

Who Can Vote?

WSSMA House of Delegates

The House of Delegates (HOD) is convened annually and is presided over by the WSSMA Speaker of the House. Delegates consist of representatives elected from county chapters around the state of Washington, as well as a contingent of members representing the members-at-large who are elected by the WSSMA Executive Committee. Every chapter is eligible for a minimum of three seats in the House of Delegates, based on 50 active and associate members or fraction thereof. One additional delegate is assigned for every additional 50 active or associate members or fraction thereof.

Delegates must be active or associate members who are considered to be in good standing. In order to be seated, delegates must have their dues postmarked by December 31st of the year preceding the HOD. Membership is verified by the AAMA.

In the House, delegates are seated as a group by chapter. They are the only ones with a vote. Alternate delegates and proxy votes are two other means chapters can utilize to preserve all of their eligible votes. Delegates can make motions, second motions, participate in discussion and nominate members from the floor for state office as well as vote. Bylaws changes can be made only by the House of Delegates.

Elected officers of WSSMA do not have the right to vote and may not serve as delegates representing their affiliated chapters. These members include the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Speaker of the House, Vice Speaker of the House and Immediate Past President. Remaining members of the Board of Trustees have the right to vote only if serving as elected delegates. The Parliamentarian does not have a vote.

Other WSSMA members and guests are allowed to observe the House. They are normally seated in the back of the room, sometimes called the gallery. They are not allowed to address the HOD without being recognized by the Speaker of the House, who in turn must receive permission from HOD to have them speak.

Sometimes the House of Delegates goes into caucus, usually for a set period of time. Delegates may not leave the room, but the caucus period allows them to consult with other WSSMA members in attendance.

The opportunity for input from all members (not just delegates) on budget and bylaws at the WSSMA Annual meeting is at the reference committee sessions. Reference committee chairs are appointed by the Speaker of the House, and may or may not, be the same as the actual chairs for the budget and bylaws committees. Guests may observe but should not actively participate in discussion.

The chance for all WSSMA members to give their input is provided on a chapter level by discussing the Delegates packets at their chapter meetings before the HOD. These packets are provided at the winter board meeting, and must be distributed to delegates at least 45 days prior to the HOD to allow all members the chance to voice their thoughts to the delegates who will represent them.