



Specialty and Service Society Standing Rules and Procedures

June 2019

PURPOSE AND MISSION OF SSS

The mission of the Specialty and Service Society (SSS) is to provide a forum for collaboration among the medical specialties, professional interest medical associations (PIMA), and the federal service branches; to promote the interests of its members within our American Medical Association (AMA); and to serve as a resource to our AMA.

To further this mission several responsibilities are recognized:

- To promote the maximum participation of SSS members within the AMA deliberative process;
- To promote the most equitable, comprehensive and balanced representation of SSS member interests within the AMA House of Delegates;
- To participate fully in the development and implementation of policies adopted by the AMA House of Delegates;
- To make available the resources and expertise of SSS members to the activities of the AMA (councils, committees, task forces, etc.);
- To provide a forum for presentation of educational and scientific matters affecting the profession;
- To optimize effective communication and interchange between the delegates, alternate delegates and representatives of the SSS societies and the AMA;
- To foster greater cooperation and consensus between SSS member societies and the AMA; and
- To promote AMA membership.

I. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the SSS will include:

- A. Delegates and alternate delegates to the AMA House of Delegates from specialty societies, PIMAs and the federal services.

- B. One representative and one alternate representative of each specialty society and PIMA that does not have delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates but has been approved by the SSS and formally recommended by their society's governing boards.
- C. PIMAs who participated in the AMA House of Delegates prior to June 2000 will retain the designation of a specialty society unless the society officially requests to be reclassified as a PIMA.

II. PRIVILEGES

- A. Vote: Voting privileges will be granted as following:
 - 1. Delegates: Delegates from specialty societies, PIMAs, and federal services seated in the AMA House of Delegates shall have full voting rights on all matters within the SSS, with the exception of issues pertaining to their own representation.
 - 2. Alternate Delegates: Alternate delegates from specialty societies, PIMAs, and federal services seated in the AMA House of Delegates shall have full voting rights on all matters within the SSS, with the exception of issues pertaining to their own representation.
 - 3. Representatives and Alternate Representatives: Representatives and alternates from specialty societies and PIMAs who are members of the SSS but are not seated in the AMA House of Delegates (HOD), shall have voting privileges on all matters within the SSS, with the following exceptions: election of officers or other members of the SSS Governing Council and issues regarding a specialty organization's or a PIMA's representation in the AMA HOD.
- B. Officers: Delegates and alternate delegates from specialty societies, PIMAs, and federal services represented in the AMA House of Delegates are eligible to hold office in the SSS, and to sit on the governing council or chair SSS committees.
- C. Committee Membership: All the members of the SSS are eligible to serve on SSS committees.
- D. Privilege of the Floor: All members of the SSS, including members of section councils who are not seated for their respective delegates, alternate delegates, representatives or alternate representatives, shall have the privilege of the floor.

III. SPECIALTY SOCIETY APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. Application for Membership in the SSS:
 - 1. Specialty societies and PIMAs may apply for membership in the SSS by writing to the SSS Governing Council at least two months prior to the annual or interim meeting at which they wish to be seated. The societies must submit their bylaws with the application. The SSS Rules Committee shall make a recommendation to the full SSS on

whether the applying society complies as defined below. The SSS Rules Committee shall notify SSS societies which new groups are seeking admission to the SSS two months prior to the meeting. If approved by the voting members of the SSS, the society may select a representative and alternate representative, who are AMA members, to represent them in the SSS.

2. Once an organization is approved for SSS membership, the SSS will assist the organization in affiliating with an appropriate section council. If no section council is appropriate, the SSS will notify the AMA Board of Trustees, and ask it to encourage the House of Delegates to establish a new section council. The SSS will offer to assist the AMA Board of Trustees in organizing the new section council. The SSS will serve the function of section council for PIMAs.
3. In deciding whether to accept a society that applies for membership in SSS, the Rules Committee will be guided by the following criteria:
 - a) the organization must not be in conflict with the AMA Constitution and Bylaws as membership shall not be denied or abridged because of sex, color, creed, race, religion, disability, ethnic origin, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or for any other reason unrelated to character, competence, ethics, professional status or professional activities;
 - b) the organization must have a voluntary membership and must report as members only those who are current in payment of dues, have full voting privileges and are eligible to hold office;
 - c) the organization must be active within its field of medicine and hold at least one meeting of its members per year;
 - d) the organization must be national in scope; it must not restrict its members geographically and must have members from a majority of the states.
 - e) the organization must submit a resolution or other official statement to show that the request is approved by the governing body of the organization;
 - f) if international, the organization must have a U.S. branch or chapter, and this chapter must be reviewed in terms of all of the above guidelines;
 - g) Organizations not applying as a professional interest medical association must represent a field of medicine that has recognized scientific validity; an applicant society cannot have board certification as its primary focus, and not require membership in the specialty organization as a requisite for board certification. An organization applying as a professional interest medical association must demonstrate that it represents and serves a professional interest of physicians that is relevant to the AMA's purpose and vision and that the organization has a

multifaceted agenda (i.e., is not a single-issue association);

