

2025 HOUSE OF DELEGATES PROCEDURES

The AOA House of Delegates is in session from the opening gavel until adjournment sine die, and the Speaker can call the House into session at any time.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The handbook includes a copy of the agenda, the current Constitution and Bylaws, any proposed amendments, Summaries of Actions of the Board of Trustees, financial report, reports of AOA and AOA-related entities, and reports of other optometric organizations.

The House Procedures are designed to serve as a reference aid for the meetings of the House of Delegates. As a guide of procedural rules, this handbook assists the Speaker and the delegates in the determination of the will of the House, providing an interpretative clarification concerning matters not specifically treated in the AOA Constitution and Bylaws. The Speaker's rulings are subject to appeal to the House, which makes the final decision on any question. For additional information, consult the AOA Constitution and Bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition, which control the proceedings of the House. (Article II, Section 6.C. of the Bylaws.)

The House of Delegates is the legislative and policy-making body of the American Optometric Association and is the supreme authority of the AOA. (Article II, Section 9.D. of the Bylaws.) It is composed of delegates representing members of the affiliated associations.

Distinguished members (past presidents) of this Association and current members of the Board of Trustees are ex officio delegates. As such, they may attend sessions of the House and shall be entitled to participate in debate and to make motions but are not entitled to vote unless they are certified as delegates representing an affiliated association.

Each delegate representing a section is entitled to participate in debate and make motions but not vote.

Any requests for the list of delegates/alternates of the House of Delegates shall not be granted because of the possible revisions to this list during the entire Congress.

CREDENTIALS

Credentials of the delegates and alternates must be received by the Secretary-Treasurer of the AOA not later than fifteen (15) days prior to the first day of the Annual Congress. (Article II, Section 3.A.4. of the Bylaws.)

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE – AUTHORITY

The authority for the establishment of this committee is Article II, Section 4 of the Bylaws:

Credentials Committee

No later than thirty (30) days before each annual congress, the president shall appoint a credentials committee composed of at least three (3) members. The credentials committee

shall verify the credentials of all delegates to the congress and report to the congress for the purpose of seating the delegates and their alternates. Any dispute as to the number of delegates to which an affiliate is entitled or as to which delegates or alternate delegates are eligible to serve as delegates or alternate delegates shall be determined by the Credentials Committee, whose decision shall be final and not appealable.

RESPONSIBILITIES & GUIDELINES

1. Throughout the sessions of the House of Delegates, a credentials table will be maintained by members of the committee. All committee members should be present a reasonable time before each session of the House convenes.
2. It is suggested that the Credentials Committee be present prior to the opening of the House for the purpose of examining and verifying credentials of all delegates and alternates. This will expedite the seating in the House of Delegates.
3. All credentials forms are examined in accordance with the Bylaws and the AOA Membership Department count to determine the number of authorized delegates and alternates to which each delegate group is entitled. (Article II, Section 3.A.2. of the Bylaws.)
4. Each delegate group (except the student members) is entitled to one (1) delegate for each fifty (50) paid-up members, excluding student, honorary, and associate members as certified to the AOA Secretary-Treasurer. Except for optometric educator members, members who pay less than their full active member dues are counted as one-half member. The delegate strength of each delegate group for the Annual Congress shall be determined from the records on April 30 unless that date is a Saturday, Sunday, or Federal holiday. (Article II, Section 3.A.1. and 2. and Section 11. of the Bylaws.)

The student members at each school or college in the United States accredited or pre-accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education are entitled to one (1) delegate and alternate, and the affiliated association representing the student members is entitled to three (3) delegates and alternates. (Article II, Section 3.B.1. and 2. of the Bylaws.)

5. When verified by the Credentials Committee, each delegate group will receive the appropriate number of ribbons for the delegates and alternates.
6. Seating in the delegate area of the House of Delegates itself is reserved for certified delegates representing members of the affiliated associations, distinguished members, the Board of Trustees, and section delegates. Alternates are to be seated in the area reserved for alternates. The Sergeants-At-Arms are responsible for monitoring the proper seating.
7. The Credentials Committee shall report to the House periodically.

An appropriate initial motion is:

“Mr. Speaker, as a delegate, and on behalf of the Credentials Committee, I move that all certified delegates as recorded be seated.”

Supplementary reports shall be given as needed during subsequent business sessions.

An appropriate subsequent motion is:

“Mr. Speaker, as a delegate, and on behalf of the Credentials Committee, I move that the revised listing of delegates as recorded be the official delegate roll of this House.”

NOTE: A motion made on behalf of a committee does not require a second. (Roberts, p. 31.)

8. The Credentials Committee Chair shall call the roll for roll call votes. The other members of the Credentials Committee shall tally the votes on roll calls in the House of Delegates. Official results of a vote are announced by the Speaker.

Each affiliated association (except for the association of student members) is entitled to one (1) vote for each ten (10) paid-up members, excluding student, honorary, and associate members as certified to the AOA Secretary-Treasurer. Except for optometric educator members, members whose dues are less than their full active member dues are counted as one-half member. (Article II, Section 5.A. of the Bylaws.)

The delegation representing the student members shall be entitled to three (3) votes on any matter coming before the House. (Article II, Section 5.A. of the Bylaws.)

9. The final action of the committee shall be to give written comments to the Speaker of the House evaluating the effectiveness of the committee and making recommendations for changes in these guidelines.

All members of the Credentials Committee must be listed as either a delegate or alternate from their respective affiliate.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

The President may preside at the House of Delegates or a member may be designated by the President to preside as Speaker of the House. A Past President, because of past experiences and knowledge of the Association, is a logical choice to serve as Speaker. It is the obligation of the Speaker to sense the will of the House, to preside accordingly, and to hold the rulings ever subject to challenge from, and reversal by, the House.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE (ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER)

As provided for in Article II, Section 6.C. of the Bylaws, deliberations of the House of Delegates shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition, when not in conflict with the AOA Constitution and Bylaws.

