

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL GOVERNING CAMPAIGNS FOR ELECTION TO DISTRICT OFFICE**

## **Political and Campaign Ethics**

It is imperative that Toastmasters International preserve and protect the democratic principles upon which the organization was founded, including the rights and freedoms to seek and hold office. No action, written, oral or otherwise, must be taken that will interfere with the right of every individual qualified Toastmaster to seek and to achieve election to any office at any level of the organization. In addition, no action must be taken that will interfere with the right and duty of every delegate and of every proxy holder at all times to vote solely as his or her conscience and best judgment dictates. No actions must be taken that might impinge upon the powers, duties, authority and responsibilities of the district councils and of the district governors in fulfilling the mission of the district.

To ensure that the democratic principles are preserved and to protect the personal integrity of its members and the integrity of the organization itself:

1. No individual member, club, district or other group must engage in any activity or campaign by use of threats, restrictions, intimidations, "deals," candidate slates, pressures or other unethical means that would or might prevent or dissuade any individual member from competing in any nomination or election process at any level or from exercising his or her voting franchise in any particular manner;
2. No such person or entity must use any such action referred to in item 1 to attempt to dictate decisions of any district officer, or district council or member club in any respect to any degree;
3. No such person or entity must publish or distribute any newsletter or other publication that contains defamatory remarks, malicious and derogatory charges or false or libelous statements;
4. Except for district, regional and international conferences and conventions, all other meetings of district officers and international directors must be confined to such activities as will assist the district officers in fulfilling their responsibilities and must not be used for political purposes, such as endorsements, distribution of campaign literature, presentations by or for candidates and hospitality room(s) by or for candidates.

## **Campaign Ethics**

Toastmasters International is dedicated to providing men and women opportunities to develop communication and leadership skills in a mutually supportive and positive environment. Holding and fulfilling the roles of a Toastmasters office, whether at the club, area, division, district or international level, allow members to enhance their leadership skills. In keeping with the spirit of Toastmasters International, campaigning

for office at all levels should be a positive experience that fosters self-confidence and personal growth. To ensure that Toastmasters political campaigns are conducted in a positive manner:

1. All communications and activities endorsing a candidate, either by the candidate or by supporters of the candidate, must focus on the candidate's Toastmasters accomplishments and personal qualifications for office. Endorsements must not be used without the permission of the endorser. Photos are considered endorsements.
2. In keeping with the spirit of Toastmasters, no negative information about candidates will be allowed in written communications meant to be distributed widely or in oral communications at an official Toastmasters meeting.
3. All activities, publications, letters, speeches and conduct of campaign participants must be represented in a standard of excellence reflecting credit on the organization.
4. No member of the district executive committee or member of the district nominating committee must officially endorse any candidate for district office. No current international officer or director may endorse any international or district candidate.
5. Activities in support of candidacy for Toastmasters office must be conducted in an ethical manner. The candidate is accountable for the conduct of his/her campaign, and is responsible for keeping the activities of supporters within the established policies and guidelines.
6. No Toastmaster, including past international presidents and past international directors, must direct any proxy holder how to vote proxies at any election within Toastmasters International. Violation of any of the above principles concerning prohibited activities by an individual member of any club, or by any club, will subject: a) the offending club to suspension or expulsion in accordance with Article III, Section 4, and Article III, Section 8, of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, unless the club expels the offending individual member or ends its own violations; and/or b) the individual member to suspension or removal from good standing, or other appropriate action, in accordance with Article III, Section 8, of the Bylaws of Toastmasters International.

## **Campaigns for District Office**

All candidates may distribute campaign materials at area and division speech contests. All candidates are allowed to display campaign materials in a candidates corner at these events, provided space is available for the candidates corner and all candidates have equal access to it. Campaign materials may not be placed on walls, chairs or tables outside of the candidates corner.

Campaign speeches are not permitted at any area speech contest, division speech contest or other district non-election meeting except the district conference.

At the discretion of the area or division governor responsible for the speech contest, candidates present at the contest may be introduced to the audience if all candidates present are introduced. All candidates for district office in contested races, including floor candidates, may be allowed to speak at the district conference at a time other than during the annual district meeting. These campaign speeches must be given at an appropriate time, place and length, as identified by the district governor, provided that all candidates are given an equal opportunity and are properly notified.

All candidates may distribute campaign materials at the district conference, and all candidates are allowed to display campaign materials in the candidates corner at a district conference. Campaign materials may not be placed on walls, chairs or tables, or handed out at educational sessions, meal functions or the district hospitality suite.

All candidates are allowed to give educational presentations at district conferences, provided the presentations conform to the needs of the district, and provided that all candidates for the same office are given an equal opportunity.

The only hospitality suite permitted at a district conference is the one provided and operated by the district, with no contribution from any candidate. The provision of a hospitality suite is, however, at the discretion of the district governor. Advertisements by or on behalf of candidates for district office are not permitted in district publications.