- h) A SSS applicant society must meet 50% of the current AMA membership requirement for delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates in order to be granted or to maintain representation in the SSS. The society must be able to demonstrate active recruitment for AMA membership to meet the House of Delegates requirement for representation;
- i) The organization must be established and stable; therefore, it must have been in existence for at least five years prior to submitting its application to the SSS; and the physician members of the organization should comprise the majority of the voting membership of the organization.

- 4. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the criteria for delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates (as delineated in AMA Policies G-600.020 and G-600.022) as defined in a) through i) above.

B. Application for delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates:

- 1. All Societies seeking delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates must be members of the SSS for a minimum of three years (AMA Bylaw B-8.4.1).
- 2. Any specialty, professional interest or federal service society, which has participated in the SSS for two years (four consecutive meetings), may apply for delegate status in the House of Delegates by filing a formal application with the appropriate office of the AMA. A society may not withdraw its application for representation in the AMA House of Delegates once the appropriate office begins its review process. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the criteria for delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates at the time the application is presented at the SSS meeting.
- 3. The application will be referred to the SSS Rules Committee for review. The Rules Committee will report its recommendation for approval or disapproval at the next meeting of the SSS. Eligible SSS voting members will consider the Rules Committee's recommendations and then vote to recommend to the AMA House of Delegates whether it should approve or disapprove the application for delegate status.
- 4. The SSS recommendation will then be transmitted with the application to the AMA Board of Trustees for its consideration and report to the AMA House of Delegates. If changes are made to AMA Policies G-600.020 and G-600.022 after the SSS has made its recommendations on new applications for representation in the AMA House of Delegates, the SSS Governing Council may revise the recommendation prior to sending its report to the AMA Board of Trustees for consideration. Approval of the action of the governing council will be voted upon at the next SSS meeting.
- 5. If the SSS recommends a seat in the AMA House of Delegates, but the House rejects

the application, then the society may remain in the SSS and request reconsideration one time every three years.

IV. GOVERNING COUNCIL

- A. The SSS Governing Council shall direct the programs and activities of the SSS, which shall be subject to the approval of the AMA Board of Trustees.
- B. The SSS Governing Council shall be comprised of the officers and four at-large members.

V. OFFICERS

- A. The officers shall be chair, chair-elect, immediate-past chair, and secretary. The chair-elect shall serve a one-year term and automatically succeed to the office of chair. The chair shall serve a one-year term and automatically succeed to the office of immediate-past chair. The immediate-past chair shall serve a one-year term. The secretary shall serve a one-year term and be eligible for re-election twice.
- B. There will be four at-large members who shall be elected by the voting members for a two-year term and be eligible for re-election twice. Two at-large members shall be elected in even years and two at-large members in odd years. Unexpired terms of at-large members shall be filled as an unexpired term.
- C. The slate of candidates for these offices shall be presented by the SSS Nominating Committee at the opening meeting of the SSS at the AMA Annual meeting; additional nominations may be made from the floor prior to elections. Officers and at-large members shall be elected upon receiving a majority of the votes cast by eligible SSS members.
- D. At each AMA Annual Meeting, the members elected to serve the SSS Governing Council shall take office at the conclusion of the final meeting of the SSS and serve until the conclusion of the final meeting of the SSS during which their term ends.
- E. Executive Committee - The chair, chair-elect and secretary are empowered to act as an executive committee for planning and responding to urgent matters.
- F. Only SSS members with voting privileges who are delegates and alternates in the AMA House of Delegates shall be eligible to hold office in the SSS.
- G. A quorum of the governing council shall be a majority of its members.

VI. STANDING COMMITTEES:

- A. **SSS Nominating Committee** will be chaired by a past SSS governing council chair who is not currently on the governing council. The committee will be composed of the chair and four at-large members nominated by the SSS chair and elected at the meeting of the SSS held

immediately prior to the opening of the AMA House of Delegates. Other nominations to this committee may be made from the floor prior to election. At-large members will serve one-year terms and are eligible for re-election twice. The nominating committee will report its nominees for the offices to the membership 30 days prior to the annual SSS meeting.