QUORUM

Certified delegates representing a majority (27 of 53) of the affiliated associations shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any session of the House of Delegates. (Article II, Section 6.A. of the Bylaws.)

MAJORITY

A majority is one vote more than half of the votes cast, a quorum being present. (Robert's, §44:1)

ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE CHAMBER

Entrance to the AOA House of Delegates Chamber is limited to delegates and other persons presenting proper credentials. By virtue of their membership, all members of the AOA are entitled to observe sessions of the House of Delegates. Non-members and guests may enter at the pleasure of the Speaker or the House.

ORDER AND DECORUM

Order and decorum will be maintained in the House by the Speaker with the assistance of the Sergeants-At-Arms. It shall be the responsibility of the Sergeants-At-Arms to monitor access to the delegates' areas of the House of Delegates and to assure that the delegates are properly seated. Other areas are provided for the seating of alternates, members, staff, representatives of other organizations, press and guests.

When the House of Delegates is in session, individuals wishing to conduct personal business are requested to step out of the House Chamber. To preserve the decorum of the House, no personal audio or video recordings are allowed, except for ceremonial events, as authorized by the Speaker.

SERGEANTS-AT-ARMS

The Sergeants-At-Arms shall assure that all individuals admitted to the House area present proper credentials and are seated in the proper areas for delegates, alternates, members, staff, representatives of other organizations, press and guests. All members of the Sergeant-At-Arms Committee must be listed as either a delegate or alternate from their respective affiliate.

SEATING OF THE DELEGATES

Only individuals who are properly certified to the Secretary-Treasurer and whose credentials have been verified by the Credentials Committee may be seated as delegates or alternates. Delegates

who have been certified will receive the appropriate ribbon and must wear it in order to be seated in the House of Delegates. Each delegate group may select one alternate for each delegate.

Seating in the delegate area of the House of Delegates is reserved for certified delegates representing members of the affiliated associations, sections, distinguished members (past presidents) and the Board of Trustees. The Executive Director may be seated near the Board of Trustees. If required due to occupancy limitation, seats will be allocated to all delegations proportionate to the relative size of their delegations.

If a seat within a delegation is unoccupied by a delegate, an alternate from that group may be certified and then seated in the delegate's place. Arrival of a delegate, who has priority, will necessitate an alternate leaving the delegates' area. Affiliate association delegations will be responsible for determining which of their own delegates will be granted a seat when there are not enough seats available for all of the affiliate's delegates who would like to attend a session of the House of Delegates.

A staff table is provided for other AOA staff. They are admitted by a staff badge.

A press table is provided for the optometric press. They are admitted by a press badge.

Additional seating is provided outside the delegates' area for alternates, members, representatives of other organizations and guests.

NOTE: The House of Delegates may authorize the seating of the executive directors of affiliated associations with their delegations in the House of Delegates area.

PRIVILEGES OF NON-DELEGATES

A delegate may request permission for a non-delegate member of the American Optometric Association to address the House of Delegates (Article II, Section 5.E. of the Bylaws.). If permission is granted by the Speaker, the member must confine any remarks to the specific matter under consideration and debate. A similar request may also be made on behalf of a guest by an officer of this Association. Also, the Speaker may permit a member or guest to address the House.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

During a Non-Public Session, only Delegates, AOA Board of Trustees, AOA Past Presidents, Alternates, Other AOA Member doctors of optometry, AOA Executive Director, AOA Legal Counsel, AOA Staff, and Executive Directors of Affiliated Associations will be permitted to attend.

ACCESS TO THE FLOOR

Subject to restrictions on the total number of delegates allowed in the room at one time due to occupancy limitations, each delegate shall be entitled to the privileges of the floor and to participate in debates on any matters coming before the House.

A delegate wishing to secure the floor shall go to the nearest microphone and address the Speaker. The Speaker will acknowledge the person by identifying the microphone position. The delegate must then clearly announce his or her name and the delegate group represented. The Speaker shall repeat the name and the delegate group before the delegate may proceed.

DISCUSSION, DEBATE AND AMENDMENTS

In order to facilitate discussion and debate, wherever possible, written copies of any lengthy or complicated motions or resolutions should be provided to the Speaker before the motion sought to be amended is considered by the House.

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

The Resolutions Committee is authorized to begin on-site deliberations two days in advance of the convening of the House, depending on the number of resolutions submitted. It may begin deliberating off-site at its discretion at any time.

AUTHORITY

The authority for the establishment of the Resolutions Committees is in Article II, Section 8 of the Bylaws:

Resolutions Committee

- A. The president shall, no later than sixty (60) days prior to the first day of the annual congress, appoint one (1) or more resolutions committees as the president may deem necessary or appropriate. Each committee shall be composed of at least five (5) members of this Association, one (1) of whom shall be designated as chair by the president.
- B. Each resolutions committee shall consider such proposed resolutions as may be referred to it in accordance with subparagraph C of this section and shall report to the House of Delegates those resolutions which it has approved either in the form referred to it or as modified or changed by the committee. If the committee makes significant substantive modifications or changes to a resolution, it shall consult the originator prior to reporting the resolution to the House of Delegates.
- C. Resolutions may be proposed by an affiliated association, by a section, by the House of Delegates, or by the Board of Trustees. An affiliated association or section shall deliver to the secretary-treasurer, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the first day of the annual congress, one (1) typewritten copy of all resolutions which such affiliated association or section proposes for adoption by the House of Delegates, and the secretary-treasurer shall deliver one (1) copy thereof to the chair of the appropriate resolutions committee. The Board of Trustees may at any time submit a proposed resolution to the secretary-treasurer who shall refer it to an appropriate resolutions committee, and the House of Delegates by

a two-thirds (2/3) vote may similarly do so. Proposed resolutions which have not been referred to an appropriate resolutions committee in accordance with the provisions of this subparagraph shall not be considered by the House of Delegates.

