

House of Delegates Reference Manual

Procedures, Policies and Practices

Revised: September 2022

General Information

The House of Delegates, also known as the “House” or HOD, is the LSMS’ policymaking body, and is the foundation of organized medicine in Louisiana. It is a democratic forum that represents the views and interests of a diverse group of member physicians and medical students who come together to establish broad policy on health, medical, professional and governance matters.

Composition of the House of Delegates

The House of Delegates has approximately 200 voting delegates, each selected by the group being represented. All delegates are required to be LSMS members. LSMS Bylaws establish the criteria for membership in the House of Delegates.

The House includes elected delegates from:

- LSMS Medical Districts, allocated on a proportional basis with one delegate per 25 active, academic, military, part-time, and retired license and emeritus members.
- Chartered parish medical societies, allocated on a proportional basis with one delegate per 25 joint active, academic, military, part-time, and retired license members.
- Affiliated parish medical societies, allocated on a proportional basis with one delegate per 25 joint active, academic, military, part-time, and retired license members.
- Each medical school in the state who is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) and the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA).
- LSMS Young Physician Section, Resident & Fellow Section, Private Practice Section, Employed Physician Section and Medical Student Section.
- Statewide specialty societies

Additionally, the House includes the following non-elected delegates:

- The general officers of the society
- The LSMS delegation to the American Medical Association
- All past presidents of the society
- All past Speakers of the House of Delegates
- The Editor of the LSMS Journal, and Emeritus Officers

The LSMS Bylaws provide for Official Observers in the HOD. Louisiana physician organizations may apply to the Board of Governors for official observer status in the House. Organizations granted observer status are invited to send one representative to all meetings of the Louisiana State Medical Society House of Delegates. The observer must be a physician member of the named organization and not a hired representative or staff member. Official observers have the right to speak on the floor of the House upon recognition by the Speaker. However, Official Observers do not have the right to introduce business, introduce an amendment, make a motion, or vote.

Apportionment of Delegates

75 days prior to the opening of the House, the LSMS will calculate the number of elected and non-elected delegates eligible to participate in the upcoming House of Delegates; this number is known as the official call. Per LSMS Bylaws, a full dues equivalent method is used within each medical district to determine apportionment to the LSMS House of Delegates. NOTE: to calculate the delegate apportionment for chartered and/or affiliated parish societies those recognized parish medical societies need to submit a copy of their current membership roster to the LSMS no later than May 1st of each year. Failure to do so may result in lost seats to the House.

Meeting Overview

The LSMS Bylaws specify that the House of Delegates shall meet annually. Typically, the LSMS convenes its annual meeting in late July or early August. Currently the meeting is held annually in Baton Rouge. LSMS Bylaws outline the procedures under which special meetings of the HOD can occur. Information on the dates and location for each annual meeting is available on the LSMS website. The meeting includes events related to awards, elections and the inauguration of the incoming LSMS President. As for the House itself, voting delegates introduce business to the House through the presentation of resolutions as individuals or on behalf of the group they represent. The members of the House can support, oppose, voice concern, or articulate their point of view on items of business under consideration. Ultimately, the HOD will act on all items of business.

Meetings Held in Conjunction with the House of Delegates

The Board of Governors, Past Presidents Advisory Council, Private Practice Section, Employed Physician Section, Young Physician Section, Resident and Fellow Section and the Medical Student Section all meet before the House of Delegates. Additionally, other LSMS committees and councils may meet during this time if there is business to conduct. However, travel expenses and meals to attend meetings held during the House are not reimbursable per LSMS policy.

From time to time, the LSMS will host educational sessions before, during and/or after the House of Delegates meeting.

Delegate Credentials and Registration

All delegates, both elected and non-elected, must register to attend the meeting. Registered delegates will receive all meeting materials in advance of the meeting. All delegates must be registered and credentialed before being seated on the floor of the House of Delegates. At each HOD meeting, each delegate receives a delegate badge with an appropriate ribbon. All badges

may be picked up at the registration desk, the location and hours of which are announced in the schedule of events and in the meeting handbook.

Seating: delegate seating for the HOD rotates from meeting to meeting. The seating chart for each HOD meeting is included in the HOD Handbook.

Re-Credentialing of a Delegate: If a delegate must leave the meeting or is absent for more than half a day, the delegate may formally transfer his credentials to another delegate at the registration area. A temporary substitute delegate has all of the rights and privileges of a delegate, including the right to vote on items of business and vote in any election.

