

Approved: Board of Directors – 11/3/18
Revised: Board of Directors – 7/27/19
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Election Communications

AAD Election Connection!

The Academy recognizes the need for members to learn the policy positions of candidates for officer, director, and Nominating Committee positions. To this end, the Academy has created *AAD Election Connection!* to give members the opportunity to communicate with the candidates and learn their positions and views on important issues. Question(s) and candidate responses will be available on *AAD Election Connection!* for membership viewing throughout the election period.

1. Question Submission

Individual members, not groups or organizations, are encouraged to submit question(s) at www.aad.org/aadelection beginning seven (7) days after the Academy has officially announced the slate of candidates. Such question(s) are not to be multiple part. The AHTF will review question(s) to ensure they do not criticize, defame, or denigrate candidates, and are professional and ethically consistent with the Academy's Code of Medical Ethics for Dermatologists. The AHTF will notify the author of inappropriate or inflammatory questions so they may submit a new question. The AHTF will review all question(s) and, when approved, question(s) will be posted and sent to all candidates. A subset of the Ad Hoc Task Force (AHTF) on Election Oversight will monitor the *AAD Election Connection!* and has the authority to remove any inappropriate communications.

Candidate Notification

Candidates will receive an automatic notification alerting them to new question(s) that have been posted on this site. The communication will include the question and a link back to the site. Candidates will have the opportunity to respond to the question(s) but will be under no obligation to do so.

2. Other Social Media Sites

The AHTF on Election Oversight will not monitor other social media site(s). Members, individuals or candidates are encouraged to submit copies of questions posted on other social media sites to candidates@aad.org. They are also encouraged to report unprofessional communications to the AHTF on Election Oversight.

Candidates:

- are counseled to use their own judgement in weighing the risk/benefit of responding to questions/comments on these sites.
- are encouraged to refer issues of relevance to their candidacy to the *AAD Election Connection!* site.
- shall under no circumstances, criticize, defame or denigrate other candidates during social media discussions.
- may wish to use the following language to gracefully move the conversation(s) to the *AAD Election Connection!* site:
 - I'm not comfortable addressing your question in this forum. Please submit your question(s) to the *AAD Election Connection!* site where I will respond so that the discussion is transparent to all voting members and all candidates.

- I am responding to all election-related questions on the *AAD Election Connection!* site. Please submit your question to www.aad.org/aadelection so that the discussion is transparent to all voting members and candidates.

3. Definitions

- a. Professional Communication
Communications that are respectful, truthful, and do not criticize, denigrate, or defame¹ Candidates or other members, and are otherwise consistent with the [Academy's Code of Medical Ethics for Dermatologists](#).
- b. Cyberbullying
One or a group of people using electronic means via computers and mobile phones (emails, social media and networking web sites, chat rooms, instant messaging, texting, etc.) to send communications to torment, threaten, harass, humiliate, embarrass or target another person.

4. Member and Candidate Sanctions for Failure to Comply with Regulations

The Ad Hoc Task Force on Election Oversight is responsible for addressing inappropriate communications and works with the member, individual, slated or write-in candidate(s) to resolve the issue. The Ad Hoc Task Force has the authority to block a member's or candidate's access to the *AAD Election Connection!* Should further review or sanctions be required, the Ad Hoc Task Force will refer the issue to the Board of Directors or the Professionalism and Ethics Committee. Candidates or other members may not file a complaint with the Professionalism and Ethics Committee based on an alleged violation of the Administrative Regulation on Nomination and Election Procedures unless the Ad Hoc Task Force has first found that such violation occurred and that referral to the Professionalism and Ethics Committee is appropriate. The foregoing does not prevent candidates and other members from filing complaints directly with the Professionalism and Ethics Committee based on election-related conduct that they believe violates the Administrative Regulation on Code of Medical Ethics for Dermatologists for a reason other than a violation of this administrative regulation.

Slated and write-in candidate(s), who are found, by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, to be in violation of the above regulations may, at the Board's discretion, be subject to sanctions, including but not limited to, removal from the ballot and/or nullification of votes received.

NOTE: Please view the [Administrative Regulation on Nomination and Election Procedures](#) and this Board Governance Policy on Election Communication for all Academy election rules.

¹ Definition of **written and oral defamation**: The act of making and publishing (to one or more third parties) untrue statements of fact about another which damages his/her reputation. If the defamatory statement is printed or broadcast over the media, including social media, it is libel and, if only oral, it is slander.