

## APA ELECTION GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES AND SUPPORTERS

Based on Those Approved as Amended by the Board of Trustees – March 2022

### A. Overview

The intent of the guidelines is to encourage fair and open campaigning by APA members on a level playing field 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 a profession.

Campaigning, as allowed and specified in this document, is not permitted until after the nominations have been reported to the Board of Trustees by the Nominating Committee. Members should withhold commitments of their final support or votes until after all candidates are known. Members soliciting letters of nomination or circulating petitions to be nominated **may not use the nomination process for campaign/electioneering purposes beyond asking for nomination letters or signatures on petitions.** Use of APA/DB resources, including but not limited to APA listservs and membership directory, is not permitted.

Each candidate receives a copy of these guidelines and a statement to sign, certifying that he/she has read the guidelines; promises to abide by them; will immediately report any deviations of which he/she becomes aware to the Elections Committee; and will notify and try to correct any supporter upon learning of an actual or potential deviation.

All APA members are expected to abide by the APA election guidelines in APA elections, including in their capacity as officers and members of other organizations. APA requests that other organizations adhere to the intent of the campaign guidelines and provide fair and equitable coverage of opposing candidates.

The Elections Committee investigates any potential violation by a candidate or supporter of which it becomes aware, and reports violations to the Board of Trustees. The procedures used by the Elections Committee to investigate and report campaign violations are in the APA Operations Manual and will be sent to candidates with these Election Guidelines.

### B. Campaigning

Campaigning is defined as any attempt to influence a potential voter's vote. Campaigning is limited to appearances made as part of one's normal work activities, and individual communication through any medium (email, mail, phone call) by a candidate to a single individual recipient. Mass emails (one email to more than one recipient), robocalls, or the use of staff or surrogates to conduct communication via email or mail is not permitted. **Permitted campaign activities are specified in this document. All other activities are prohibited.**

Approved APA-organized campaign activities are as follow:

- “Meet-the-Candidates” live Town Hall/Webinar;
- Special APA Election Edition, published during campaign period;
- Psychiatric News December Election Issue;
- APA Election Website ([psychiatry.org/election](http://psychiatry.org/election)); and
- Any other activities reviewed and approved by APA Elections Committee.

## 1. Resources

- Use of APA, Area Council/State Association, or District Branch resources or personnel is prohibited, except for any Election Committee approved communication of candidate statements to members.
- APA, Area Council/State Association, or District Branch funds, services, stationery, or staff may not be used to endorse, support, or promote any candidate.
- Permitted APA resources are the APA Election Website ([psychiatry.org/election](http://psychiatry.org/election)) and platform used for campaigning on live APA Meet-the-Candidates Town Hall/Webinar and APA election publications. All other resources are prohibited.
- Use of personal assistants, aide, hired individuals, friends, and family members, or other persons to campaign for a candidate is prohibited. All permitted activities must be developed, performed, and executed by candidates themselves, e.g. email, mail, or phone call from a candidate to a single individual recipient.

## 2. Campaign Communications

Permitted forms of campaigning include the following; **all others are prohibited.**

### a. APA Website

APA will include information on all candidates (the photos, biographies, and statements provided for the ballot booklet) and on the election itself (campaign guidelines, ballot mailing and return dates, etc.) on its website. This election information can be accessed through the election logo and linked to other information as appropriate.

### b. One-to-One Communication

Private election-related communication with an individual is permitted.

### c. District Branch/State Association Campaigning: Newsletters

District Branch or State Association newsletters may announce as news items, without endorsement, two types of announcements:

- 1) A news item that requires equal representation of all candidates for an APA office, and/or
- 2) A limited 150-words per candidate news item describing the candidacy for an APA office of local member(s) affiliated with that District Branch or State Association.

Editorial endorsement of candidates is prohibited, as are letters to the Editor in support of (or opposition to) candidates. Newsletters may print other statements or materials by or about a candidate only if they give equal opportunity to opposing candidates. Newsletters may not be distributed beyond the usual newsletter distribution.