Vacant Delegate Positions

If for any reason, twenty-one days prior to the start of the House, there are vacant delegate positions, they may be backed filled by either district delegates or chartered/affiliated delegates depending on where the vacancy(s) occur. All vacancies must be filled by LSMS members, and these delegates will go through the registration and credentialing process.

New Delegates Orientation

Prior to the House, there will be a special meeting for new delegates where the Speakers will provide an overview of House including parliamentary procedure. The location and time of such will be published in the schedule of events and in the meeting handbook.

Order of Business

According to LSMS Bylaws the following is the order of business prescribed for the House of Delegates:

- a. Call to Order;
- b. Report of the Committee on Credentials;
- c. Report of Committee on Rules and Order of Business;
- d. Disposing of the record of proceedings;
- e. Remaining agenda, as given to each delegate

The Speakers are responsible for the content and orderly conduct of the agenda and business of the House of Delegates.

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is a set of rules by which deliberation of any item of official business, with protection of individual rights, can lead to a consensus of opinion. Parliamentary procedures serve to aid an assembly in orderly, expeditious and timely accomplishment of its business. The LSMS House of Delegates uses as its parliamentary guide Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure.

Quorum: A majority of the registered voting members of the House of Delegates shall constitute a quorum, provided at least two-thirds of the regularly elected delegates are registered for the opening session.

The majority opinion of the House in determining what it wants to do and how it wants to do it should always remain the ultimate determinate of how the House operates procedurally. It is the obligation of the Speaker to sense the will of the House, to preside accordingly, with his/her rulings subject to change from, and reversal by, the assembly.

Precedence of Motions: Motions are made so that those that are lower on the list can be modified by those that are higher. It is perfectly acceptable to skip a step in the list when making motions (for example, it is not required to amend a motion in order to move to limit debate). Votes are taken, starting from those higher on the list toward those lower on the list, until a complete disposition has been made of the matter at hand. It is not uncommon to move up the list in procedure before completely disposing of the matter at hand. See Exhibit I, **Principle Rules Governing Motions.**

First and second order amendments are allowed. Third order amendments are not allowed.

Method of Doing Business

The House of Delegates follows adopted rules that govern the conduct of debate on business under its consideration. These rules are established by the LSMS Charter and Bylaws, by tradition, and decreed by the presiding officer. When the House is in session, certain items of business are traditional, and do not require action by the House. Such items include, but are not limited to, address of the outgoing President, remarks of the Speaker, presentation of awards, recognition of distinguished guests, and addresses by invited non-members. It is the prerogative of the Speakers to schedule only those items as is appropriate without interfering with the regular business of the House. Unscheduled presentations may be arranged with the Speakers or by two thirds vote of the House. However, the Speakers discourage extraneous presentations, not on the basis of merit, but because of their primary obligation to conserve the time of the House for deliberations on the regular business already established for consideration in accordance with LSMS Bylaws and the rules of the House.

The minutes of the Board of Governors meetings, committee reports, and special reports are included in the Delegates Handbook. Items of business or recommendations to be considered by the House in these reports are presented as resolutions. The annual reports of committees are for informational purposes. When voting to approve the minutes of the Board of Governors a delegate may extract a specific action of the Board for discussion and amendment but the minutes themselves cannot be altered by the House.

The Committee on Rules and Order of Business meets prior to the opening session of the House of Delegates to consider late items and special rules for the meeting. The committee may be asked by the Speakers to consider parliamentary questions during the meeting and to consider

modifications of the rules which have been previously adopted. Late resolutions are considered by the committee prior to the opening session and a recommendation to accept or not accept each resolution is made. Authors of late resolutions are required to appear before the Committee on Rules and Order of Business; the time of the meeting is indicated on the Schedule of Events in the handbook. The committee considers only the reason for the resolutions' submission past the resolution deadline and does not consider the merits of the resolution. Late resolutions require a two-thirds vote of the House to be accepted for debate and must include a fiscal note if expenditure of LSMS funds will be required to implement the requested action.

When recognized by the Speaker, go to the nearest floor microphone and identify yourself by name and the organization you represent before addressing the House. This is necessary for the transcriber to properly prepare the proceedings of the House from the recordings.

The House has adopted the following standing rules:

1. Each speaker addressing an item brought to the floor for a vote is limited to three minutes of debate. Each delegate may return to the floor for one minute for the purpose of rebuttal or to summarize his/her position.
2. Resolutions submitted to the LSMS House of Delegates which refer to any source material, such as an article, policy, statute, law, report, etc., must have a copy of the referenced material attached. Such resolutions will not be accepted by the HOD without an attached copy of the source material.
3. Any delegate who wishes to distribute material to the House must first obtain approval from the Speaker or Vice Speaker.
4. No election materials, announcements, or marketing/promotional materials will be printed by the LSMS.