- D. Each resolutions committee shall report to the House of Delegates all proposed resolutions which it has approved, and a copy of each such proposed resolution, as approved by the committee, shall be made available to each delegate at least four (4) hours prior to its consideration by the House of Delegates. In the event that a resolutions committee does not report to the House of Delegates with approval a proposed resolution that has been referred to it, any delegate may, at the appropriate time, offer, from the floor, a motion that the House consider the proposed resolution, and if the House of Delegates shall approve the motion by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, the House of Delegates shall thereupon give consideration to the proposed resolution.

GUIDELINES

Pre-Congress Activities

- a. It is suggested that each committee member should be aware of the Judicial Council actions on the resolutions of the previous year including any resolutions referred back to the House of Delegates by the Judicial Council.
- b. Appointment of the committee in advance of the Congress is made by the President of AOA in order to provide time for familiarization with proposed issues. Each committee member should thoroughly review and become familiar with any materials provided.
- c. Copies of the extant (current) resolutions passed by the House of Delegates are available through the Resolutions Committee staff.
- d. If a stand-alone meeting is required and approved, the regular AOA reimbursement policies will apply (these expenses will be charged to the House of Delegates' budget).

RESOLUTIONS

All resolutions properly submitted and delivered to the AOA Secretary-Treasurer at least fifteen (15) days prior to the first day of the Annual Congress are automatically referred to the appropriate resolutions committee. (Article II, Section 8.C. of the Bylaws.)

Resolutions should be submitted in typewritten form, double-spaced, with source of origin of the resolution clearly indicated on the first page.

Any resolution, except those submitted by the Board of Trustees, which is not received at least fifteen (15) days prior to the first day of the Congress shall require a two-thirds (2/3)

affirmative vote by the House in order to be referred to the resolutions committee. (Article II, Section 8.C. of the Bylaws.)

The Resolutions Committee shall send a bulletin to Affiliates including all submitted resolutions no less than 10 days prior to the opening of House of Delegates.

In accordance with Article II, Section 8.C. of the Bylaws of the Association, a resolutions committee may not initiate resolutions on its own. The committee has the discretion, however, to modify or change a resolution in an appropriate manner. Any significant or substantive modification shall be brought to the attention of the entity which introduced the resolution, prior to the report to the House. (Article II, Section 8.B. of the Bylaws.)

Resolutions approved by a resolutions committee shall be reported to the House of Delegates at least four (4) hours prior to its consideration. (Article II, Section 8.D. of the Bylaws.) Those not approved need not be reported, but the entity which introduced the resolution should be informed. After consultation with the Secretary-Treasurer, the report should include the financial implications, if any, of the proposed resolution.

NOTE: A motion made on behalf of a committee does not require a second. (Robert's, p. 36.)

However, if the committee fails to approve and report any resolution submitted to it, any delegate has the right to make a motion from the floor to request that the House consider the resolution. If the House by 2/3 vote approves the motion, the resolution then will be considered by the House. (Article II, Section 8.D. of the Bylaws.)

Information on Proposing Resolutions and the Process is on page 24.

RESPONSIBILITIES AT CONGRESS

1. Chair:

- a. The chair may call a meeting of the committee to be held one or two days prior to the first official day of the House.
- b. The chair shall set the time schedule for the advance committee meetings at the Congress, as well as the time schedule for the committee meetings during the Congress. The chair shall consult with the House of Delegates staff on the setting of this time schedule to coordinate with the Congress schedule.
- c. The chair of the Resolutions Committee shall make reports to the House of Delegates. The chair will be notified by the Speaker as to when these reports are expected. The first report should include a listing of those resolutions being considered by the committee and introduction of the committee members and staff.
- d. The chair shall establish a schedule of "hearing times" and of "appearances" with the Resolutions Committee for the benefit of anyone interested in contributing to the deliberations of the committee on any resolutions being considered by it. This

schedule shall be announced to the House of Delegates. The chair shall request the Resolutions Committee staff to make arrangements for posting the schedule of such meetings or notifying the parties directly.

- e. The Resolutions Committee staff shall obtain AOA legal counsel review of each resolution before the resolution is presented to the House of Delegates.
- f. An appropriate number of copies of resolutions to be presented to the House of Delegates will be placed in the delegates' boxes or distributed electronically.
- g. The chair shall present all recommendations from the Resolutions Committee to the House of Delegates at the times designated by the Speaker.

2. Committee Members:

- a. Committee members should attend all meetings of the committee, including meetings prior to the official opening of the House.
- b. The final action of the committee should be to give written recommendations to the chair evaluating the effectiveness of the committee and making recommendations for changes in procedure.

All members of the Resolutions Committee must be listed as either a delegate or alternate from their respective affiliate.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

The House or the Speaker may, when appropriate, appoint special committees of the House of Delegates. (Article II, Section 9.C. of the Bylaws.) A special committee may hold an open hearing for interested delegates, at which time the chair shall preside. Following the open hearing, the committee shall then retire and deliberate.

Reports of a special committee are presented to the House by the chair, unless the Speaker directs otherwise.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

AUTHORITY

The authority for the establishment of this committee is in Article II, Section 7 of the Bylaws:

Nominating Committee

- A. There shall be a nominating committee composed of nine (9) members of this Association, one (1) of whom shall have served the previous year and shall be

designated as chair. No affiliated association shall be represented on the nominating committee more often than once every two (2) years, provided, however, that in any year, one (1) member of the nominating committee of the previous year shall have been elected by that committee as chair for the next year. The nominating committee shall also select two alternates to serve in the event the new chair is unable to serve for the next year. The election for the next year's chair and alternates shall be the last action of the nominating committee for each year. No affiliated association shall have more than one (1) member on the nominating committee at the same time. Any affiliated association with a candidate for an officer or trustee position shall not be represented on the nominating committee.

The names of eight (8) affiliated associations, other than that of the member of the previous year, shall be randomly selected in the manner determined by the House of Delegates. The names of eight (8) additional affiliated associations shall then be randomly selected in a similar manner as alternates for the eight (8) affiliated associations originally selected.

