

17.040. District-Level Elections

17.040.1. Guidelines for District-Level Elections

The governor shall send the current election guidelines found in Rotary Code section 26.060.4., as well as the following list of election guidelines to all clubs at the time of the official call for nominations:

Rotarians and election candidates shall

1. Learn and follow both the spirit and the letter of RI's election guidelines
2. Consult with knowledgeable Rotarians about current or new assignments which may give an appearance of campaigning
3. Not undertake personal initiatives to gain visibility, personal recognition, or favor
4. Not respond in kind to another candidate's improper activities
5. Not communicate with or visit clubs involved in the applicable election except to fulfill necessary functions (*January 2017 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 86*)

Source: June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 325; Amended by November 2004 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 59; January 2015 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 118; January 2017 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 86

17.040.2. Term Limit for Membership on Nominating Committee for Governor

The terms of reference for district nominating committees should specify that there should be no fewer than three members of the nominating committee and members should serve for no more than three one-year terms when a district has adopted a procedure for selecting members on the nominating committee for governor under RI Bylaws section 12.030.1. (*January 2017 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 86*)

Source: September 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 73

17.040.3. Voluntary System of Rotation

Districts may adopt a voluntary system of rotating an office among the areas of the district; however, candidates may run for office regardless of the voluntary rotation system and cannot be excluded from candidacy. (*January 2015 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 118*)

Source: June 2008 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 241; Amended by January 2015 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 118

17.040.4. Voting Strength

At least 15 days prior to the voting, the district governor will inform each club how many votes it is entitled to in accordance with the RI Bylaws. This list shall also include new clubs, whose voting strength shall be based on the number of charter members, and clubs reinstated after generation of the most recent invoice, whose voting strength shall be based on the number of members with which they are reinstated. (*January 2018 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 73*)

Source: July 2010 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 21; Amended by January 2015 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 118; January 2018 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 73

Cross References

19.030. Governor-nominee Selection

October 2023

26.060. Election Guidelines and Campaigning**26.060.1. Board Approved Statement of Guidelines**

A single statement of guidelines for RI elections should apply to the entire Rotary world. All candidates for elective office should be advised in writing of the RI election policies and procedures by the person responsible for administering the election. (*November 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 45*)

Source: November 1990 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 80; June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 325

26.060.2. Official Report of Nominating Committee

After confidential discussion in committee, the nominating committees for RI director shall state in writing on official reports to the general secretary that the selected nominee, to the best of the committee's knowledge, has not violated any of the rules against campaigning, electioneering or canvassing in the RI Bylaws. The report of all nominating committees shall also contain the names and signatures of all committee members in attendance. Such report should be forwarded to the general secretary along with the name of the nominee of the committee. (*April 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 157*)

Source: November 1990 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 80; Amended by June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 325; April 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 157

26.060.3. Announcement of Nominations and Elections

Members of RI nominating committees shall refrain from issuing independent statements announcing the committee's nomination without the prior authorization of the Board, pursuant to RI Bylaws section 13.010. Editors of *Rotary* magazine and licensed regional magazines shall ensure that all articles and announcements of Rotary nominations and elections accurately reflect the Rotary election process, including the opportunity to challenge. (*January 2019 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 80*)

Source: May 2003 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 362; Amended by October 2018 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 68

26.060.4. Rules Regarding Campaigning, Canvassing and Electioneering

It is a fundamental principle in Rotary that the best qualified candidate should be selected for service in Rotary's elective offices. Therefore, any effort to influence the selection process in a positive or negative manner by campaigning, canvassing, electioneering or otherwise is prohibited under the RI Bylaws.

The following rules shall be followed concerning campaigning, canvassing and electioneering for any Rotarian considering election to the office of president, director, Governor, or Council representative, or the nominating committee for any such office. These rules are designed to ensure that the best qualified candidate is selected for office:

- 1) Rotarians should at all times conform to the prohibitions of the RI Bylaws concerning campaigning, canvassing or electioneering. All Rotarians should observe both the letter and the spirit of the bylaws and refrain from any activity whose purpose or effect is to influence others by promoting or soliciting support for a candidate's or another Rotarian's candidacy. Such activity is repugnant to the spirit of the bylaws and the principles of Rotary and will be grounds for disqualification of a candidate.

- 2) Campaigning, canvassing or electioneering is any action seeking to promote, attack, support, or oppose a candidate, either directly or indirectly, in any medium, including, but not limited to, any action seeking votes, requesting support in a forthcoming election, distribution of literature or promotional materials or other overt actions intended to promote one's candidacy for an elected Rotary office.
- 3) The periods of candidacy for elective office begin when individual Rotarians begin to give serious consideration to submitting their names for a position covered by the RI rules for nominations and elections. Commencing at that time, candidates should be particularly careful to avoid any actions designed to publicize their names or achievements, to call attention to the applicable nominations or elections, or to give candidates an unfair advantage over other candidates for the same position.
- 4) The normal performance of duly-assigned Rotary activities would not be considered to be a violation of the policies related to campaigning, canvassing or electioneering.
- 5) Contacting clubs to inform them to request their concurrence for a proposed challenge or election complaint is not prohibited provided that such contact is limited to the exchange of factual information. *(September 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 28)*

Source: March 1993 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 135, App. E; Amended by June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 325; February 2007 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 149; April 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec., 157; September 2016 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 28

26.070. Election Complaint Procedures

The following procedures for review of RI elections shall be followed whenever a complaint is made and filed in accordance with the applicable sections of the RI Bylaws:

26.070.1. Advising the Parties of a Complaint

After receiving any election complaint, the general secretary shall inform the party in question of the allegation, request a written response with documentation by a certain date, and notify the parties of the proper procedure to be followed. *(June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 326)*

Source: March 1992 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 183. Amended by November 1995 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 81; February 1996 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 174; June 2001 Mtg., Bd. Dec. 326

26.070.2. Methods of Resolution

The president, or the general secretary acting on the president's behalf, shall resolve an election dispute in the following situations:

- a) there has been a misunderstanding about the requirements of the relevant constitutional documents;
- b) information has been received and certified by the general secretary that a candidate has appealed to a "non-Rotary agency" prior to completing the RI election review procedures. In such instances the president shall, in accordance with RI Bylaws section 13.030.5. and on behalf of the Board, send a "show-cause" letter by priority mail to the candidate requesting information within 15 days indicating that the lawsuit was not filed