications, brochures, and digital ads that are above and beyond the typical are not allowed. The candidate may distribute information electronically through a regularly scheduled AVMA staff-generated blogpost, and during the appropriate time at the Regular Annual Meeting of the HOD.

Candidates and supporters of candidates should not contribute anything of value (more than \$10) to HOD members including food, beverage, and entertainment.

E. Violations

Candidates for AVMA office are expected to conduct their campaigns at the highest level of professional ethics.

The House Advisory Committee (HAC) has the authority to receive complaints. Any written complaint alleging a campaign violation will be reviewed by the HAC and investigated as deemed appropriate. Complaints must be in writing and signed by the complaining party, including without limitation, electronic communication.

The HAC Chair may appoint an ad hoc working group composed of members from the HAC (2), the HOD (2), and the BOD (1) to investigate and enforce the campaign rules. If the working group finds a candidate in violation of the Rules, it may send a letter of reprimand to the candidate and/or withdraw the candidate's eligibility for AVMA expense reimbursement effective on a specified date in the future. There shall be no right to appeal the decision of the working group.

For each complaint where an infraction of the rules is found, the working group's findings and actions thereon will be reported to the HAC, the BOD, the House of Delegates, the complaining party, and all candidates involved in the impacted election.

DEFINITIONS

Campaign(ing) - Actively soliciting votes for a candidate.

Endorsement - Expressing support for a candidate.

Officer Candidate Guidelines for Social Media

The use of social media as a campaign tool for AVMA officer elections requires adherence to professional ethical behavior.

- Candidates are responsible for the content of their social media posts and all content must be owned and monitored by the candidate.
- All material posted by candidates must be truthful and verifiable.
- Social media posts should be respectful of all parties involved and reflect positively on the AVMA and all members of the veterinary profession.
- Anonymous posting is not allowed.
- Candidates must refrain from disparaging other candidates.
- The privacy of candidates, their families, and their workplaces must be maintained.
- Use of profanity or obscenity is strictly prohibited.
- Privileged or “insider” AVMA information is not allowed.
- It is prohibited to share crowdsourced fundraising pages on social media accounts.