No later than January 1st of each year, the president of each of the eight (8) affiliated associations originally selected and the president of each of the eight (8) additional affiliated associations shall notify the Secretary-Treasurer of this Association in writing the name of the member selected by such affiliated association to serve as a member or alternate member of the nominating committee. After such notification, if such an individual is unable to serve, an individual from an affiliated association selected as an alternate, in order of such selection, shall replace the individual unable to serve.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES CONSISTENT WITH BYLAWS:

The Nominating Committee should have committee members in place early enough to allow for communication to discuss the process, review the candidates' questionnaires, and evaluate the need for recruitment of candidates when appropriate.

Article II, Section 7 of the Bylaws:

- B. The nominating committee shall prepare a slate of nominees for election to office in this Association which it shall present to the House of Delegates no later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the election. The report of the nominating committee shall not preclude any delegate from making a nomination for any office from the floor of the House of Delegates.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES CONSISTENT WITH BYLAWS:

A “single” slate is defined as a nominee for each office. A “multiple” slate is defined as more than one nominee for each office. The AOA Bylaws allow the Nominating Committee to use either of these methods to submit a “slate” to the House of Delegates. The decision regarding which option will be used is at the discretion of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee may also decide to use a combination of these methods, such as submitting one name for each of the officer positions and multiple names for the trustee positions.

GUIDELINES

1. Each affiliated association shall be notified at least ninety (90) days prior to the Annual Congress of the offices to be filled by election during the Congress.
2. No person shall be appointed to the Nominating Committee from a delegate group with an announced candidate.
3. For proper consideration by the Nominating Committee, written notifications of candidacies by or on behalf of candidates should be received by the Secretary-Treasurer at least thirty (30) days prior to the Congress. The Secretary-Treasurer shall notify the members of the nominating committee and the Board of Trustees of all such candidacies. Candidates are also encouraged to make their qualifications known to the delegate groups prior to the Congress.
4. The Nominating Committee is required to consider those candidates who have met the above recommendations and who have completed and timely returned any preliminary questionnaire submitted by the nominating committee. The Nominating Committee has the prerogative to seek additional candidates if it desires.
5. Any delegate has the right to make a nomination for any office from the floor, without meeting the above recommendations. A “second” to such nomination, while not required, is permitted. (Robert’s, §46:6)
6. Each candidate for office shall be invited to appear before the House of Delegates prior to the election at a time certain as established by the Speaker. Each candidate shall address the House for three minutes.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chair of the Nominating Committee may submit an appropriate preliminary questionnaire to each reported candidate, which reply should be received by the chair no later than fifteen (15)

days prior to the Congress. Immediately upon receipt, the chair shall distribute all such responses to the committee.

At the Congress, the chair shall:

1. Ensure the committee conducts meetings and personal interviews enabling the committee to present a slate of nominees.
2. Preside over all committee meetings.
3. Prepare and post the appointment schedule in a conspicuous place outside its meeting room and electronically.
4. Contact the members of the Board of Trustees and other delegates as deemed appropriate and invite them to express their views before the committee, if they so desire.
5. In the opening remarks to the committee, clearly state to the members that it is absolutely imperative that all comments and deliberations of the committee be kept in absolute confidence. Emphasis placed on the confidential nature of the meetings will remove any hesitancy to bring out information which could have important bearing on ultimate decisions. The chair should also encourage candid answers to the straightforward line of questioning of those being interviewed and assuring them that their answers will be kept in strict confidence by the committee. The confidentiality of the committee interviews and deliberations shall be continued even after the announcement of the slate and the conduct of the election. Each member of the Nominating Committee shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement before he/she will be permitted to serve on the Nominating Committee.
6. The committee's principal obligation is to select candidates based on personal qualifications, demonstrated achievements, potential for service to the profession without consideration of political, regional, personal or other influences.
7. Encourage the committee to obtain all appropriate information necessary to determine the qualifications of a candidate. If some question has arisen during the course of an interview, it may be necessary to interview some candidates more than once. It is improper for the committee to discuss personalities or capabilities of candidates with any member of the staff. Staff members shall only assist in making meeting room arrangements and other non-partisan activities and shall not be involved in the decision-making process of the Nominating Committee in any way.
8. When the interviewing process has been completed, the committee should review the entire course of deliberation to determine if there has been any item which needs further attention. If not, the committee should enter into a voting process to determine the slate.

When the slate has been determined, the chair shall personally take a copy to the Speaker and thereafter post a copy on the HOD bulletin board and/or on the door of the meeting room and electronically.

Such report must be presented “to the House of Delegates no later than 48 hours prior to the election,” as provided for in Article II, Section 7.B. of the Bylaws.

9. The Nominating Committee recognizes the importance of disseminating information about each candidate for the AOA Board of Trustees to the AOA House of Delegates. It will be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to provide the affiliates with as much information as possible regarding the candidate’s qualifications and experience in advance of the election. Therefore, following the Report of the Nominating Committee to the AOA House of Delegates, a copy of each candidate’s curriculum vitae and questionnaire (if any) will be distributed to each affiliate via the delegate mailboxes and/or electronically.
10. Obtain from the committee members their written recommendations evaluating the effectiveness of the process, making recommendations deemed appropriate, which the chair should submit with the committee’s report to the Speaker and the Board of Trustees.
11. As a final action of the committee, elect a member as the chair of the Nominating Committee for the following year and a first and second alternate. (Article II, Section 7.A. of the Bylaws.)

MANDATORY CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS

In an effort to be consistent each year in gathering information from the candidates, the following information must always be gathered from candidates:

1. Where is the candidate licensed and what work experience has the candidate had as an optometrist?
2. What experience has the candidate had as an AOA volunteer and for how long? List all positions held in the AOA.
3. What experience has the candidate had in service with an AOA affiliate and for how long? List all positions held in an AOA affiliate.
4. Has the candidate completed the required candidate’s disclosure statement and has the committee received a copy of that statement to review?
5. Each candidate will be required to submit curriculum vitae along with his/her questionnaire.

