



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS®

# **Guidelines for State Societies on the Conversion from a House of Delegates to a General Assembly**

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## PREFACE

The objective of this document is to assist state societies that want to change from a House of Delegates to a General Assembly. These guidelines are simple, and each society needs to follow guidelines and definitions as defined by state bylaws.

## DEFINITIONS

**House of Delegates:** This body acts for the total membership in the transaction of its business. The House of Delegates distinguishes the voting body of delegates from large numbers of other members of the component chapters and members-at-large who come to the annual meeting. Delegates are representatives of the state society as a whole as well as of component chapters of the state society and members-at-large.

Delegates (and alternates) are elected for service in the House of Delegates according to the provisions of the state society bylaws.

Contingent on the wording in the state society bylaws, in a House of Delegates, only the delegates have the authority to vote on all the matters presented before the House. Officers may vote if specified in the bylaws.

**General Assembly:** This body acts for the total membership in the transaction of its business. Such an assembly's membership is limited to persons who are recorded on the rolls of the society as voting members in good standing (as defined by state society bylaws).

In a General Assembly, all members in good standing in attendance at the Assembly have the authority to vote on all matters as presented before the Assembly.

## OFFICERS

House of Delegates and General Assembly officers and their duties are as defined in the state society bylaws. Elected officers may consist of a President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Speaker, Vice-Speaker, Secretary, Treasurer, or Secretary-Treasurer. Officers and members of the Board of Trustees are governed by the state society bylaws.

## GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines to assist your society in transitioning from a House of Delegates to a General Assembly.

1. Notify all members in good standing, by mail (postal and/or electronic), that at the next annual meeting their delegates will be voting on changing from a House of Delegates to a General Assembly. The letter should include the rationale for the change and the proposed amendments to the state society bylaws that would bring about the change. Additional notification may include state newsletter and/or posting on the state society website.

2. Schedule at least two open forum discussion meetings prior to the annual meeting.

The meetings should be at least four weeks apart, on a different day of the week and at a different time of the day to allow members to attend a meeting that fits into their schedules. Meetings can be held virtually, in person, or both.

3. The proposed bylaws amendments that would bring about the change to a General Assembly should be treated as other bylaws amendments with the exception that they should be presented as a package and should be voted on in their entirety rather than individually.
4. Discussion should be held prior to and during the House of Delegates. If the state society bylaws permit, the House should grant permission for non-delegate members to speak on this matter.
5. After adequate discussion, the proposed bylaws amendments changing the governance structure from a House of Delegates to a General Assembly should be presented to the House as a whole and voted on in its entirety. However, the House may vote to divide the question and consider some of the proposed bylaws amendments separately.
6. Notify the AAMA Executive Office that your state society has changed to a General Assembly.
7. The change will take effect at the close of the current state society House of Delegates.

# **SAMPLE WORDING FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOTIFICATION TO MEMBERS AND BYLAWS CHANGES**

## **SECTION 1. Governance**

The Society shall be governed by General Assembly, which has the authority to determine the policies of this Society, to amend the bylaws (with a 2/3 vote), to conduct the election of officers, to select delegates and alternates to the AAMA Annual Conference, and to act upon other business as may be presented.

## **SECTION 2. Eligibility**

In order to be seated as a member of the General Assembly, vote, and/or address the Assembly, an individual must be a voting member of the state society, as defined by the state society bylaws.

Eligibility shall be verified through the AAMA Executive Office and/or other means designated by the state bylaws or the officer presiding over the Assembly.

## **SECTION 3. Appointments**

The presiding officer (as defined by officer descriptions in the state bylaws), shall appoint such committees as are necessary to perform the business of the General Assembly.

## **SECTION 4. Quorum**

A majority of the eligible voting members present at the Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

## **SECTION 5. Annual Meeting**

The General Assembly will convene annually.