



Rules and Guidelines Governing HYLA Elections for the 2021–2022 Bar Year (June 1, 2021 – May 31, 2022)

These rules govern the election of the Board of Directors and Officers of the Houston Young Lawyers Association (“HYLA”) for the 2021–2022 bar year. Candidates may run for the following positions:

- nine (9) elected Directors;
- Treasurer;*
- Secretary;* and
- President-Elect.*

**To be eligible to run for Treasurer, Secretary, or President-Elect, a candidate must either (i) currently serve as a HYLA Director or as Secretary or Treasurer, or (ii) within the past two (2) years have served at least one full term in such office; provided, however, with the unanimous written consent of the Board of Directors, such requirements may be waived, but only on a candidate-by-candidate basis.*

ELECTION DATES AND DEADLINES

Optional Information Sessions—All sessions are on Zoom.

- Wednesday, February 24 at 12:00 p.m.
- Monday, March 1 at 6:00 p.m.

Election-Related Deadlines:

- Wednesday, March 17 at 6:00 p.m.—Petitions with 15 signatures & signed acknowledgment due
- Wednesday, March 17 at 11:59 p.m.—Candidate bios & photographs due
- Wednesday, April 7 at 10:00 a.m.—Electronic voting begins
- Thursday, April 29 at 5:00 p.m.—Electronic voting ends
- Saturday, June 26 at 10:00 a.m. — Mandatory board retreat

REQUIREMENTS TO SERVE

Attendance: All board members will be required to attend the following: (1) the HYLA board retreat on **June 26, 2021**, and (2) each of the monthly board meetings, subject to the absences allowed under the HYLA bylaws, which can be provided upon request. Of course, board members are also encouraged to attend as many HYLA events as possible.

Leadership: The 2021–2022 HYLA President will assign each of the Directors to serve in a specific role on the board, either as the chair of a HYLA committee or as the chair of one of the following board committees: (1) strategic planning, (2) financial planning, (3) membership, (4) marketing, (5) bar outreach, (6) HYLA history, (7) firm representatives, and (8) happy hours.

I. CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

Following the announcement of elections by the HYL A Secretary (via email or the HYL A newsletter), potential candidates may request a petition to run for an elected position and attend one of two optional information sessions:

- **Thursday, February 24 at 12:00 p.m.**
- **Monday, March 1 at 6:00 p.m.**

These information sessions will be held on Zoom.

To obtain a petition to run for an elected position, candidates must email HYL A President-Elect Alvin Adjei at aadjei@txbalaw.com, with their name and desired position.

Each potential candidate shall obtain **at least fifteen (15) signatures** of Regular Members¹ on their petition and return it to HYL A President-Elect Alvin Adjei at aadjei@txbalaw.com, and HYL A Executive Director Lucy Cain at lucy_cain@hyla.org no later than the HYL A Annual Meeting on March 17, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. **Each potential candidate must also sign and submit with their petition the acknowledgment attached to these rules and guidelines.**

Electronic signatures of Regular Members are permitted. Any question or discrepancy as to the authenticity of a candidate's petition or the signatures thereon shall be resolved by the HYL A Executive Committee, consisting of the President, President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary.

After receipt of a potential candidate's petition, the HYL A Executive Director will verify that the signatures obtained are current Regular Members. The HYL A President-Elect or Executive Director will then notify the candidate via email whether such signatures are valid. Upon receipt of written confirmation that the signatures are valid, the candidate may begin campaigning.

II. SUBMISSION OF CANDIDATE BIO AND PHOTOGRAPH

Candidates shall e-mail (1) a short biography—not to exceed 100 words (strict requirement); and (2) a color photograph in a high-resolution JPEG format to the HYL A Executive Director Lucy Cain at lucy_cain@hyla.org by **Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.** for election-related purposes. Incomplete submissions or failure to comply with these rules shall result in ineligibility to run.

III. VOTING

"Voting Period" shall mean the period beginning on *Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.* and ending on *Thursday, April 29, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.*

¹ For purposes herein, "Regular Members" shall include individuals who have registered for membership as "Regular" or "Government & Non-Profit" members during the 2020–2021 bar year.

Voting begins on Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 10:00 a.m., at which point the HYL A President-Elect will send an email to all current Regular Members. Each Regular Member is entitled to complete one (1) electronic ballot in the election. ***Interim Members, Law Student Members, Foreign Attorney Members, Vendor Members, and Sustaining Members are ineligible to vote.***

Each Regular Member shall cast one (1) vote for each of the following positions: President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

All candidates for Director shall be listed on the electronic ballot in randomized order. Each Regular Member may cast up to nine (9) votes for Director candidates. The nine (9) candidates for Director receiving the most votes shall serve on the Board of Directors during the 2020–2021 bar year.

Uncontested positions shall be listed on the electronic ballot. If every Officer position is uncontested, and only nine (9) candidates seek election to a Director position, no ballot shall be distributed, and those candidates shall be automatically elected to the positions for which he or she ran.

No write-in voting shall be permitted. However, space will be permitted for Regular Members to recommend individuals (or themselves) for a HYL A committee chair or appointed Director position.

During the Voting Period, the HYL A President-Elect or HYL A Secretary shall send at least one (1) reminder e-mail to the Regular Members to whom the original email was distributed on April 5, 2021.

The interim and final results of voting will only be accessible by the HYL A President, President-Elect, and Executive Director. The HYL A President, President-Elect, and Executive Director will not share such results, except as provided below, nor shall she share the information for accessing the results or the percentages, rankings, or other quantitative information about the election with anyone during or after the Voting Period.