**d. Introduction at Professional Presentations**

A candidate's candidacy may be mentioned when the candidate is introduced for the purpose of giving a professional presentation, provided that the candidate is not endorsed. Candidates are to inform the hosts/speakers of the events that an endorsement or any statement of an endorsement is not permitted.

There are no restrictions on professional presentations, defined as events where no campaigning occurs, and a candidate participates in the dissemination of information through any medium. Running for office should not inhibit or prohibit candidates from conducting their usual professional business.

**e. Endorsement**

Endorsement by organizations is prohibited. **Candidates may submit a list of ten (10) individual endorsements to be included on the candidates' webpage hosted on the APA Election Website.**

- Supporters may not campaign on behalf of the candidates. Candidates are obligated to inform their supporters that campaigning on the candidate's behalf is not permitted.
- Candidates are responsible for calling attention to the guidelines or sending a copy of the guidelines located on the APA Election Website to any members whom they ask for endorsement [as one of the 10 endorsements listed on the official APA Election Website].
- Members of the Board of Trustees, Nominating, Elections and Tellers Committee are not permitted to endorse or support a candidacy.

## **APA ELECTION GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES AND SUPPORTERS**

***(Continued)***

### **ADDITIONAL ELECTION ACTIVITY**

Election-related activity that is not permitted under the APA Election Guidelines includes (but is not limited to) letters, calls, e-mail communications, texts, instant messages, and other communications to multiple recipients not originated by APA (except as approved by the Elections Committee), advertisements in print or other media, election websites, distribution of “campaign” items, or swag, and publication of position papers except through APA. A candidate is not permitted to use (or direct someone else to use) the APA Member Directory to generate mass communications in any medium.

It is a violation of the APA Election Guidelines for candidates to participate in webcasts or panel discussions, issue press releases, respond to surveys, or allow publication of interviews relating to the election, unless approved in advance by the Elections Committee.

It is also impermissible for a nominee to engage in a debate over social media channels about the election, the candidate’s qualifications, or particular issues relating to the election.

Any request of additional election activity, e.g. surveys, questionnaires, debate, interview requests, etc., require advance approval by the Elections Committee.

### **ENFORCEMENT OF GUIDELINES**

By accepting a candidacy, a candidate agrees to follow the APA Election Guidelines.

If a candidate engages in election activity inconsistent with the APA Election Guidelines, the committee will take appropriate action to address the violation with the candidate, including (but not limited to) addressing the violation with the candidate, requiring the candidate to withdraw with Board approval, or any other appropriate action(s) as determined by the Elections Committee.

The Elections Committee is charged with enforcing the APA Election Guidelines which has been set forth in conjunction with the Board of Trustees. This document outlines the principles that will guide enforcement of the Guidelines.

In considering appropriate enforcement of the Guidelines, the Elections Committee will be guided by the following goals:

- To sustain the high professional reputation of the APA;
- To maintain the integrity and goals of the Guidelines;
- To be fair to all candidates;
- To not reward candidates who violate the Policy; and
- To ensure enforcement of action is appropriate to the violation.

## ELECTION PRINCIPLES

### **The EQUITY OF ACCESS AND ECONOMIC PRINCIPLE:**

The electorate and the candidates should have access to each other as set forth and approved by the Elections Committee. The Committee and APA should utilize the most economic means of conducting the election campaign in terms of time and money.

### **The FAIRNESS PRINCIPLE: (ensuring equity)**

Every qualified member should have equal opportunity to run for leadership positions in the APA. (This addresses the problem of the power and privilege of incumbents, which pose handicaps to challengers or outsiders. Equal opportunity addresses the issue of finances and expense problems.)

### **The COLLEGIALLY PRINCIPLE:**

An atmosphere of collegiality should be promoted among candidates and among members, fostering the fellowship spirit, a more open communication and exercise of professionalism that would ensure focus on issues and fair play. Candidates who do not adhere to this principle, as determined by the Elections Committee, may be referred to the Board for removal from candidacy or their votes nullified.

### **The MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLE:**

The election process should arouse members' interest in and knowledge of APA affairs and foster optimum ballot returns. Well-informed members will likely be involved voters.