

I.J.002

Title: Elections and Voting Initiatives

Rationale or Purpose

To fulfill the responsibilities of the governing documents for the election of officers to the Association and other voting initiatives.

Policy Statement

The NEB adopts the following procedures to fulfill its requirements stated in the bylaws for elections to national and division positions and voting, generally. The method of elections and general voting shall be by electronic ballot.

Procedures

1. Generally

- a. The Executive Director is required to employ a third-party provider of election services on behalf of the Association.
- b. Electronic ballots shall be prepared, listing candidates alphabetically by position.
 - i. Candidates shall provide the Office of the Executive Director with required candidate materials (as indicated in Policy I.J.001), for this purpose by 1 September of any year prior to an election year.
 - ii. In the event required candidate materials (as indicated in Policy I.J.001) are not received from any candidate by the prescribed date, the NAFME website shall indicate that required materials, (as indicated in Policy I.J.001) were not received.
 - iii. Upon confirmation that all required candidate materials, pursuant to Policy I.J.001, are received by the prescribed date, NAFME shall post to the association's website on 1 October of any year prior to an election year.
- c. For national and division position elections and other voting initiatives, ballots and supporting information shall be distributed not fewer than ten days nor more than sixty days prior to the voting period, to all members of record eligible to vote.
- d. For national and division position elections and other voting initiatives, the voting period shall commence on the Second Tuesday in January of the election year and shall be open for thirty calendar days, closing midnight of the thirtieth day Eastern Time. The starting and concluding dates for voting will be clearly noted.
- e. For national and division position elections, a majority of votes cast shall constitute election. For amendments to the NAFME Bylaws, an approving vote of the majority of those members who cast ballots by such means as are determined by the National Executive Board, is required. For

alterations/amendments to the NAFME Constitution, an approving vote of two-thirds of those members who cast ballots, is required.

- f. Reporting of Results
 - i. The third-party provider of election services on behalf of the association shall provide NAFME legal counsel with the winning candidates/results.
 - ii. The association's legal counsel shall report the winning candidates to the National President/Board Chair. For national and division position elections, the sitting National President/Board Chair and National President-Elect will notify all candidates of the results.
 - iii. At the conclusion of an election/voting period, NAFME will report the results of any action put to the membership for a vote. For national and division position elections, results (i.e., the names of the winning candidates) will be announced to the membership and reported publicly. A report of division voting (participation) percentages will be shared with the National Executive Board, and each Division board, while the release of raw vote count(s) to either the candidates and/or the National Executive Board, can only be authorized by a vote of the National Executive Board.
 - iv. For proposed amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws, results including the percentage of votes for or against each proposed action, will be announced to the membership and reported publicly.
 - v. The results will be recorded at the next meeting of the National Executive Board.
 - vi. Once the minutes of the NEB meeting at which the election results are recorded are approved, the ballots and electronic voting records will be destroyed.
- g. In the case of a tie for a national or division position election, unless one candidate withdraws from the contest, the winner will be selected by a coin toss (or equally random chance selection process, to be agreed upon by all involved candidates and NAFME legal counsel). This procedure will be outlined in the online voting instructions provided to all voting members.

2. Communications

- a. Prior to a vote of the NAFME membership, NAFME will encourage members to become informed and engaged in elections for national and division positions by posting candidate materials via the NAFME website (as outlined by I.J.001), and by sharing via social media, email, and publications. Additionally, candidate National Leadership Assembly speeches and Q&A will be archived on the NAFME website and similarly shared out. Lastly, NAFME will host two National Presidential Candidate Town Hall Meetings, which will also be archived on the NAFME website, and similarly shared out. Dissemination of candidate materials, National Leadership Assembly speeches and Q&A, and Presidential Candidate Town Hall Meetings, shall always be conducted equally.
 - i. NAFME State Federated Associations are encouraged to share NAFME approved election/voting communications throughout election/voting periods. All other State Federated Association communications and

activities (such as town halls) regarding NAFME elections/voting initiatives are prohibited.

- ii. Candidates for national and division positions may share NAFME approved election/voting communications throughout election/voting periods. Prohibited candidate activities are described under section 3.b.i. of this policy.

3. Ethics

- a. Members of both National and Division Nominating Committee(s) shall not be considered as candidates for elected office.
- b. Prohibition on Candidate for National and Division Positions Campaigning:
 - i. Candidates for election to national and division positions shall refrain from campaigning activities. Prohibited campaigning activities include:
 - Soliciting or accepting funds for the purpose of supporting one's candidacy.
 - Requesting or accepting endorsements or support, either formal or informal, of any kind.
 - Initiating communication of any kind with NAFME members with the intention of campaigning.
 - Organizing, either directly or indirectly, a "get out the vote" campaign.
 - Publicly promoting one's views, disparaging an opponent, or speaking about one's candidacy beyond general acknowledgment.
 - Any other "explicit" violation of the spirit of this section, as determined by the NAFME Executive Committee.
 - ii. Violation of section 3.i. of this policy shall result in removal of a candidate for a national or division position from the ballot.
 - Reporting of Violations and Appeals:
 - Reports of violations must be brought forth in writing to the NAFME Executive Committee.
 - Reports of violations may only be brought forth by NAFME members.
 - After review of the reported violation, if deemed necessary, it shall be the responsibility of the NAFME Executive Committee to notify a candidate for a national or division position of an alleged violation of this section.
 - The NAFME Executive Committee may seek guidance from NAFME legal counsel in rendering a decision regarding reported violations.
 - Upon notification of a violation, the candidate for a national or division position shall have 48 hours to provide information that would mitigate against their removal from the ballot (the appeal).
 - Information provided to the NAFME Executive Committee by the candidate for a national or division position shall be reviewed on its merits.

- The NAFME Executive Committee shall render a final decision, to be communicated first to the candidate for a national or division position, who has violated section 3.i of this policy.
- c. Compliance with NAFME elections for NAFME members, non-members, organizations both for-profit and non, NAFME State Federated Associations, their officers and staff, NAFME societies, councils, or any other legal subset or component of NAFME:
- NAFME members, non-members, organizations both for-profit and non, NAFME State Federated Associations, their officers and staff, NAFME societies, councils or any other legal subset or component of NAFME, shall refrain from public endorsement or public/private displays of support for a particular candidate for national or division position, or participation in campaign practices that involves political campaigning or requires campaign funding.
 - Compliance oversight of the breadth of social media and beyond is an unreasonable expectation for the NAFME Executive Committee, however, the Committee will take seriously any indications of, or reports of, non-compliant activity as listed in section 3.c. and will act as reasonably possible, to mitigate.
- i. The Office of the Executive Director is directed annually to inform appropriate state officials (elected state officers, editors, managers, paid officials, and others ethically bound to protect the Association), of all provisions of the election policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all NAFME elections and voting initiatives.

Definitions

“NEB” in this policy refers to the National Executive Board.

References

Approved By:	NEB, January 4, 2013
Date of Last Revision:	September 14, 2022; October 2015; February 25, 2021;;
History:	September 14, 2022 – Revised and approved on September 14, 2022, in efforts to prohibit candidate for National and Division positions campaigning. February 2021 - Revised and approved on February 25, 2021, in efforts to institute more equitable election practices and further access and inclusion within NAFME’s volunteer leadership.