

CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

2024

Committee Purpose

It is the duty of this committee to:

1. Review the *Articles of Incorporation* and the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* in order to keep them consistent with Association programs.
2. Act as a consultant to this Association on the *Constitution* and *Bylaws*.
3. Process and adjudicate all matters pertaining to violations of the MDA Bylaws, *Principles of Ethics*, or the MDA Member Conduct Policy which have been referred to the committee using the process and procedures of the Bylaws and Governance Manual of the American Dental Association. An appeal of any decision may be made in accordance with the Bylaws of the MDA.
4. Review the ADA *Principles of Ethics*, including any updates, and recommend any needed action by the MDA House of Delegates.
5. Assist and facilitate an annual review of the “Digest of Adopted Resolutions” for change or revisions which may be obsolete, and forward those recommendations to the House of Delegates.

Mission Statement

The Constitution, Bylaws and Ethics Committee exists to maintain and provide oversight and review of the MDA's *Articles of Incorporation* and *Constitution* and *Bylaws*. In addition, this Association believes that dentists should possess not only knowledge, skill, and technical competence, but also those traits of character that foster adherence to ethical principles. As a result, the committee exists to assist members of the profession in making a commitment to high ethical standards of conduct, thereby ensuring that patients receive the benefit of a high level of ethical standard of conduct from the dental profession. The committee accomplishes its mission through the five activities listed above.

Member Responsibilities

Committee meetings

The Constitution, Bylaws, and Ethics Committee usually meets three or more times per year, each meeting generally lasting two hours. The committee reviews proposals to amend the *Bylaws* at the upcoming meeting of the House of Delegates. Other committee business will also be taken up at that time.

Our committee roster is populated by representatives from as many of our component societies as possible. We encourage each district to operate and maintain an ethics committee. These district committees would mediate ethic complaints on a local level and help promote ethical standards.

The speaker of the house is a permanent member of this committee, facilitating an annual review of the “Digest of Policies” and making recommendations to the House of Delegates about obsolete policies.

Members of the committee should be familiar with the MDA's *Constitution* and *Bylaws* and have interest in promoting the ethical practice of dentistry.

Relationships

The Constitution, Bylaws and Ethics Committee is the final authority at the state level on questions of ethical conduct that are officially brought forward to it. Questions of ethical conduct will normally be referred to it by a district ethics committee. The state committee's decisions may be appealed to the ADA Council on Ethics, Bylaws, and Judicial Affairs.

Regarding matters of the content and structure of the MDA *Constitution* and *Bylaws*, the committee acts in an advisory capacity to the Board of Trustees and to the House of Delegates. The committee's primary relationships are with the House of Delegates, to whom it makes recommendations on the *Constitution* and *Bylaws*; the state's district dental societies, from whom questions of ethics may be referred; and the ADA's Council on Ethics, to whom committee decisions may be appealed.

The public as a whole is a primary stakeholder in the activities of the committee, as it works to maintain high ethical standards of conduct in dentistry. MDA members benefit by the high reputation that dentistry maintains with the public.

Goals and Objectives

1. To promote the ethical practice of dentistry as a critical and relevant component of our profession.
2. To improve our ability to respond to the membership's ethical concerns and inspire interest in dental ethics through education and dialogue.
3. To encourage a committee composition that is representative of membership and promote active participation.
4. To maintain a current and relevant "Digest of Adopted Policies".
5. To continue to educate our members regarding the MDA's position on Top Dentist-type surveys and lists and the advertising thereof.
6. To assist component districts with ethical protocols and education.
7. To educate MDA members regarding the Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct, and the ADA's Member Conduct Policy.
8. To investigate and resolve any ethics and/or conduct complaints brought forward to this committee.