NOMINATIONS

A candidate for election to office shall be permitted the opportunity to have one nominating speech, not to exceed three (3) minutes in length, and one seconder. The presentation of a slate of nominees by the Nominating Committee made in accordance with Article II, Section 7.B. of the Bylaws, shall not constitute a nominating speech for any candidate so presented.

VOTING

The Credentials Committee Chair shall call the roll for roll call votes. The other members of the Credentials Committee shall tally the votes on roll calls in the House of Delegates. Official results of a vote are announced by the Speaker.

Each affiliated association (except for the association of student members) is entitled to one (1) vote for each ten (10) paid-up members, excluding student, honorary, and associate members as certified to the AOA Secretary-Treasurer. Except for optometric educator members, members whose dues are less than their full active member dues are counted as one-half member. (Article II, Section 5.A. of the Bylaws.)

The delegation representing the student members shall be entitled to three (3) votes on any matter coming before the House. (Article II, Section 5.A. of the Bylaws.)

The total vote of each delegation may be cast by its delegate or delegates present when the vote is called.

The method of voting in the House of Delegates is determined by the Speaker of the House. The speaker may call for a voice vote or a roll call vote.

Except as otherwise required by statute, the Constitution and Bylaws or by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition, no action can be taken by the House of Delegates except upon a majority of the vote cast, a quorum being present. (Article II, Sections 6.B. and C. of the Bylaws.)

Voice Vote: The Speaker of the House determines the result of the vote by the volume of voices. If a delegate feels the vote was reported incorrectly by the Speaker, the delegate may request a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote: The roll call vote is utilized when the voice vote is inconclusive. The Speaker may order a roll call vote on any issue, or a roll call vote shall be directed upon the request from delegates of five affiliated associations. The Credentials Committee Chair will call the roll. Roll call votes are used in contested elections. Article II, Section 6.D. of the Bylaws provides that "Whenever a vote is to be taken by roll call, the order of such voting shall be on an alphabetical basis beginning from a randomly selected affiliated association in the manner determined by the House of Delegates." Thus, before each roll call vote, the Credentials Committee Chair shall determine the order of the vote by randomly drawing by lot the name of the affiliated association that will be called first.

ELECTIONS

To be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast for the office, a quorum being present.

As provided in Article III, Section 1.E. of the Bylaws, in any election where there is more than one office of trustee open for the same term, each delegation shall have the right and obligation to cast a total vote, consisting of the regular voting strength, multiplied by the number of offices of trustee open. However, no single candidate may receive a vote greater than the regular voting strength.

Pursuant to Article III, Section 1.D. of the Bylaws, the balloting in the House for terms having different lengths shall be conducted separately, beginning in the order of the longest duration of the term of office.

NOTE: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition (at page 419) does not permit consideration of a motion to drop from the balloting the candidate(s) receiving the fewest number of votes.

Information on the Election Sequence is on page 22.

CLARIFICATION OF TRUSTEE ELECTION PROCEDURE

Because Article III, Section 1.E. of the AOA Bylaws requires that balloting for the two trusteeships be conducted at the same time with the regular vote count doubled, where there are more than two candidates, the “majority” (in accordance with Article II, Section 6.B. and C. of the Bylaws) amount needed for election to a trusteeship position shall generally be a majority of the amount of votes available to any one candidate (the regular vote count as cast).

Where only one candidate receives a majority of the regular vote count cast in the election, that candidate shall be declared elected to a trusteeship position.

Where only two candidates receive a majority of the regular vote count cast in the election, those candidates shall be declared elected to two trusteeship positions.

Where three candidates each receives a majority of the regular vote count cast in the election—a mathematical possibility, but a result which cannot yield a valid election—then the candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared elected to a trusteeship position, and the two other candidates who received a majority of the regular vote count cast in the election shall compete in a “runoff” election where the vote count shall revert to the regular amount.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

The Constitution and the Bylaws of the American Optometric Association may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast at any annual or special congress in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article VI of the Constitution and in Article IX of the Bylaws.

Proposed amendments may be submitted by affiliated associations to the Secretary-Treasurer not later than one hundred (100) days before the House convenes. Amendments are distributed to the affiliated associations at least ninety (90) days prior to consideration by the House. (Article VI of the Constitution; Article IX of the Bylaws.)

Information on Amending the Constitution and Bylaws is on page 24.

AGENDA

The agenda lists the specific items to be considered by the House. Its purpose is to provide a systematic plan so that items of business may be considered carefully and handled expeditiously. The agenda and the established order of business can be revised or suspended by the Speaker or by the House.

Items generally included on the agenda are as follows:

Call to Order

Reports of the Credentials Committee

Organization of House of Delegates: Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of the Handbook for Delegates as a guide of procedural rules, Seating of the Executive Directors of the Affiliated Associations, Ratification of Actions of the Board of Trustees

Report of the Nominating Committee

Reports of the Resolutions Committee

Report of the American Optometric Association President

Report of the American Optometric Student Association President

Report of the Executive Director

Reports of the Secretary-Treasurer

Consideration of Constitution and Bylaws Amendments

Report on Congress Geographical Location Selection

Recognition of Special Guests

Calls for Substantive Motions (New Business)

Presidential Inaugural Address

Election of Officers and Trustees

Good and Welfare

Adjournment

Questions relating to the priority of business shall be decided by the Speaker with the consent of the House or upon action by a majority vote of the House.

TIME CERTAIN

Although all items on the agenda are important to the operation of the Association, some items are scheduled for a time certain.

“Time Certain” is a fixed time for a special item of business, report, or presentation. The Speaker may suspend any other business under discussion to observe a time certain.

OPEN FORUMS

One or more open forums may be conducted during the Annual Congress. The forums are scheduled for a time certain and usually follow the formal recessing of the House of Delegates. An open forum offers an opportunity for the members of the House, without the formality of parliamentary procedure, to discuss major issues that are before the profession. The President of the Association may preside or may appoint another member to preside. No substantive motions can be made during open forums.