Resolutions

Business is introduced into the House through submission of resolutions by an individual delegate or any group that has delegate representation in the House as specified by Article XI, paragraph A in the LSMS Bylaws.

To be considered as regular business, LSMS Bylaws require each resolution must be received by the Speaker of the House of Delegates no later than 45 days before the opening session of a meeting of the House.

Resolutions submitted later than 45 days before the opening session of a meeting of the House are considered late and will be considered as new business only if:

- a. Presented by the President of the Society.

- b. Presented by the Board of Governors.
- c. Decreed to be of an emergency nature by a committee composed of the President and the Speaker of the House; or
- d. Accepted by a two-thirds vote of the House of Delegates, provided that, before any such resolution shall come before the House of Delegates for action, the resolution must have been presented to the Committee on Rules and Order of Business for its consideration and recommendation.

Structure of Resolutions: The essential element of a resolution is the language expressed as one or more RESOLVED paragraphs setting forth its requested action. It may also include a prefatory statement, or preamble, explaining the rationale for the resolution. This is frequently accomplished using one or more WHEREAS statements preceding the RESOLVED paragraphs. See Exhibit II, **Resolution Format**.

It is not necessary for a resolution to have a preamble or WHEREAS statement(s) when the significance of the RESOLVED paragraph is self-explanatory. If such introductory statements are included, they should identify the issue briefly, advise the House as to the timeliness/importance of the issue, the effect of the issue upon the federation of medicine and indicate if the action called for in the RESOLVE (S) is revising current LSMS policy.

It is a general principle of parliamentary procedure that an assembly in adopting a resolution adopts only the RESOLVED section(s). It follows that the important matter before the House should be stated in free-standing RESOLVE(S) indicating precisely the requested action. It is not necessary to amend the language of the introductory portions of a resolution, unless it is the desire of the House to do so before considering the RESOLVE(S).

Experience has shown that some resolutions as submitted exhibit imprecision, inaccuracy and grammatical or structural errors. Timely submission of resolutions permits the Speakers to consider, with the author (s) improvement in form and clarity of the intent of the resolution.

When preparing resolutions, close attention should be given to the following:

1. The title of a resolution should accurately reflect the subject of the RESOLVE(S).
2. Information contained in the resolution, including WHEREAS statements, should be checked for accuracy. Inflammatory statements or other language that reflects poorly upon the Society are inappropriate and not acceptable.
3. The RESOLVE(S) should contain the action desired and should stand alone since the House adopts only the RESOLVE(S) and the WHEREAS' do not appear in the official Proceedings of the House.

Fiscal Note: All resolutions accepted for business by the House of Delegates whose implementation necessitates an expenditure of LSMS funds must include a fiscal note. No resolution requiring funding by the LSMS may be considered by the House without the inclusion of such fiscal note. Resolutions with fiscal notes will be discussed on the opening day of the

meeting, and if adopted, will be included in the final proposed budget for the coming year. The final budget is presented for adoption on the last day of the meeting.

The following guidelines should be used in the development of appropriate fiscal information:

- a. Resolutions requiring the expenditure of LSMS funds should indicate the actual dollar amount or a specific cost range.
- b. Resolutions which call for the institution of legal action, a public campaign or other similar action for which a precise cost estimate cannot be determined should indicate that a substantial commitment of resources may be necessary for implementation.
- c. The author's organization or LSMS staff can assist the sponsor with the development of fiscal information.

All fiscal notes will be reviewed by the LSMS Budget and Finance Committee and amended, if necessary, to reflect a more accurate cost projection. Additionally, the Budget and Finance Committee may assign a fiscal note to any resolution if it deems that the resolve of the resolution creates an additional financial burden to the society.

At the appropriate time, the Speaker will call for the introduction of resolutions *Introduction of Resolutions* as published in the agenda. Resolutions in the Delegates Handbook which have complied with the deadline established in the LSMS Bylaws are regarded as officially received but not yet introduced for debate. A delegate on the floor of the House, but not necessarily the author must officially introduce it as business of the House. Introduction of a resolution does not imply support by the person making the motion. Resolutions can be voluntarily withdrawn prior to introduction without vote when desired by the author and after notification to the Speakers. See **Amendments** below for instructions on changes to resolutions.

