

Campaigning Policy – Permissible and Impermissible Activities when Running for Office

adopted by the ZI Board April 2005 (See the ZI Web site for the most up-do-date policy)

Zonta needs the most qualified leaders for office. Candidates for Zonta office need to demonstrate high ethical standards. Zonta wishes to ensure the most qualified candidate is elected and will ensure all candidates have the opportunity to inform the membership in a fair, equitable and appropriate way. The following campaigning policy outlines the behavior expected.

Campaigning is defined as encouraging voters to vote for or discouraging voters from voting for a specific candidate. A candidate is an individual who intends to run for club, district, or international office, whether or not the slate has been issued and whether or not the individual is on the slate.

Campaigning for or by any candidate is not allowed. However information about candidates is necessary for informed voting. Therefore:

- a. After the slate has been issued, a candidate on the slate may be introduced at functions as a candidate for the office for which she or he is nominated.
- b. At a convention or conference a candidate running for international or district office respectively may give a presentation promoting her candidacy if scheduled as part of a business session.
- c. The nominating committee may distribute materials prepared by the candidates about their background, qualifications and goals if elected.
- d. At conventions or conferences candidates on the slate may wear official identification indicating that they are candidates. After being nominated, candidates from the floor are also entitled to wear such identification.
- e. Zontians who are attending a district conference at which elections are held may confer with other members of their club to discuss the candidates, but they may not instruct delegates how to vote.
- f. Zontians who are attending an international convention may confer with other members from their district to discuss the candidates, but they may not instruct delegates how to vote.
- g. If asked, Zontians may orally provide information to other Zontians about candidates, but may not solicit votes for any candidates.

Examples of Permissible Activities

1. A candidate may attend a meeting of a club other than the candidate's own, or the conference of a district other than the candidate's own.
2. A candidate may give a speech or presentation, if invited, at a club meeting, area meeting, or district conference, whether the candidate is from the club, area, or district or not.

Examples of Activities that Are Not Permissible

1. Distributing any gift, trinket, buttons, or other promotional material on behalf of a candidate, at any time.

2. Advocating or discouraging the election of a candidate in club or district communications.
3. Making a speech about a candidate.
4. Encouraging or discouraging clubs from sending delegates or proxies to a conference or convention in order to improve the likelihood that a candidate will win or lose an election.

Enforcement of the Policy

1. Alleged violations of the Policy are to be reported in writing to a member of the board at the level of the office the candidate is seeking (i.e., club board for candidates for club office, district board for candidates for district office, international board for candidates for international office).
2. The board may consider alleged violations at a regular or special meeting or, if necessary, in a mail balloting. The candidate will be given an opportunity to respond to the allegations. If the candidate is a member of the board, she or he may be present at the consideration of the alleged violations if they are considered at a regular or special meeting, but may not participate in the deliberations or vote. If the board considers the alleged violations at a regular or special meeting it may, by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, (1) reprimand the candidate privately; or (2) reprimand the candidate at an official function, including the election meeting; or (3) remove the candidate from the slate. If the international board considers the alleged violations by mail ballot, the vote to impose discipline must be unanimous by the entire board, except that if the candidate who is alleged to have engaged in misconduct is a member of the board, she or he will not be entitled to vote on this matter.
3. If the alleged violation does not come to the board's attention until after the election, and if the candidate is elected the board shall follow the disciplinary procedures with respect to removal from office as set forth in the Zonta International Bylaws.
4. The Zonta International Rules of Procedure prohibit the use of membership lists to contact other Zontians for the purposes of lobbying for or against candidates who are running for office.