SUBSTANTIVE MOTIONS (NEW BUSINESS)

A call shall be made for the introduction of substantive motions each day prior to the last day of the House session. In order to facilitate discussion and debate, written copies of any substantive motion should be provided to the Speaker before the substantive motion is introduced. No substantive motions can be made on the last day of the House session.

Information on Proposing Substantive Motions and the Process is on page 24.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

The House of Delegates may direct that Letters of Appreciation (formerly “Thank You” resolutions) be sent by the Secretary-Treasurer on non-controversial matters, such as to note important anniversaries, to acknowledge outstanding accomplishments and to express appreciation upon retirements. Any requests for such letters shall be submitted in writing to the Speaker to review for presentation to the House. If approved by the Speaker as being non-controversial, and as not expressing a policy of the Association, the Speaker will set a time for this request to be made during a Good and Welfare agenda item. After due presentation of information and the request (no motion is necessary), the Speaker, without calling for a vote, declares the referral to the Secretary/Treasurer: “So ordered.”

GOOD AND WELFARE

Good and Welfare comes just before recess or adjournment and provides an opportunity for delegates to make comments or announcements, but no substantive motions can be made.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

No printed matter such as pamphlets, charts, notes, etc., shall be distributed to the delegates in the House chamber unless permission has been first obtained from the Speaker of the House.

All campaign literature and other promotional materials should be placed in the delegates' boxes which are located outside the House entrance.

AOA POLICY

Any delegate wishing to review existing policy on any subject should contact AOA staff for assistance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION

Announcements and information, such as additional names of deceased members for inclusion in the Minutes, should be given, in writing, to the Speaker or to the staff at the staff table in the House of Delegates or in the House office when the House is not in session.

ASSISTANT TO THE SPEAKER

An AOA staff member is assigned by the Executive Director to assist the Speaker in developing the agenda and maintaining the schedule to help assure an efficient reporting and decision-making process in the House of Delegates.

PARLIAMENTARIAN

In advance of, and during the sessions of the House, the Parliamentarian serves as an aide to the Speaker of the House as a source of information on parliamentary matters. The Parliamentarian is also available to provide assistance to individual delegates regarding parliamentary procedure.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE INFORMATION SHEET

An information sheet based on Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th Edition originally prepared by retired AOA Legal Counsel Thomas E. Eichhorst, AOA Parliamentarian, 1967-2002 & 2009-2014, and subsequently revised by AOA staff, is on page 21.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER NEWLY REVISED (12th Edition)
Simplified Table of Rules Relating to Motions

		May Interrupt	Must Be Seconded	Is Debatable	Is Amendable	Vote Required	Can Be Reconsidered
P R I V I L E G E D	Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	No	Yes	(1)	Yes	M	Yes
	Adjourn	No	Yes	No	(2)	M	No
	Recess	No	Yes	(3)	Yes	M	No
	Raise a Question of Privilege	No	No	No	No	Chair Rules	No
	Call for the Orders of the Day	Yes	No	No	No	2/3 to set aside	(4)
S U B S I D I A R Y	Lay on the Table	No	Yes	No	No	M	(5)
	Previous Question (Stop Debate)	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	(6)
	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	No	Yes	(7)	Yes	2/3	(8)
	Postpone to a Certain Time	No	Yes	(9)	Yes	M	Yes
	Refer or Commit	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	M	(10)
	Amend	No	Yes	(11)	(12)	M	Yes
	Postpone Indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	M	(13)
M A I N	MAIN Motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	M	Yes
I N C I D E N T A L	Objection to Consideration of Question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3 against consideration	(4)
	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Rules	No
	Suspend the Rules	No	Yes	No	No	M	No
M I S C E L L A	Take from the Table	No	Yes	No	No	M	No
	Reconsider (14)	(15)	Yes	(11)	No	M	No

- Notes:**
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| M: Majority | (4) only negative vote sustaining objection | (10) if committee hasn't started consideration |
| (1) No, if business pending | (5) only negative vote | (11) if motion is |
| Yes, if no business pending | (6) if before action | (12) maximum of 2 |
| (2) No, ordinary | (7) No, if pending | (13) only affirmative vote |
| Yes, to a future time | Yes, general | (14) only on same day or following day |
| (3) No, if business pending | (8) only on unexecuted part | (15) if no one is speaking |
| Yes, if no business pending | (9) only on time | |

**AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ELECTION SEQUENCE**

1. Election of President-Elect

- A. Nominating Speech for the person(s) nominated by the Nominating Committee
- B. Second
- C. Speaker calls 3 times for other nominations from the floor (For each candidate nominated from the floor, there will be a Nominating Speech and a Second)

If more than one candidate:
Random drawing of first
delegation to be called in roll call.
ROLL CALL ELECTION
Majority required to elect

OR:

If only one candidate:
SPEAKER DECLARES ELECTED BY
ACCLAMATION

2. Election of Vice-President

- A. Nominating Speech for the person(s) nominated by the Nominating Committee
- B. Second
- C. Speaker calls 3 times for other nominations from the floor (For each candidate nominated from the floor, there will be a Nominating Speech and a Second)

If more than one candidate:
Random drawing of first
delegation to be called in roll call.
ROLL CALL ELECTION
Majority required to elect

OR:

If only one candidate:
SPEAKER DECLARES ELECTED BY
ACCLAMATION

3. Election of Secretary-Treasurer

- A. Nominating Speech for the person(s) nominated by the Nominating Committee
- B. Second
- C. Speaker calls 3 times for other nominations from the floor (For each candidate nominated from the floor, there will be a Nominating Speech and a Second)

If more than one candidate:
Random drawing of first
delegation to be called in roll call.
ROLL CALL ELECTION
Majority required to elect

OR:

If only one candidate:
SPEAKER DECLARES ELECTED BY
ACCLAMATION

4. Election of 2 Trustees, 3-Year Terms Each

- A. Nominating Speech for a person nominated by the Nominating Committee
- B. Second
- C. Nominating Speech for person(s) nominated by the Nominating Committee

D. Second(s)

E. Speaker calls 3 times for other nominations from the floor. (For each candidate nominated from the floor, there will be a Nominating Speech and a Second)

F1. If more than two candidates:

Random drawing of first delegation to be called in roll call.

