

	BOARD POLICY
Subject:	Guidelines for Preparing Motions for the Annual General Meeting
Date Approved by Board:	December 2024

The following guidelines are provided for members preparing motions for the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Providing guidance around content and process should assist members in preparing clear, concise and relevant motions for the AGM.

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1 Types of motions:

1.1.1 **Bylaws motions:** Motions from members that propose or require an amendment to the Doctors Nova Scotia (DNS) bylaws. These motions will be reviewed by the Governance Committee and the Board of Directors (the Board) prior to the AGM.

1.1.2 **Policy motions:** Motions from members that ask DNS to:

- Take a position on an issue;
- Create a new policy or amend an existing policy;
- Support something on behalf of its members; or
- Explore or initiate something on behalf of its members.

1.1.3 **Board Motions:** Motions that are brought to the AGM by the Board.

1.2 **Motion:** A matter which is proposed to be put forward at the AGM and discussed, then voted on.

1.3 **Resolution:** A motion that has been adopted at the AGM.

1.4 **Member Motions Committee:** Is responsible for supporting members who want to bring a motion to the AGM by:

- Reviewing motion proposals for the content and considerations outlined in Section 3 of these Guidelines.
- Sharing feedback and working with the member to ensure their intentions are clear and the motion is positioned to facilitate a constructive and respectful dialogue at the AGM.
- Educating the member on the motions process at the AGM.

The Member Motions Committee will be comprised of:

- The Board Chair,
- Two members of the Governance Committee (one board member and one non-board member),

- One member of the physician Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Reconciliation and Accessibility (EDIRA) Committee, and
- One member of the Policy & Health Issues Committee.

1.5 **Virtual attendance:** Participating in a meeting remotely without being physically present.

2. PROCESS

2.1 An invitation to submit motions for the AGM will be communicated to the membership by e-newsletter starting in January of each year and in the February and March issues of the magazine, *doctorsNS*. These guidelines and any additional information required will be available on the Doctors Nova Scotia website in January.

2.2 All motion proposals must be accompanied by a completed AGM Motion form.

2.3 Motions to amend (or those that would require an amendment) to the bylaws:

- Must be submitted at least 75 calendar days prior to the AGM. This allows additional time for review by the Governance Committee and the Board. The specific deadline date will be communicated to the membership in January.
- Will be reviewed by the Member Motions Committee, Governance Committee and the Board. The Member Motions will provide feedback to the mover and seconder.
- May be accompanied by a briefing note from the Governance Committee and/or Board when distributed to the membership to ensure the implications of the bylaws revisions are clear.

2.4 Policy motions:

- Must be submitted at least 60 calendar days prior to the AGM. The specific deadline date will be communicated to the membership in January.
- Will be reviewed by the Member Motions Committee, which will provide feedback to the mover and seconder.
- Will go to the Board prior to the AGM for information only.

2.5 All motions will be shared with the membership not less than 30 calendar days prior to the AGM.

3. CONTENT

3.1 A motion must be complete so that, upon passage, it becomes a clear and formal expression of the opinion or will of the assembly.

3.2 Bylaws motions should be worded as follows:

*BE IT RESOLVED that section ___ of the bylaws be revised as follows: or
BE IT RESOLVED that the bylaws be amended as follows:*

3.3 Motions that do not require changes to the bylaws should be worded as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Doctors Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting asks the Board of Directors to consider...

- 3.4 Motions can only use acronyms after the full name has been stated with the acronym in parenthesis.
- 3.5 Motion proposals must identify the mover and seconder and provide contact information for both. The mover and seconder must be in attendance at the AGM, either in person or virtually. If there are difficulties with the technology supporting virtual participation that prevent a mover from speaking to their motion, the motion will be lost. If the seconder is prevented from seconding the motion, and another seconder does not come forward, the motion will be lost. It is suggested that all movers and seconders of motions be present in-person if possible.
- 3.6 The motion should address a specific topic or issue, use concise direct language and present an identifiable action.
- 3.7 The motion proposal should include a rationale, explaining why the motion should be considered and any potential resources required from DNS to implement the motion.
- 3.8 When developing motions for the AGM, movers and seconders are asked to consider that the motion:
 - Aligns with the DNS strategic plan.
 - Speaks to issues that directly impacts the practice of medicine and would be seen as aligning with the association's purpose, expertise and capacity.
 - Is not asking DNS to continue to act upon or support a motion previously passed.
 - Is not reiterating or duplicating existing DNS policy.
- 3.9 The Member Motions Committee does not have the authority to deny a member motion if it does not meet the considerations outlined in Section 3 of these guidelines; however, every effort will be made to work with the mover and seconder to offer feedback and direction to ensure their intentions are clear and the motion is positioned to facilitate a constructive and respectful dialogue at the AGM.

4. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR MEMBER MOTIONS AT THE AGM

- 4.1 Robert's Rules of Order in its most current edition will be the guide for conducting DNS meetings.
- 4.2 Simplified rules for debating member motions at the AGM will be provided to all delegates. The goal is to prevent anyone from being disadvantaged if they aren't familiar with the rules of order and to support the Chair in maintaining decorum.
- 4.3 To ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to speak, there will be times when the Chair will have to enforce time limits for speakers. The rules of order around setting time limits will be communicated to all delegates.
- 4.4 To ensure fairness and privacy for everyone attending the AGM, both in-person and virtual attendees will have the opportunity to vote confidentially via a secure online voting platform that guarantees anonymity.

- 4.5 Delegates are not permitted to project photos or videos during debate.
- 4.6 Detailed procedural guidelines will be shared with the membership in advance of the AGM and will be communicated by the Chair to delegates at the meeting.
- 4.7 Any DNS member can contact staff with questions about procedural rules and guidelines.

5. FOLLOWING THE AGM

1. If a motion to change the bylaws is approved at the AGM, the change comes into effect immediately.
2. All other resolutions approved at the AGM will be reviewed by the Board in the year following the AGM. It is the responsibility of the Board to identify implications and determine the association's ability to carry out the resolution. The Board will take the following factors into consideration:
 - Alignment with the strategic plan and direction;
 - Financial resources required;
 - Staff resources required;
 - Best interests of the association;
 - Legal implications; and
 - Alignment with best practices in business and governance.

It is the Board's responsibility to determine the level of effort/resources (financial/human) needed to effectively act on each issue and to weigh this information against the fit within the DNS strategic plan, the knowledge and expertise available to the Association and budgetary implications.

3. If more information is required to make a decision, the Board can request that the mover of a resolution provide additional information.
4. Once the Board has considered a resolution, movers and seconders will be advised of the Board's decision. A report on outcomes of resolutions will be shared with the membership.

Questions can be directed to:

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