

Elections Communications Guidelines

Scope:

These guidelines apply to all board director and president-elect candidates and does not apply to the constituency leadership positions.

Principles:

The OMA is committed to ensuring an open, fair, and transparent election campaign process — a level playing field for all.

High voter turnout and member involvement are only possible if members are actively engaged throughout the election process. Candidates play an important role in promoting the elections and getting members to participate.

The OMA will support members in understanding what is and is not allowable; there is a distinction between promotion and campaigning.

Guidelines:

These guidelines have been provided to ensure all candidates understand expectations. As part of their application, all candidates acknowledge and agree to abide by these guidelines, as well as the Board Recruitment Policy. Contravention of the declared agreement may result in a notice of inappropriate conduct being communicated to the membership and/or a request to withdraw their candidacy.

The OMA will ensure all president-elect and board director candidates have a comprehensive application package available for members to review online, including statements, skills assessment, CVs and other approved resources.

From the close of nominations until the end of the voting period, the OMA will not disseminate to members, by any means, communications that support any candidate, such as candidate campaigns and candidate support communications.

All candidates are permitted to post pre-approved promotional messages – provided for in a candidate toolkit – through social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram), and engage members through their own networks. Items that are prohibited are also clearly outlined below.

The chart below provides additional details on the specific tools, methods, and tactics for campaigning and promotional activity, what is permissible and who is responsible.

Tactic/Activity	Type	Status
Comprehensive candidate profile online (oma.org)	Information	Coordinated by OMA
To increase exposure, all board directors and president-elect candidates will have the option to submit a 2-minute video to be posted on the OMA website. The candidate will be responsible to provide 2-minute video responses to questions provided by OMA. The video is required to be subtitled to adhere to the accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA). To ensure all candidates have access to this tactic, the OMA will aid members with the recording of a 2-minute video in addition to required transcription as requested by candidates.	Information/ promotion	Candidate led, optional OMA support
Townhalls will be held for both board directors and president-elect candidates for members to meet the candidates and to listen on their thoughts on different topics and set questions. Recordings will be posted online. Questions will be collected in advance enabling directors to prepare appropriately.	Information/ promotion	Participation is optional but encouraged. OMA coordinated.
Use pre-approved messages provided in the candidate toolkit across social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) and other channels like emails.	Promotion/ information	Permitted activity. Toolkit OMA coordinated.
LinkedIn page. OMA staff will host an information session for any candidate (constituency election, board, president-elect) on how to leverage the LinkedIn platform to highlight their skills and experience.	Information/ promotion	Permitted activity. LinkedIn profile is structured, and skills/experience focused.
Dedicated personal website for campaign purposes.	Campaigning	Not permitted.
Inclusion of their existing personal website in their oma.org profile.	Information/ promotion	Not permitted. Broad variability of websites and candidates' technical skills in establishing such sites creates unfairness and inequity to the process.

Tactic/Activity	Type	Status
Emails to personal contacts and existing networks.	Promotion	Permitted activity. Contacts and networks need to have the ability to opt out of receiving such emails. Excess emails could be perceived as spam or irritants by recipients and volume should be carefully considered.
Unsolicited emails	Campaigning/ promotion	Not permitted.
Communications that contain campaign promises, comparisons to other candidates or traditional ‘vote for me’ messaging.	Campaigning	Not permitted.
Paid advertising	Advertising	Not permitted.
Use of OMA resources to support individual candidates	Campaigning	Not permitted.
Formal endorsements from members for candidates (candidate initiated)	Campaigning	Not permitted.
Speaking at section, district, fora, MIG meetings	Campaigning/ promotion	Permitted activity. Encourage constituency groups to include all candidates.
OMA distributed communications that promote or highlights a single candidate e.g., through OMA New, or constituency communications.	Campaigning/ promotion	Not permitted.