ROLL CALL ELECTION.

Regular votes doubled (example: entitled to 16 votes, becomes 32 votes for this specific election). Maximum vote for any candidate will be regular votes (example: 16). Must vote all (example: 32) of the doubled votes allocated among the various candidates.

OR:

F2. If only two candidates:

SPEAKER DECLARES ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION

Majority of regular vote required to elect.

- CONTINUE ROLL CALLS UNTIL 2 CANDIDATES RECEIVE MAJORITY OF REGULAR VOTE AND ARE ELECTED
- WHEN 1 CANDIDATE RECEIVES A MAJORITY AND IS ELECTED, THE NUMBER OF VOTES RETURNS TO REGULAR AMOUNT
- ROLL CALLS CONTINUE UNTIL A SECOND CANDIDATE RECEIVES A MAJORITY AND IS ELECTED
- CANDIDATES CAN WITHDRAW AT ANY TIME, BUT CANNOT BE FORCED TO WITHDRAW, NOT EVEN IF THEY RECEIVE ZERO VOTES.

5. Election of Trustee for Unexpired Term (Two-year Term and/or One-year Term, in that order)

A. Nominating Speech for person(s) nominated by the Nominating Committee

B. Second

C. Speaker calls 3 times for other nominations from the floor (For each candidate nominated from the floor, there will be a Nominating Speech and a Second)

If more than one candidate:

Random drawing of first delegation to be called in roll call.

ROLL CALL ELECTION

Majority required to elect

OR:

If only one candidate:

SPEAKER DECLARES ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO AMENDING AOA CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS, AND PROPOSING HOUSE OF DELEGATES RESOLUTIONS AND SUBSTANTIVE MOTIONS

AOA Constitution and Bylaws Amendments

Who Can Propose: 1) Any AOA Affiliate
2) AOA Board of Trustees

When Must Constitution and Bylaws Proposal Be Made: Not less than 100 days before the day the AOA Congress commences, the proposal from an AOA Affiliate must be submitted in writing to the AOA Secretary-Treasurer.

How Are AOA House of Delegates Members and Others Notified: Not less than 90 days before the day the AOA Congress commences, a written notice of all proposed Constitution and Bylaws changes is sent out to all affiliate Presidents and Secretaries. House of Delegates members receive copies of the proposals in their Congress materials.

Does Constitution or Bylaws Proposal Require AOA Board of Trustees Approval: No.

Does Constitution or Bylaws Proposal Go to Resolutions Committee of the House of Delegates: No.

What Vote Is Required for House of Delegates to Pass: 2/3 vote of House of Delegates.

Can Constitution or Bylaws Proposal Be Amended by the House of Delegates: Yes, but only if the amendment is germane to the original proposal. For example, a proposal to amend the dues could not be amended to alter the nominating process for officers because the latter topic has nothing to do with the original proposal nor can the amount of the increase be raised to larger than that indicated in the 90-day notice. The 90-day notice requirement cannot be evaded by floor amendments that are not germane or go beyond what was sent out.

Resolutions to the AOA House of Delegates

Who Can Propose:

- 1) Any AOA Affiliate
- 2) AOA Board of Trustees
- 3) Any AOA Section
- 4) AOA House of Delegates

When Must Resolution Be Made:

- 1) AOA Affiliate must do so at least 15 days prior to the first day of the AOA Congress
- 2) AOA Board of Trustees may do so at any time
- 3) AOA Section must do so at least 15 days prior to the first day of the AOA Congress
- 4) AOA House of Delegates may do so at any time (2/3 vote required)

How Are AOA House of Delegates Members and Others Notified: Resolutions from AOA Affiliates and AOA Sections must be submitted in writing to the AOA Secretary-Treasurer at least 15 days before the first day of the AOA Congress. They are then referred automatically to the Resolutions Committee of the House of Delegates. The Resolutions Committee determines which resolutions are then sent to the floor of the House of Delegates. Copies of resolutions going to the floor of the House of Delegates must be provided to delegates at least 4 hours before they are to be considered by the House.

Does Resolution Require AOA Board of Trustees Approval: No.

Does Resolution Go to Resolutions Committee of the House of Delegates: Yes. The Resolutions Committee can approve, modify, or reject the resolution by holding it in the Resolutions Committee. The House of Delegates, by a 2/3 vote, can consider a resolution that the Resolutions Committee has held in committee.

What Vote Is Required for House of Delegates to Pass: Majority vote of House of Delegates.

Can Resolution Be Amended by the House of Delegates: Yes, but only if the amendment is germane to the original proposal. For example, a resolution to adopt a policy on glaucoma treatment could not be amended to alter the policy on horizontal gaze nystagmus because the latter topic has nothing to do with the original resolution. In other words, you cannot evade the Resolutions Committee process by floor amendments that are not germane.

Review by the Judicial Council: Resolutions are subject to review by the Judicial Council before becoming effective. A four-fifths (4/5) vote of the Judicial Council is required to return a resolution to next year's House for reconsideration.

Substantive Motions to the House of Delegates

Who Can Propose: Any delegate to the AOA House of Delegates.

When Must Substantive Motion Be Made: During the meeting of the AOA House of Delegates, but not after the last call for substantive motions from the Speaker of the House. No substantive motions can be made on the last day of the House of Delegates.

How Are AOA House of Delegates Members and Others Notified: Although there is no advance notice requirement, prior notice to the Speaker is helpful to facilitate discussion and debate. Substantive motions occur on the floor of the House of Delegates.

Does Substantive Motion Require AOA Board of Trustees Approval: No.

Does Substantive Motion Go to Resolutions Committee of the House of Delegates: No.

What Vote Is Required for House of Delegates to Pass: Majority vote of House of Delegates.