IV. ELECTION RESULTS

Following the end of the Voting Period, the HYL A President, President-Elect, and Executive Director shall view the electronic tally of votes to determine the winners for each Officer and Director position.

Should any question or discrepancy as to the electronic tally arise, the HYL A President-Elect and Executive Director, in consultation with the HYL A President, shall have discretion as to how to resolve that question or discrepancy. In the event of a tie for any Officer or Director position, the HYL A President-Elect shall initiate a runoff election.

The HYL A President-Elect shall promptly provide the election results to the HYL A President. The HYL A President-Elect shall then promptly notify each individual candidate of the election results. Thereafter, the election results will be announced to the general HYL A membership.

V. CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES AND RULES

To the fullest extent possible, all campaigning, whether by spoken, written, or online solicitation, should concentrate on the merits of the candidate favored and should avoid criticism of any other

candidate. Each candidate and his or her supporters should make every effort to present the candidate's candidacy in a dignified manner. The HYL A President-Elect reserves the right to request that a candidate cease any conduct not in keeping with these guidelines. Failure to abide by such request may result in disqualification.

Candidates shall obtain **written approval** from the HYL A President-Elect Alvin Adjei at aadjei@txbalaw.com, *before* he or she uses the HYL A logo on any material or medium.

A. Campaign Material Rules

Candidates may request mailing labels of Regular Members by emailing HYL A President-Elect Alvin Adjei at aadjei@txbalaw.com, and Executive Director Lucy Cain at lucy_cain@hyla.org with the request for labels and the material(s) to be mailed. Upon approval by the President-Elect and the Executive Director's receipt of a \$35 payment, the labels will be delivered to the candidate.

Candidates may attend HYL A events and distribute candidacy materials related to their campaign. If materials are deemed inappropriate by the HYL A President-Elect, the HYL A President-Elect may request such material not be distributed at HYL A events.

Candidates may neither solicit nor publicize, directly or indirectly, any written endorsement (*e.g.*, "the current HYL A [position] has endorsed me for [position]") from any current HYL A Officer or Director, any other candidate, or the HYL A Executive Director in campaign materials.

Candidates shall not solicit, approve, publicize, or condone broad mailings by law firms, local bar associations, specialty bar associations, alumni organizations, bar association sections or committees, or other bar association-related groups, directly or indirectly seeking to endorse their candidacy.

All communication via email or any other electronic means are governed by the same restrictions regarding letters and mailings outlined herein. In addition, with respect to communications via email, a candidate shall only email other attorneys about their candidacy if the recipient is a Professional Acquaintance of the candidate or a Professional Acquaintance of a Professional Acquaintance (*i.e.*, a friend of a friend).²

B. Online Campaign Rules

Candidates may campaign on the Internet by use of a personal website or webpage (inclusive of social media outlets, including but not limited to Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter).

Any website, webpage, or social media page related to the election must contain the following disclaimer: "The views expressed in this [*website, webpage, social media page*] are not necessarily those of the Houston Young Lawyers Association." This rule does not apply to social media posts.

² As used herein, "Professional Acquaintance" shall mean an individual the soliciting attorney knows personally. Mere membership in the same professional, social, or alumni organization, specialty bar, section, or the like does not qualify an individual as a Professional Acquaintance.

The term “written endorsement,” as used above, will be interpreted narrowly and will not apply to, among other things, “likes” of campaign-related social media posts or sending invitations to events, invitations to like pages, etc., through social media.

A candidate is not permitted to post or comment about his or her candidacy, or the candidacy of any other candidate, on any of HYLA’s social media websites.

C. Telephone Campaign Rules

Telephone solicitation by persons other than a candidate or attorneys supporting the candidate, through the use of organized telephone solicitation methods, for example, is prohibited.

D. Campaign Event Rules

Candidates shall not organize any joint events co-hosted with other candidates.

VI. SANCTIONS AND APPEAL FOR VIOLATIONS OF RULES

Any violation of the rules contained herein may result in sanctions being imposed against the offender. The HYLA President-Elect, in consultation with the HYLA Executive Committee, may impose any appropriate sanction deemed necessary, including but not limited to:

1. removal of the candidate from the ballot;
2. limiting the candidate’s campaign in any appropriate manner; or
3. publicity of any violations or other public censure, including distribution with the official ballot any appropriate disclosure regarding a violation of these rules.

Any campaign complaints must be submitted by the complaining person in writing via email to the HYLA President-Elect Alvin Adjei at aadjei@txbalaw.com. The HYLA President-Elect shall promptly rule on the complaint and make a decision as to the appropriate remedy or sanction, if any.

Candidates are responsible for compliance with the HYLA election rules by persons assisting with their campaigns. Any and all acts of an individual assisting with a candidate’s campaign in violation of these rules will be considered the act of the candidate.

The HYLA President-Elect shall interpret and assure compliance with these rules. The HYLA President-Elect’s interpretation of these rules and decisions may be appealed to the HYLA Executive Committee. The decision of HYLA Executive Committee shall be final and non-appealable.

If the HYLA President-Elect determines that disqualification of a candidate is warranted, the HYLA President-Elect shall promptly request that the HYLA Executive Committee vote on the disqualification. Upon a vote of a majority of the HYLA Executive Committee (excluding any person whose conduct would be directly affected by such a vote), such candidate shall be disqualified.

* * *

Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and will abide by the Rules and Guidelines Governing HYL A Elections for the 2021–2022 Bar Year.

Printed Name

Signature