The delegate introducing a resolution should approach the nearest microphone and obtain recognition from the Speaker. Once recognized, he or she should state their name and the organization they represent and state "I move adoption of Resolution Number_." The Speaker will ask for a second and, if one is obtained, the delegate may then discuss the resolution. He or she will not be permitted to speak again until all others desiring to speak have done so unless to answer questions directed to them through the Speaker.

Any delegate on the floor of the House may call out "I second the motion" without recognition by the Speaker. This indicates a desire to have the matter considered but does not imply support. At the time of introduction of a resolution, it is possible for any delegate to object to its consideration. In the event the House sustains such objection by a two-thirds vote, the resolution is not accepted as business of the House.

Amendments: Opportunity is available during debate on a resolution to present changes only to the RESOLVE(S) in the form of editorial requests, amendments, or substitutions. These changes can be offered from the floor by any delegate officially seated in the House. Amendments exceeding a short phrase or at the request of the speakers should be submitted in writing to the Speakers before introduction. All amendments must be introduced on the floor of the House. The

submission of a written or typed amendment is not sufficient for consideration of the change; it still must be introduced from the floor of the House.

Sunset Resolutions

LSMS policies are listed in the LSMS Policy Manual. Newer policies on the same issue supersede older policies. Policies are reviewed after five years. Policies may be extracted from a sunset resolution for debate.

LSMS policy requires abandonment of unsuccessful legislative efforts that are not reaffirmed by the House. The Council on Legislation submits a sunset resolution annually to the House listing legislative initiatives to be abandoned. Unsuccessful legislative initiatives will be maintained for two regular sessions of the Louisiana legislature before consideration of abandonment unless they are completed prior to this deadline.

Resolutions adopted by the House that direct an LSMS action are included in the LSMS Directives. The LSMS Councils review the Directives annually to identify those that have been accomplished or are due for sunset. Directives are reviewed after two years for abandonment or upon completion. The LSMS Councils submit sunset resolutions to the House listing the directives to be abandoned. Directives may be extracted from the resolution for debate.

Resolutions are divided into four sections by topic. The sections are:

- 100 - General Business; Bylaws
- 200 - Legislation
- 300 - Scientific; Public Health
- 400 - Socioeconomic

Occasionally a topic will be of such importance that a separate section is created for resolutions addressing it. The numbering and placement of resolutions in these sections are at the discretion of the Speakers.

Late Resolutions, as defined in the Procedures, will be distributed to the House at the beginning of the opening session. The Committee on Rules and Order of Business will submit its recommendations to the House on each late resolution. This Committee does not hold open hearings but provides the author (s) of late resolutions an opportunity to explain the reasons for submitting their resolution past the deadline. The author of a late resolution receiving a not accept recommendation may appeal such recommendation to the House. The House will then vote on the acceptance of each resolution. A two-thirds affirmative vote is required for acceptance as official business of the House.

Member Virtual Engagement Portal (MVEP)

In addition to the tradition of submitting resolutions through the House of Delegates, members can also submit resolutions and/or issues via our Membership Virtual Engagement Portal. All submissions are assigned to the appropriate LSMS Council or Committee, which works on the resolution/issue throughout the year as opposed to one day a year. This process allows for a timely resolution of issues that do not need to be addressed at the annual meeting. Having resolutions addressed and/or vetted by the appropriate LSMS Council or Committee, streamlines the overall debate process on the House floor.

Calendar of Consent: The Consent Calendar includes those resolutions which the Speakers believe are of a non-controversial nature and will generate little or no opposition. The Consent Calendar is presented prior to the consideration of other resolutions. When the Consent Calendar is presented, any item may be removed for debate by request from the floor without the need to vote to separate it from the other items.

Commendation Resolution: The House of Delegates has established a rule prohibiting the introduction of commendation resolutions. These resolutions can be controversial in nature and, because unanimous approval is assumed, commendation resolutions may not be in the best interest of the Society. Requests for commendations should be sent to the Board of Governors for consideration of appropriate recognition.

Elections

Article V, Officers, of the Charter of the LSMS states a member shall not be eligible for nomination to any office who is not in attendance at the Annual Meeting (except if he has been a faithful attendant at the Annual Meetings and has a valid excuse), and who has not been an active member of the Society for at least three years prior to his nomination.

Nominations for elections are held during the opening session of the House and are designated by a specific time on the agenda. Incumbents in any office up for election are requested to notify the Secretary/Treasurer of the LSMS 45 days prior to the opening session of the House of Delegates whether he or she will be a candidate for reelection. In addition, any other LSMS members who intend to seek an elected position or office should forward a one-page resume and an individual picture to the Secretary/Treasurer of the LSMS 45 days prior to the opening session of the House.