Can Substantive Motion Be Amended by the House of Delegates: Yes, but only if the amendment is germane to the original motion. For example, a substantive motion to fund a program could not be amended to create a committee to study an entirely unrelated topic because the latter topic has nothing to do with the original motion. In other words, you cannot evade normal parliamentary procedure by floor amendments that are not germane. You could, of course, just make a separate, new substantive motion. Substantive motions can be made on any subject that does not require a Constitution or Bylaws amendment but are usually not made for major policy determinations because they do evade the Resolutions Committee deliberative process. For that reason, substantive motions that are major policy issues are often referred to a Resolutions Committee for study, often at the recommendation of the Speaker of the House.

Review by the Judicial Council: Substantive Motions are subject to review by the Judicial Council before becoming effective. A four-fifths (4/5) vote of the Judicial Council is required to return a substantive motion to next year's House for reconsideration.

AOA Meeting Procedures - Quick Reference Guide

This document describes the most common types of motions at meetings and includes guidance on how such motions are handled. It also addresses some other issues that may come up during the meeting. The meeting chair (“Chair”) is responsible for making sure (1) that the meeting participants address the items on the agenda (keeping the meeting “on track”), (2) that meeting participants’ rights to propose motions, debate motions, and vote are respected, and (3) that the rules governing the meeting (AOA Constitution and Bylaws and Robert’s Rules of Parliamentary Procedure – 12th Edition) are followed. Throughout this reference guide, the word “Assembly” refers to the participants in the meeting who have a right vote on matters coming before the group – for example, the members of an AOA committee.

Main Motions and Subsidiary Motions

A **Main Motion** is any motion that brings business before the Assembly. Resolutions, “Substantive Motions”, and bylaws amendments all fall in this category.

Subsidiary Motions are those that are applied to the main motion for the purpose of changing or disposing of it. The most common subsidiary motion is the motion to “**Amend**” the main motion.

Introducing and Debating Motions

The way to introduce a main motion is for a meeting participant to stand and say, “I move that...”. Most motions require a second (if unsure, it’s never improper to simply have a second). Another participant may rise to say “I second the motion,” or the Chair may have to ask, “Is there a second for this motion.”

At that point, the Chair would say, “It is moved and seconded that (state the question), and then say, “is there any discussion,” or “would anyone like to speak?” The Chair customarily allows the original mover to speak first. If it’s not clear who stood up to speak first, do your best to establish priority and say, “The chair recognizes (name)” to make clear who has the right to speak first.

After people have had a chance to speak, the Chair asks, “is there any further discussion? There being no further discussion, all those in favor of the motion please say ‘aye,’ all those opposed, say ‘no’. The ayes/nos have it, and the motion is adopted/lost.”

If during the debate, a **subsidiary motion** is introduced (such as a motion to amend), then that motion is addressed separately using the the same rules as described above (the subsidiary motion in essence temporarily becomes the main motion). That motion must be disposed of before going back to the main motion.

Rules of Debate

Notes: everyone is entitled to speak *twice* on each motion; preference should be given to people who have not spoken yet when someone is seeking to speak a second time.

The right to **debate** questions is an important right. Debate can only be cut off by the Assembly itself by introduction of a subsidiary motion such as the motion to “Call the Previous Question,” or a motion to “Limit Debate.” Both motions require 2/3 approval for adoption. A speaker cannot be **interrupted** except in in very limited circumstances. However, Robert’s Rules limits comments by any one person to 10 minutes at a time. This means there is no such thing as a “filibuster” under Robert’s Rules. If the Chair wishes to enforce the 10 minute rule, it is customary to give the speaker a warning and a brief period (less than a minute) to wrap up their statement.

It is possible for a member of the Assembly to **end all debate** on a question by introducing a motion to Call the Question, Limit Debate, Postpone Indefinitely consideration of the question, or Lay the Motion on the Table (which is used when you plan to take up the question again later in the meeting).

It is also possible for the Assembly to **object to the consideration** of a motion by a 2/3 vote *before debate begins*, but this is only used when the Assembly strongly feels that the question is totally improper and should not even be debated. In most cases, it is enough to either defeat a motion or postpone its consideration indefinitely as a way to kill it.

Privileged Motions and **Incidental Motions** are an exception to the general rule that a questions must be dealt with and disposed of while it's on the floor before moving on. These motions temporarily interrupt debate about the motion being considered. The major difference between the two is that a privileged motion is not related to the pending questions, while an incidental motion is related. If a motion to recess or adjourn is adopted, debate is suspended until the Assembly reconvenes after the recess/adjournment, at which time the business is take up at the same point where it left off.

Revisiting a Question

This area gets confusing, so if it should come up, it's probably best for the Chair to take a short sidebar to discuss how to proceed. It is possible to move to "Reconsider" something done *earlier that same day*. Only someone who voted *in favor of* the earlier motion may move to reconsider it. The assembly cannot "Reconsider" subsidiary motions once the main motion to which they applied has been adopted.

It is also possible to move to "Rescind" or "Amend" something previously adopted. This requires a 2/3 vote, and in some cases is out order, depending on the content of the motion being rescinded.

List of Common Motions

Subsidiary Motions:

"Amend"

"Lay on the Table" (save for consideration later in the meeting)

"Call the Previous Question" (forces vote on the original main motion)

"Refer to Committee a.k.a. 'Commit'"

"Postpone Indefinitely" (kills the motion)

Privileged and Incidental:

"Adjourn" (ends the meeting, or one day of a meeting if a multi-day meeting)

"Recess" (short break)

"Point of Order" (questions whether rules of assembly are being violated)

"Suspend the Rules" (temporarily change Robert's Rules) – can't be applied to anything that requires advance notice (for example, bylaws amendments). If applied to something that requires 2/3 majority vote, then needs 2/3 approval to pass). Can use 'unanimous consent' approach if non-controversial (RR p. 266)

"Call for Orders of the Day" (question whether assembly has skipped over some item of business).

Miscellaneous:

“Take from the Table” (force the Assembly to take up a matter tabled earlier in the meeting)

For more detailed treatment of rules applied to the most common motions, refer to Roberts Rules 11th Edition, or the chart contained in the AOA House of Delegates Procedures document