- B. **SSS Rules Committee** will be appointed by the SSS chair and approved by the governing council and shall be comprised of a chair and at least four at-large members. The chair will serve a one-year term and is eligible for re-appointment once. At-large members will serve a one-year term and are eligible for consecutive re-appointment twice. This committee will carefully review all specialty society applications for SSS membership and delegate status in the AMA House of Delegates. This committee will also carefully review the SSS Standing Rules and Procedures and recommend amendments to the SSS Standing Rules and Procedures, as the committee deems necessary, or as recommended by the SSS.

The committee shall report as to qualifications of the organization as per SSS Standing Rules and Procedures and AMA guidelines and to the desirability of inclusion in the SSS or AMA House of Delegates as appropriate.

- C. When necessary, the chair of the governing council, with governing council approval, has the authority to appoint ad hoc committees to address limited scope issues facing the SSS. Ad hoc committee members will be appointed by the SSS chair and approved by the governing council.

VII. BUSINESS MEETING

- A. The SSS shall provide a forum for specialty organizations, PIMAs and the federal services to promote their participation in the policies and activities of the AMA. The members of the SSS shall adopt standing rules and procedures for the conduct of business and activities of the SSS. The SSS Standing Rules and Procedures shall become effective upon approval by the AMA Board of Trustees.
- B. The SSS chair shall appoint a parliamentarian prior to the beginning of the first session of the annual and interim meetings. The parliamentarian shall serve as a reference for any questions of parliamentary procedure and shall use the same rules of order as utilized by the AMA House of Delegates as the reference. The parliamentarian shall serve only during the meeting and may be reappointed at subsequent meetings.
- C. The SSS chair shall appoint tellers prior to the beginning of the first session of the annual and interim meetings. Tellers will be responsible for identifying eligible voters within the SSS, and when necessary, tally their votes. Should a written ballot be required, tellers will have the responsibility to assure that the ballots are received only by eligible voters, that ballots are properly handled, and that the tally is reported to the SSS Chair.
- D. The SSS will use the same rules of order as utilized by the AMA House of Delegates as the authority for parliamentary procedures not covered in the SSS Standing Rules and

Procedures.

- E. The chair of the SSS shall be the presiding officer for all meetings of the SSS. In the absence of the chair, the chair-elect shall preside.
- F. A quorum for meetings of the SSS shall be one third of the SSS voting member organizations.
- G. The SSS meeting will include a review of the business before the AMA House of Delegates, including resolutions and board and council reports. At the annual and interim meeting, the chair-elect of the SSS will serve as chair during the discussion of the house business and will assign SSS members to each of the official reference committees. Responsibilities will include:
 - 1. Analysis of material presented in the delegate handbook with highlighting of issues germane to the mission of SSS or crucial to the purpose of the AMA;
 - 2. Being present during the reference committee and reporting to the SSS on relevant deliberations;
 - 3. Speaking for the SSS at the reference committee or on the AMA House of Delegates floor, when authorized on specific matters. SSS support requires a three-fifths majority of members present and voting with a minimum of 30 organizations voting in the affirmative;
 - 4. Coordinating testimony of other specialty delegates, with respect to testimony, when a position of the SSS is not deemed appropriate; and
 - 5. Coordinating appropriate activity for the SSS or its individual component societies on the floor of the House.
- H. A SSS Candidate Forum will be held at each annual meeting inviting all contested candidates for elected councils and offices of the AMA to participate. The slate of candidates for each position will be presented separately in a townhall setting and allow time to individually respond to SSS questions.

VIII. ASSESSMENTS

The governing council is authorized to assess member societies attending the meeting an appropriate amount for food and beverage service.

IX. AMENDMENTS

The SSS Standing Rules and Procedures may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the SSS by a three-fifths majority vote of its members present and voting. SSS members will be notified of any proposed amendments to the SSS Standing Rules and Procedures at least 30 days

prior to the SSS meeting. Amendments must be approved by the AMA Board of Trustees prior to enactment.

X. DISCONTINUANCE OF REPRESENTATION

- A. Organizations that are represented in the SSS and miss three consecutive annual or interim meetings of the SSS will automatically lose representation status in the SSS. These organizations must reapply for representation in the SSS and complete three years of consecutive membership in SSS before applying for representation in the AMA House of Delegates.
- B. Organizations who remain in the SSS for five years, but do not seek to obtain representation in the AMA House of Delegates, will be subject to a reassessment of qualifications for admission by the SSS Rules Committee every five years. Those societies not meeting the requirements as established in the Specialty Society Application Process (Section III) will lose representation status in the SSS.
- C. Discontinuance of representation in the AMA House of Delegates shall be in accordance with the parameters outlined in the AMA bylaws.