Information provided by declared candidates for office is included in the delegate handbook under the Elections Section. All candidates for an elected position must be officially nominated on the floor of the House of Delegates. LSMS members who have not previously declared their candidacy for an elected position can still be nominated on the floor of the House of Delegates at the time nominations are opened for all elected positions. Seconding comments or speeches for candidates in nomination are subject the rules of the House.

Some delegations or medical districts hold caucuses immediately following the evening recess of the opening session or the following morning to discuss elections. Candidates or their representatives are advised to check with the component societies concerning caucus schedules.

In an office where there is more than one position vacant, the elections are open and not slotted. That is, all candidates who run for an office in which there are multiple positions run against each other. This occurs in the election of the AMA delegates and alternate delegates.

In those elections in which there is more than one position vacant, bullet voting is not allowed. Each voter must cast a vote for each vacant position; otherwise the ballot for that office will not count.

The ballot box opens one hour prior to the start of the final session of the House and remains open for two hours. Each candidate is allowed to send one representative to observe the official counting of the ballots. The method for runoff elections is established by the Speaker.

If no candidate receives a majority of the ballots cast, then a run-off is held. The candidate receiving the fewest votes is dropped, and a new vote is taken. The ballot box will be opened at a time designated by the Speaker. This process is repeated until a candidate is elected.

In accordance with the policy of the House, the LSMS staff will not duplicate campaign or election material for those delegates seeking office. Each candidate is responsible for providing their own campaign material. If campaign material is to be placed at the delegates' seats in the House it must be done by the candidate and/or his or her supporters. LSMS staff will not distribute campaign materials.

Unexpired Terms: An unexpired term created as a result of an election will be filled by the House at the meeting in which the vacancy was created. The office will be declared vacant by the Speaker. The date and time of the election will be designated by the Speaker.

EXHIBIT I - PRINCIPLE RULES GOVERNING MOTIONS

Order of Precedence	Can Interrupt?	Requires Second?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote Required?
PRIVILEGED MOTIONS					
1) Adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
2) Recess	No	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Majority
3) Question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS					
4) Postpone (table)	No	Yes	No	No	Majority†
5) Close debate	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
6) Limit debate	No	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Two-thirds
7) Postpone definitely	No	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Majority
8) Refer to Committee	No	Yes	Yes*	Yes*	Majority
9) Amend	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
MAIN MOTIONS					
10) a. Main Motions	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
b. Specific main motions					
Reconsider	Yes	Yes	Yes*	No	Majority
Rescind	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Resume consideration	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

No order of precedence	Can interrupt?	Requires Second?	Debatable?	Amendable	Vote Required?
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MOTIONS

Appeal	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Suspend rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Consider Informally	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

REQUESTS

Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
Parliamentary Inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
Withdraw a motion	Yes	No	No	No	None
Division of question	No	No	No	No	None
Division of assembly	Yes	No	No	No	None

*restricted

† requires two-thirds vote when it would suppress a motion without debate

EXHIBIT II - RESOLUTION FORMAT

RESOLUTION FORMAT

- Used for a specific issue and/or policy concept.
- The resolution (RESOLVE) should be direct, concise, and specific and not encumbered by rambling thoughts and comments.
- The RESOLVE must stand by itself.
- Additional position or actions on the same subject of the resolution can be added by: "..., and be it further RESOLVED, That..."
- Fiscal Note: Dollar amount for implementation of resolution, i.e., program, project, committee meeting.
- Resolutions which call for the passage of legislation should be worded as follows: "Resolved, that the LSMS seek and/or support legislation..."
- Resolutions which call for the LSMS AMA delegation to introduce a resolution in the AMA House of Delegates should be worded as follows: "Resolved, that the LSMS AMA delegation submit the following resolution to the AMA House of Delegates"
- Resolutions which establish LSMS policy should be worded as follows: "Resolved, that the following be adopted as LSMS policy: (statement)."
- Current related LSMS policies should be stated at the bottom of the resolution.

RESOLUTION FORM:

LOUISIANA STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY HOUSE OF DELEGATES

RESOLUTION _____

SUBJECT: *(Short action words taken from RESOLVE)*

INTRODUCED BY: *(First line: committee: component medical society, individual delegate, specialty society, etc.)
(Second line: if a committee, name of chair)*

WHEREAS, _____, and

WHEREAS, _____, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that _____; and be it further

RESOLVED, that _____

Fiscal Note:
Current Related LSMS Policies: