



2025 House of Delegates: Amendments to the Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association

May 7, 2025



Amendments to the Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association

This document contains amendments proposed for consideration by the 2025 House of Delegates when it convenes July 13-14, in Washington, DC. The Bylaws amendments listed below, which may be updated editorially as needed, and all other motions proposed by House delegations will be compiled and posted to the APTA House of Delegates Community on June 2.

Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association Related to APTA Board of Directors Tenure
Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association Related to Association Committees
Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article X. Amendments
Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section 8: Conduct of Business, C. Elections
Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association Amended to Greater Align with the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act.
Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association to Grant Physical Therapist Assistant Members the Right to Serve as a Director to the Association
Amend: Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association to Provide Voting Rights for Student Engagement Group Delegates

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

Proposed by: Board of Directors

AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION RELATED TO APTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS TENURE

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association be amended related to APTA Board of Directors tenure.

*This is a motion with two conforming amendments: Parts A–B. Triple asterisks (***) indicate language that is not being amended and therefore has not been included to make the document more concise.*

PART A

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article VI. Board of Directors, Section 5: Tenure, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

* * *

Section 5: Tenure

- A. The members of the Board shall be divided into four classes. Each of the first ~~three~~ four classes will include ~~one-third or approximately one-third of the~~ between two and three members who are neither officers nor the public member, plus one or two officers. The Secretary and the Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates shall belong to the first class, ~~which shall be elected in years that are multiples of three.~~ The Treasurer and the Speaker of the House of Delegates shall belong to the second class, ~~which and~~ and shall be elected the year after the first class. The President and the Vice President shall belong to the third class, ~~which and~~ and shall be elected the year after the second class. The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall belong to the fourth class, which shall consist of the and shall be elected the year after the third class. ~~The public member, who~~ shall be appointed by the Board.
- B. Members of the Board other than the public member shall assume office at the beginning of the calendar year following the ~~close of the annual session of the House at which~~ year when

1 they were elected. The public member shall assume office at a time determined by the
2 Board.

- 3 C. The term of office of each member of the Board, with the exception of the public member,
4 shall be ~~three~~ four years or until their successors assume office. The term of the public
5 member shall range from one to three years as determined by the Board.
- 6 D. No member shall serve more than ~~three complete consecutive~~ one complete terms on the
7 Board in the same office consecutively. ~~or No member shall serve more than two complete~~
8 ~~consecutive terms in the same any office on the Board, with the exception of the President~~
9 ~~who may serve no more than three consecutive terms on the Board.~~
- 10 E. A complete term for a member of the Board shall be defined as ~~three~~ four years, and for the
11 public member as determined by the Board. If a member vacates a current office to assume
12 another office on the Board, the time served in the vacated office shall count as a full term
13 for the purpose of term limits.
- 14 F. If a position on the Board becomes vacant, the vacancy shall be filled in the manner
15 prescribed in these bylaws or the standing rules.
- 16 G. The process to remove a Board member from office prior to the expiration of their term shall
17 be done in accordance with the state in which the Association is incorporated.

18
19 Proviso: New term lengths and limits will apply to Board members elected starting with the 2025
20 elections. Any individual elected in 2025 or later may serve no more than one complete term per
21 office and no more than two complete terms in any Board office. However, the President may serve
22 up to three consecutive terms. This applies regardless of any prior Board service before 2025. There
23 are a few exceptions:

- 24 1. Individuals elected to their first term of office before 2025 will be eligible for re-election in 2025,
25 2026, and 2027, under the new bylaws, to serve a new four-year term.
- 26 2. Individuals serving a second term of office before 2025 will not be eligible to serve a third
27 consecutive term in the same office.
- 28 3. The Speaker will be elected to a two-year term in the 2026 elections, which will not count as a
29 complete term. The Speaker will then be elected in 2028 for a full four-year term."

30 31 PART B

32
33 That **Standing Rules of the American Physical Therapy Association**, Standing Rule 6: Vacancies:
34 Officers and Directors, A and B, be amended by substitution.

35 36 6. VACANCIES: OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

- 37 A. If a vacancy occurs within the first year of a ~~three~~ four-year term, or the Board member-elect
38 cannot assume office, the vacancy may be filled by the Board until the next session of the House.
39 The Nominating Committee shall select a candidate(s) for election at the next annual session of
40 the House; the elected person shall serve for the remaining ~~two~~ three years of the term.

B. If a vacancy occurs after the first year of a ~~three~~ four-year term, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the Board.

Support Statement

Motion Concept:

This motion concept proposes amendments to the APTA Bylaws that would change terms and tenure for members serving on the Board of Directors.

What is this motion seeking to achieve?

- Greater ability for board members to focus on executing strategic initiatives without the pressure of being re-elected after three years. This can lead to a more stable and focused approach to long-term goals and the ability to see initiatives through to completion.
- Allow board members to gain deeper institutional knowledge and a strong understanding of the organization's operations, challenges, and opportunities within a single term.
- Greater opportunity for board members to grow into their leadership roles, as they will have time to understand the intricacies of governance, organizational culture, and the profession.
- Build consistent pacing of Board transition allowing for smoother transitions between boards and greater continuity in decision-making.
- A single term offers clear expectations for both the Board members and organizations. This will allow for better succession planning and leadership transitions.
- Bring more voices and perspectives to the Board by shifting from many Directors serving 6 years total to 4 years total.
- Improve the candidate experience and potentially make consenting to national office more appealing to a wider scope of members by removing the barrier of running against incumbent candidates.
- Reduce potential for conflict of interest of Board members serving while also in candidacy phase.

How does this motion contribute to achieving the APTA Vision?

- APTA's governing structure and processes are the building block on which all association initiatives are achieved. A change to the Board's terms and tenure contributes to achievement of the vision by offering more opportunities for APTA members to have a voice within their association through service in the House and in a national office position.

How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?

- If adopted, this amendment would increase member value and diversity by making Board service more appealing to a broader scope of members.

How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?

- This amendment proposes changes to service on APTA's Board of Directors, a national office that would impact members across the country.

1 **What previous or current initiatives and positions of the Association address this topic?**

- 2 • This amendment is proposed to enhance election integrity, impact, and inclusion and eliminate
3 barriers by optimizing term lengths and tenure for Board service.
4 • Board terms and tenure are addressed within the APTA Bylaws, Article VI. Board of Directors.
5 • The issue of Board terms and tenure has been deliberated in the House previously, most recently
6 via RC 1-15, which can be found on the [House Community within the 2015 House archives](#).
7

8 **What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?**

- 9 • Changing the term and tenure of the Board will impact current Board members and those
10 considering office by allowing greater flexibility for service.
11

12 **Additional background information.**

13 The proposed language helps individual Board members contribute effectively as well as optimizes
14 the turnover, sustainability, and succession planning for the Board.
15

16 This will allow board members to gain deeper institutional knowledge and a stronger understanding
17 of the organization's operations, challenges, and opportunities within a single term. This includes a
18 greater opportunity for board members to grow into their leadership roles, as they will have time to
19 understand the intricacies of governance, organizational culture, and the profession.
20

21 It provides greater ability for board members to focus on executing strategic initiatives without the
22 pressure of being re-elected after three years. This can lead to a more stable and focused approach
23 to long-term goals and the ability to see initiatives through to completion. Single term limits per
24 office facilitate a more consistent pacing of Board transition allowing for smoother transitions
25 between boards and greater continuity in decision-making and efficiency of outcomes.
26

27 A single term offers clear expectations for both the Board members and organizations. This will allow
28 for better succession planning and leadership transitions for both director and officer positions.
29 APTA Board completes an annual assessment of performance in which they benchmark themselves
30 alongside other associations. Succession planning has been identified consistently as an opportunity
31 area.
32

33 Finally, the proposed language will bring more voices and perspectives to the Board by shifting from
34 many Directors serving 6 years total to 4 years total. This may also make consenting to national
35 office more appealing to a wider scope of members by reducing the barrier or running against
36 incumbent candidates. It may improve the candidate experience by increasing the % successful
37 election as a non-incumbent candidate.
38

39 **Last Updated:** 05/06/2025

40 **Contact:** governancehouse@apta.org

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

Proposed by: Board of Directors

AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION RELATED TO ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association be amended related to APTA committees.

*This is a motion with five conforming amendments: Parts A–F. Triple asterisks (***) indicate language that is not being amended and therefore has not been included to make the document more concise.*

PART A

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, be amended by adding Section 9: Committees of the House of Delegates.

ARTICLE V. HOUSE OF DELEGATES

* * *

Section 9: Committees of the House of Delegates

A. Nominating Committee

- (1) The Nominating Committee, elected by the House, shall consist of five Physical Therapist members in good standing.
- (2) Members shall serve three-year terms, or until their successors are elected, and shall assume office at the beginning of the calendar year following the year when they were elected. The terms of two members shall expire each year, except that every third year the term of only one member shall expire. No member shall be elected to successive complete terms.
- (3) Members of the committee may not serve concurrently as delegates to the House or be slated for national office during their term.
- (4) The chair shall be elected by the committee annually.
- (5) Vacancies on this committee shall be filled by appointment by the Nominating Committee until the next Meeting of the House, when an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term.
- (6) This committee shall:
 - a. Foster activities that maintain and promote a pool of qualified nominees.

b. Prepare a slate of at least two qualified candidates, if possible, for each position from those consenting to serve if elected for officers, directors, and members of the Nominating Committee to meet the responsibilities of their positions. The slate of candidates shall be distributed to the members as soon as available, but no later than three months before the Annual Meeting of the House.

B. Reference Committee

(1) The Reference Committee shall assist the House in meeting its responsibilities as prescribed in the standing rules.

(2) This committee shall consist of at least three members, all of whom shall be Physical Therapist members appointed by the House Officers. The Speaker of the House of Delegates shall serve as an ex-officio member.

(3) Members shall serve three-year terms with at least one member being appointed each year.

(4) Members of the committee may not serve concurrently as delegates to the House.

C. Bylaws and House Documents Committee

(1) The Bylaws and House Documents Committee shall review and propose revisions to these bylaws, standing rules, and Association policies and positions for the profession adopted by the House as prescribed in the standing rules.

(2) This committee shall consist of at least three members, all of whom shall be Physical Therapist members appointed by the House Officers. The Secretary shall serve as an ex officio member.

(3) Members shall serve three-year terms with at least one member being appointed each year.

(4) Members of the committee may not serve concurrently as voting delegates to the House.

D. Special Committees

(1) The House may create such special committees to further the work of the House as it deems necessary, subject to the Board's fiduciary role.

(2) Members of the committee may not serve concurrently as voting delegates to the House.

PART B

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article VI. Board of Directors, Section 2: Composition, be amended by striking out B. Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

* * *

Section 2: Composition

* * *

~~B. Executive Committee~~

~~The Executive Committee shall exercise the power of the Board between meetings and shall meet at least twice a year. Three members shall constitute a quorum. The President may call a special meeting of the Executive Committee and must call a special meeting on request of three members of the Committee. Notice of all meetings shall be given to all members of the Executive~~

~~Committee not later than five days before the date fixed for the meeting. This notice may be by U.S. mail or by electronic communications as permitted by law.~~

PART C

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article VI. Board of Directors, Section 6: Conduct of Business, B. Executive Committee, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 6: Conduct of Business

B. ~~Executive Committee~~ Committees of the Board of Directors

1. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one of the 10 directors other than the public member. This fifth member shall be elected to the Executive Committee annually by members of the Board who are not members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall exercise the power of the Board between meetings and shall meet at least twice a year. Three members shall constitute a quorum. The President may call a special meeting of the Executive Committee and must call a special meeting on request of three members of the Committee. Notice of all meetings shall be given to all members of the Executive Committee not later than five days before the date fixed for the meeting. This notice may be by U.S. mail or by electronic communications as permitted by law.
2. Other Committees. The Board of Directors appoints other committees as necessary. Committees composed only of officers and/or directors may be delegated Board authority. All other committees appointed by the Board are advisory committees with their authority limited to making recommendations to the Board.

PART D

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section 5: Composition, C. Consultants, be amended by striking out the words "the chair or designee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee," after the words "Nominating Committee," so that it would read:

Section 5: Composition

C. Consultants

Consultants shall advise and offer information to the House but shall have no voting rights. Consultants shall be available to delegates throughout the year and may reply to inquiries in the House sessions as directed by the Speaker of the House. Consultants shall include the members

of the Reference Committee, the members of the Nominating Committee, ~~the chair or designee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee~~, the Chief Executive Officer, and Association staff designated by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Board.

PART E

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section 7: Nonvoting Delegates, A. Nonvoting Body, and C. Number of Voting Delegates, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE V. HOUSE OF DELEGATES

* * *

Section 7: Nonvoting Delegates

A. Nonvoting Body

Nonvoting delegates of the House shall be the Student Engagement Group delegates, institutional member group delegates, ~~Ethics and Judicial Committee delegates~~, Bylaws and House Documents Committee delegates, special committees of the House, and the members of the Board.

* * *

C. Number of Nonvoting Delegates

* * *

~~(3) Ethics and Judicial Committee delegate: Two delegates, who shall be selected by the committee.~~

PART F

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, be amended by striking out Article VII. Committees of the Association.

~~ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES OF THE ASSOCIATION~~

~~Section 1: Committees of the Board of Directors~~

~~In addition to other committees that may be created by the Board, the Board shall appoint the following:~~

~~A. Finance Committee~~

~~The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, who shall serve as chair, and at least five members, all of whom shall be Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant members. Members other than the Treasurer shall serve a term of three years. At least one member shall be appointed annually. This committee shall:~~

~~(1) Advise the Board on matters pertaining to the Association's financial needs, growth, and stability based on periodic review of income, expenditure, and investments.~~

~~(2) Present an annual budget to the Board for adoption.~~

1 ~~B. Audit Committee~~

2 ~~The Audit Committee shall consist of at least three members, all of whom shall be Physical~~
3 ~~Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant members. Members shall serve a term of three years. At~~
4 ~~least one member shall be appointed annually. This committee shall:~~

- 5 ~~(1) Be the point of contact and meet at least annually with the Treasurer and Association's~~
6 ~~independent auditors to discuss the annual audit.~~
7 ~~(2) Advise the Board of irregularities or material findings that arise from the independent audit~~
8 ~~or other sources.~~

9 ~~C. Ethics and Judicial Committee~~

10 ~~The Ethics and Judicial Committee shall consist of at least five members, all of whom shall be~~
11 ~~Physical Therapist members. Members shall serve a term of five years. At least one member shall~~
12 ~~be appointed annually. No member shall be appointed to successive complete terms. The~~
13 ~~committee shall collaborate with and be a resource to members and member groups, and to the~~
14 ~~Board regarding ethical and judicial matters, and to the House regarding ethical matters.~~

15 ~~(1) With respect to ethical matters the committee shall:~~

- 16 ~~a. Interpret the Binding Ethical Documents.~~
17 ~~b. Propose revisions of Binding Ethical Documents.~~
18 ~~c. Make revisions, as necessary, to the documents that interpret the Binding Ethical~~
19 ~~Documents and disseminate these documents for the management of judicial affairs.~~
20 ~~d. Review and comment on matters pertaining to ethics in existing and proposed~~
21 ~~Association policies and positions adopted by the House and Board and other initiatives~~
22 ~~or activities of the Association.~~
23 ~~e. Publish opinions and other materials that address current and emerging ethical situations.~~
24 ~~f. Promote activities for the dissemination of information and educational materials related~~
25 ~~to Binding Ethical Documents and interpretive documents.~~
26 ~~g. Collaborate with and be a resource to component ethics committees or liaisons.~~

27 ~~(2) With respect to judicial matters the committee shall:~~

- 28 ~~a. Consult with the Board on development of Association policy adopted by the Board~~
29 ~~related to disciplinary action as a result of ethical complaints.~~
30 ~~b. Process reported violations of relevant provisions of Binding Ethical Documents in~~
31 ~~accordance with Association policy adopted by the Board.~~
32 ~~c. Make final decisions in disciplinary proceedings against a member, subject to appeal to~~
33 ~~the Board by the member.~~
34 ~~d. Publish sanctions against members who are determined to have engaged in unethical~~
35 ~~conduct.~~

36 ~~D. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee~~

37 ~~The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee shall consist of at least five Association members.~~
38 ~~Members shall serve a term of three years. At least one member shall be appointed annually. This~~
39 ~~committee shall provide strategic advice, recommendations, and counsel to the Board regarding~~
40 ~~diversity, equity, and inclusion.~~

41 ~~Section 2: Committees of the House of Delegates~~

1 ~~A. Nominating Committee~~

- 2 ~~(1) The Nominating Committee, elected by the House, shall consist of five Physical Therapist~~
3 ~~members in good standing.~~
- 4 ~~(2) Members shall serve three-year terms starting at the beginning of the calendar year following~~
5 ~~the close of the annual session of the House at which they were elected, or until their~~
6 ~~successors are elected. The terms of two members shall expire each year, except that every~~
7 ~~third year the term of only one member shall expire. No member shall be elected to~~
8 ~~successive complete terms.~~
- 9 ~~(3) Members of the committee may not serve concurrently as delegates to the House or be~~
10 ~~slated for national office during their term.~~
- 11 ~~(4) The chair shall be elected by the committee annually.~~
- 12 ~~(5) Vacancies on this committee shall be filled by appointment by the Nominating Committee~~
13 ~~until the next session of the House, when an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term.~~
- 14 ~~(6) This committee shall:~~
- 15 ~~a. Foster activities that maintain and promote a pool of qualified nominees.~~
- 16 ~~b. Prepare a slate of at least two qualified candidates, if possible, for each position from~~
17 ~~those consenting to serve if elected for officers, directors, and members of the~~
18 ~~Nominating Committee to meet the responsibilities of their positions. The slate of~~
19 ~~candidates shall be distributed to the members as soon as available, but no later than~~
20 ~~three months before the annual session.~~

21 ~~B. Reference Committee~~

- 22 ~~(1) The Reference Committee shall assist the House in meeting its responsibilities as prescribed~~
23 ~~in the standing rules.~~
- 24 ~~(2) This committee shall consist of at least three members, all of whom shall be Physical~~
25 ~~Therapist members appointed by the House Officers. The Speaker of the House of Delegates~~
26 ~~shall serve as an ex-officio member.~~
- 27 ~~(3) Members shall serve three-year terms with at least one member being appointed each year.~~
- 28 ~~(4) Members of the committee may not serve concurrently as delegates to the House.~~

29 ~~C. Bylaws and House Documents Committee~~

- 30 ~~(1) The Bylaws and House Documents Committee shall review and propose revisions to these~~
31 ~~bylaws, standing rules, and Association policies and positions for the profession adopted by~~
32 ~~the House as prescribed in the standing rules.~~
- 33 ~~(2) This committee shall consist of at least three members, all of whom shall be Physical~~
34 ~~Therapist members appointed by the House Officers. The Secretary shall serve as an ex-officio~~
35 ~~member.~~
- 36 ~~(3) Members shall serve three-year terms with at least one member being appointed each year.~~

37 ~~D. Special Committees~~

- 38 ~~(1) The House may create such special committees to further the work of the House as it deems~~
39 ~~necessary, subject to the Board's fiduciary role.~~
- 40 ~~(2) Members of the committee, with the exception of the nonvoting delegate, may serve~~
41 ~~concurrently as voting delegates.~~

Support Statement

Motion Concept:

This motion concept amends the APTA Bylaws by shifting Board committee descriptions into operational policy: [APTA Board of Directors- Appointed Groups](#).

What is this motion seeking to achieve?

- Allow APTA greater flexibility to adjust committee structures and responsibilities, which is especially important to allow APTA Board to respond quickly to evolving needs or priorities.
- Streamline the bylaws for simplicity. Transparency would be maintained through updates to the [APTA Board of Directors- Appointed Groups](#) policy.
- Enhance governance structure towards best practices in nonprofit governance which emphasize the distinction between bylaws (which define core functions and governance) and operational policies (which define day-to-day procedures). This helps avoid potential inconsistency between what is outlined in the bylaws and what is needed for operational efficiency.
- Move committee details to operational documents provide clarity around governance roles, separating the high-level decision-making processes (governance) from the implementation details (operations), which can lead to more effective oversight and smoother operations.
- Align with modern governance practices and give the Board the tools to manage the organization more effectively and responsively.
- Move descriptions of Committees of the House of Delegates to the section of the bylaws which describes the House of Delegates, but the details remain in the bylaws, and align rules for service as a voting delegate of Bylaws and House Documents Committee members and Special Committee members with all other House committees.

How does this motion contribute to achieving the Vision?

APTA's governing structure and processes are the building block on which all association initiatives are achieved. These edits contribute to achievement of the Vision by allowing greater flexibility for the structure and function of Board appointed groups whose member volunteers achieve important work related to the physical therapy profession.

How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?

This motion supports member value by providing role clarity for APTA members considering volunteering to serve on a Board-appointed group.

How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?

If adopted, this amendment would align with modern governance practices giving the APTA national Board the tools to manage the organization more effectively and responsively.

1 **What previous or current initiatives and positions of the Association address this topic?**

2 This amendment is related to the Next Level Governance initiative which seeks to achieve clarity in
3 APTA governance for the future by simplifying descriptions and requirements of committees of the
4 Board and providing greater consistency in their governance and administration. Combined with a
5 transparent board policy that outlines roles, makeup, and administration of committees, this change
6 allows greater consistency of our committees while also allowing the organization to be nimbler in
7 its approach to support the work of the Board and House and evolve the organization's strategic
8 efforts.

9
10 **What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?**

11 This amendment would minimally affect current and future committee members.
12

13 **Additional background information.**

- 14 • This motion was sparked by ongoing conversations among the Board to determine what are the
15 committees needed to support and drive success of the next strategic plan launching in 2026
16 and the associations evolving needs with the fast pace of change in today's world.
- 17 • This language allows APTA the greatest flexibility to make adjustments to committee structures
18 and responsibilities. This is especially important to allow APTA Board to respond quickly to
19 evolving needs or priorities. Transparency would be maintained through updates to the [APTA](#)
20 [Board of Directors-Appointed Groups](#) policy which will be available to delegates for review
21 following the May 2025 Board of Directors Meeting.
- 22 • This motion also serves to streamline the bylaws for simplicity. It enhances governance structure
23 towards best practices in nonprofit governance which emphasize the distinction between bylaws
24 (which define core functions and governance) and operational policies (which define day-to day
25 procedures). This helps avoid potential inconsistency between what is outlined in the bylaws and
26 what is needed for operational efficiency. Moving committee details to operational documents
27 provide clarity around governance roles, separating the high-level decision-making processes
28 (governance) from the implementation details (operations), which can lead to more effective
29 oversight and smoother operations.
- 30 • This change would align with modern governance practices and give the Board the tools to
31 manage the organization more effectively and responsively.

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33 **Last Updated:** 05/06/2025

34 **Contact:** governancehouse@apta.org

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

1 Proposed by: Board of Directors

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3
4 **AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, ARTICLE X.**
5 **AMENDMENTS**
6

7
8 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article X. Amendments, first sentence,
9 be amended by substitution.

10
11 ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS

12 ~~Unless the year ends in 0 or 5, any bylaws amendment~~ Amendments to these bylaws must receive a
13 ~~two-thirds majority vote of the House~~ without debate to be considered. The bylaws may be
14 amended by the House by a two-thirds vote, provided that the amendments:

- 15 A. ~~Has Have~~ been submitted in accordance with the Reference Committee process by a date set
16 by the Speaker of the House of Delegates, which shall be at least ~~four months~~ 90 days before
17 the ~~first Annual mMeeting~~ of the House; and,
18 B. ~~Has Have~~ been distributed to members at least ~~two months~~ 60 days before the ~~first Annual~~
19 ~~mMeeting of the Annual Session~~ of the House. Distribution may be by U.S. mail, or any
20 electronic communication permitted by law.

21
22 **Support Statement**
23

24 **Motion Concept:**

25 This motion concept amends the bylaws by removing the requirement that bylaw amendments can
26 only be considered in years that end in 0 or 5 unless there is a 2/3 vote in the affirmative to hear
27 them.

28
29 **What is this motion seeking to achieve?**

30 Greater flexibility to allow bylaws amendments to be forwarded to the House in any year provided
31 they have met the requirements for main motions outlined in the standing rules, have a majority
32 vote to be heard, and a 2/3 vote to be adopted.
33
34

1 **How does this motion contribute to achieving the Vision?**

2 APTA's governing structure and processes are the building block on which all association initiatives
3 are achieved. Although these edits may not directly contribute to achievement of the Vision, they are
4 necessary to provide the nimbleness needed to achieve next level governance that provides the
5 foundation to achieve important work related to the physical therapy profession.

6
7 **How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?**

8 This motion supports member value by ensuring APTA is positioned through its structure and
9 processes to deliver opportunities to belong, engage, and contribute.

10
11 **How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?**

12 This motion is national in scope as it addresses members' ability to bring forward amendments to
13 the governing document that shapes the structure of their association.

14
15 **What previous or current initiatives and positions of the Association address this topic?**

16 This article was last revised during the Bylaws revision of 2021 when the date set by the Speaker was
17 amended to four months before the first meeting of the House.

18
19 **What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?**

20 Delegates and members wishing to bring bylaws amendments to the House of Delegates would be
21 impacted.

22
23 **Additional background information.**

24 This motion also serves to modernize the APTA Bylaws and position the Association for success in
25 being nimble and adaptive to the changing landscapes of Associations as we progress in our second
26 century. The proposed language balances prioritizing long term concepts for the profession and
27 generative discussions with greater flexibility to update the bylaws to maintain consistency with
28 modern governance practices allowing the organization to be more responsive to internal member
29 and external professional landscape.

30
31
32 **Last Updated:** 05/05/2025

33 **Contact:** governancehouse@apta.org

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

1 Proposed by: Board of Directors

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3
4 **AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION, ARTICLE V. HOUSE OF**
5 **DELEGATES, SECTION 8: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS, C. ELECTIONS**
6

7 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section
8 8: Conduct of Business, C. Elections be amended by substitution.

9 * * *

10 C. Elections

- 11 (1) Election of officers, directors, and members of the Nominating Committee shall be by ballot
12 or use of electronic equipment. Officers shall be elected by a majority of the votes cast when
13 a quorum is present or participating. Directors and members of the Nominating Committee
14 shall be elected by a plurality of the votes cast when a quorum is present or participating,
15 with the exception of the public member appointed by the Board. If the vote fails to
16 determine election, rebaloting shall be conducted under procedures determined by the
17 House Officers Board of Directors.
- 18 (2) Except for appointed positions, on a group petition of at least five eligible petitioners, a
19 qualified consenting member shall be placed in nomination for a position as an officer or as a
20 member of the Board or Nominating Committee. Eligible group petitioners include
21 components and the PTA Engagement Group delegation. Such petition must be filed with the
22 House Officers Elections Committee no later than 45-20 days after the slate of candidates
23 prepared by the Nominating Committee has been distributed to members. A candidate
24 nominated by group petition shall be afforded similar opportunities for publication of
25 candidacy to the membership as those afforded a candidate nominated by the Nominating
26 Committee but shall be identified as nominated by petition.
- 27 (3) ~~Nominations from the floor shall be in order when nominations are presented to the House~~
28 On petition by an individual member in good standing, a qualified consenting member shall
29 be placed in nomination for a position as an officer or as a member of the Board or
30 Nominating Committee. Individual petitions shall be conducted under procedures as
31 determined by the Board of Directors.
32
33

Support Statement

Motion Concept:

This motion concept proposes amendments to the APTA Bylaws that would provide flexibility to permit the House of Delegates to conduct asynchronous elections for National Nominating Committee and Board of Directors positions.

What is this motion seeking to achieve?

- Improve access for Delegates who may be unavailable on a single election day (due to work, travel, or other commitments) by allowing individuals to vote when it is convenient for them within a set period.
- Eliminate the challenge of coordinating across time zones, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to vote.
- Lower operational costs by reducing the need for physical-venues, volunteers, and other resources typically needed for a one-day in person or virtual synchronous election.
- Reduce time commitment required of delegates for virtual synchronous voting.
- Align with trends as digital engagement becomes more commonplace in various aspects of life, including many of our components operating asynchronous electronic elections.
- Allow for a mechanism for individuals to be nominated in a process that would take the place of the historic provision for "nominations from the floor".

How does this motion contribute to achieving the Vision?

APTA's governing structure and processes are the building blocks on which all association initiatives are achieved. A change to the elections process contributes to achievement of the vision by offering more opportunities for APTA members to have a voice within their association through service in the House and on our national Board.

How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?

If adopted, this amendment would increase member value opportunity within the House by making the elections process more accessible to delegates who might not otherwise be able to participate.

How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?

This amendment proposes changes to APTA's national election process, which will impact delegates from across the country.

What previous or current initiatives and positions of the Association address this topic?

- This topic is addressed in the next level governance initiative that seeks to address election integrity, impact, and inclusion by supporting flexibility in our bylaws that would open a pathway for asynchronous national elections.
- Elections are addressed within the APTA Bylaws, Article V. House of Delegates, and related rules within APTA Standing Rules.

- A version of this concept was forwarded to the 2024 House for consideration and was not adopted. The language proposed this year is clearer and provides a new procedure comparable to the current processes allowing for nominations from the floor.

What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?

If adopted, delegates will be impacted by this motion by allowing them to vote at their convenience eliminating the need for an additional House meeting.

Additional background information.

This motion will improve access for Delegates who may be unavailable on a single election day (due to work, travel, or other commitments) by allowing individuals to vote when it is convenient for them within a set period. Furthermore, it eliminates the challenge of coordinating across time zones, ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to vote. If passed, the motion would reduce time commitment required of delegates for virtual synchronous voting sessions. This concept aligns with trends as digital engagement becomes more commonplace in various aspects of life, including many of our components operating asynchronous electronic elections. Finally, this will lower operational costs by reducing the need for physical-venues, volunteers, and other resources typically needed for a one-day election.

A version of this concept was brought forward by the 2024 Board of Directors. The language presented in 2025 clarifies that a process will be maintained for individual nominations as currently exists with "nominations by the floor." The proposed language maintains the same threshold that an individual member, without a second, can submit a candidate. That candidate would be included in the electronic ballot distributed to the delegates for election.

The language also includes a change in the timeframe to submit nomination by group petition from 45 days to 20 days. While this does accelerate the timeline in which a group of petitioners submits a name for nomination by group petition, it serves to position the candidate for success and improve the ability of APTA staff to operationalize the multiple phases of the election process. The candidate by group petition will be afforded more equitable consideration by the delegates by posting their candidate materials in a similar timeframe as candidates slated by the Nominating Committee. Furthermore, it provides the voting delegates with a larger window of time to review the candidate materials of candidates slated by the Nominating Committee and by group petition by allowing the petitioned candidates earlier distribution of their materials. It also allows staff operational time for the window of time for petitions from individual members.

Last Updated: 05/06/2025

Contact: governancehouse@apta.org

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

1 Proposed by: Board of Directors

2
3
4 **AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION AMENDED TO GREATER**
5 **ALIGN WITH THE ILLINOIS GENERAL NOT FOR PROFIT CORPORATION ACT**
6

7
8 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association be amended to greater align with the
9 Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act.

10
11 *This is a motion with six conforming amendments: Parts A–F. Triple asterisks (* * *) indicate language*
12 *that is not being amended and therefore has not been included to make the document more concise.*
13

14 **PART A**

15
16 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article I. Name, be amended by
17 substitution.
18

19 **ARTICLE I. NAME AND LOCATION**
20

21 The name of ~~this association shall be~~ the Corporation is the American Physical Therapy Association®
22 ("Association" or "APTA®"), a nonprofit corporation incorporated in the state of Illinois. The principal
23 office of the Association is located in Alexandria, VA.
24

25 **PART B**

26
27 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article II. Object, be amended by
28 substitution.
29

30 **ARTICLE II. ~~OBJECT~~ PURPOSES AND RESTRICTIONS**
31

32 A. Purposes. ~~The object of this purposes of the Association shall be include these:~~ to represent and
33 promote the profession of physical therapy; to meet the needs and interests of its members in
34 order to address the physical therapy needs of members of society; and to develop and advance
35 the art and science of physical therapy, including practice, education, and research.

B. Restrictions. All policies and activities of the Association shall be consistent with applicable federal, state, local, or international antitrust, competition, trade regulation and applicable tax exempt requirements; including the requirements that the Association not be organized for profit and that no part of its net earnings inure to the benefit of any private individual.

PART C

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article III. Members, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE III. INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Section 1: Categories and Qualifications of Individual Members

* * *

Section 2: Rights of Individual Members

A. All individual members shall have the right to attend the House. Any individual member of a member group may attend the group's business meetings and speak.

B. All individual members shall receive the official journal of the Association.

* * *

Section 4: Chapter Assignment

All individual members, other than those employed by the Association or who reside for at least one year where no chapter exists, shall be assigned to a chapter having territorial jurisdiction of the area where the member practices, resides, or attends school, or to an immediately adjacent chapter in which the member demonstrates the possibility of more active participation. Members who reside outside the United States, are active uniformed services personnel, or are spouses or partners of active uniformed services personnel may choose a chapter.

Section 5: Dues

The Board shall establish dues and may create different dues categories for individual members.

Section 6: Good Standing

An individual member is in "good standing" if the member:

A. ~~Complies with the Binding Ethical Documents of the Association~~ the Code of Ethics ~~applicable to the individual's membership category;~~

B. Makes timely payments of Association and chapter dues; and.

C. Is not under current suspension or revocation of a license as a physical therapist or of a license or certificate as a physical therapist assistant.

Section 7: Disciplinary Action

Any individual member who is not in good standing may be expelled from membership or otherwise disciplined. Complaints that a member has violated relevant provisions of the ~~Binding Ethical Documents~~ Code of Ethics shall be processed in accordance with Association policy adopted by the Board.

Section 8: Reinstatement

A. The Board may reinstate any former individual member in accordance with Association policy adopted by the Board.

* * *

PART D

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article IV. Member Groups, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBER GROUPS

Section 1: Components

* * *

C. Structure

- (1) Components shall have bylaws that do not conflict with these bylaws ~~and must be approved as determined~~ by the Board at its sole discretion.
- (2) Components shall be incorporated and have corporate articles that ~~must be~~ are approved by the Board at its sole discretion.
- (3) Component policies and positions shall not conflict with Association Policies, and Positions, ~~and Binding Ethical Documents and the Code of Ethics~~.

* * *

D. Obligations

Each component shall:

- (1) Further the ~~object purposes~~ of the Association as set forth in these bylaws and in Association Policies, Positions, and ~~Binding Ethical Documents~~ the Code of Ethics in the component's state or territorial jurisdiction or specific area of physical therapy.

* * *

- (8) Be represented in each ~~session~~ meeting of the House unless a waiver is approved by the Board.

* * *

E. Trusteeship

The Board in its discretion may conduct the affairs and assume custody of the records, funds, and management of any component that the Board determines has failed to comply with its obligations to members or to the Association. Such action shall be subject to ratification by the House at its next ~~session~~ meeting.

F. Dissolution

- (1) A component may dissolve pursuant to the provisions of its bylaws or corporate articles.
- (2) If the Board determines that a component that has failed to satisfy its obligations or to observe the limitations on components as set forth in these bylaws, the Board shall bring a motion to the next ~~session~~ meeting of the House to dissolve the component.

* * *

Section 2: Institutional Groups

* * *

E. Trusteeship

The Board in its discretion may conduct the affairs and assume custody of the records, funds, and management of an institutional group that the Board determines has failed to comply with its obligations. Such action shall be subject to ratification by the House at its next ~~session~~ meeting.

F. Dissolution

- (1) An institutional group may dissolve pursuant to the provisions of its bylaws or corporate articles.
- (2) If the Board determines that an institutional group has failed to satisfy its obligations or to observe the limitations on institutional groups as set forth in these bylaws, the Board shall bring a motion to the next ~~session~~ meeting of the House to dissolve the institutional group.

* * *

Section 4: Limitations

All member groups are subject to the following limitations:

A. Association Policies, Positions, and ~~Binding Ethical Documents~~ and the Code of Ethics.

* * *

PART E

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE V. HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Section 1: Authority

In its role as the representative body of the membership, the House shall:

- A. Speak and act on behalf of the membership for the profession.
- B. Establish Association Policies and Positions for the profession.
- C. Adopt ~~Binding Ethical Documents~~ the Code of Ethics to govern the conduct of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants.
- D. Recommend or instruct the Board to act, subject to these bylaws and the Board's fiduciary responsibility to manage the affairs of the Association.

* * *

Section 2: Annual ~~Session~~ Meeting

The ~~annual session of the Association shall consist of one or more meetings of the House~~ have an Annual Meeting of the House which shall be held at a time and place specified by the Board.

Section 3: ~~Special Sessions~~ Meetings

In addition to the Annual Meeting of the House, Special ~~sessions~~ meetings of the House may be called between annual sessions by a two-thirds vote of the Board and shall be called in response to a

written request from components representing a majority of the delegate votes in from the ~~previous~~
~~session~~ most recent aAnnual mMeeting of the House.

Section 4: Notice of ~~Sessions~~ Meetings

A. Annual ~~Session~~ Meeting

The time and place of the ~~aAnnual session~~ Meeting of the House shall be announced at least ~~six~~
~~weeks-60 days~~ before the ~~session~~ meeting is to convene. This notice may be made by U.S. mail or
any electronic communications permitted by law.

B. Special ~~Sessions~~ Meetings

(1) At least 30 days before a ~~sSpecial session~~ Meeting, official notice of the ~~session~~ meeting shall
be sent to members of the Association. This notice may be made by U.S. mail, or any
electronic communications permitted by law.

(2) The time, place, and purpose of any ~~sSpecial session~~ Meeting of the House shall be stated in
the notice.

Section 5: Composition

* * *

C. Consultants

Consultants shall advise and offer information to the House but shall have no voting rights.
Consultants shall be available to delegates throughout the year and may reply to inquiries in the
House ~~sessions~~ meetings as directed by the Speaker of the House. Consultants shall include the
members of the Reference Committee, the members of the Nominating Committee, the chair or
designee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, the Chief Executive Officer, and
Association staff designated by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Board.

* * *

PART F

**That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article VI. Board of Directors, be
amended by substitution.**

ARTICLE VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1: Authority

* * *

C. The Board carries out all Association Policies, Positions, ~~and Binding Ethical Documents and the~~
Code of Ethics, and motions adopted by the House that recommend ~~or instruct~~ the Board to act.
When the House recommends ~~or instructs~~ the Board to act, the Board shall communicate its
progress to the House at least annually. If the Board determines that any specific action is
inadvisable, the Board shall report the reasons for its determination to the House.

D. The Board establishes Association Policies and Positions, including Policies and Positions for the
profession, when necessary. Any Association policy or position for the profession adopted by the
Board shall be brought to the House at the next ~~aAnnual Session~~ Meeting for consideration.

E. The Board in its role to foster the growth and development of the Association shall, among other things:

* * *

(7) Adopt Association policy, in consultation with the Ethics and Judicial Committee, for processing charges that a member has violated relevant provisions of the ~~Binding Ethical Documents~~ Code of Ethics.

* * *

Section 2: Composition

A. Board of Directors

The six officers of the Association together with 10 directors, one of whom shall be the public member, shall constitute the Board.

B. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one of the 10 directors other than the public member. This fifth member shall be elected to the Executive Committee annually by members of the Board who are not members of the Executive Committee.

B. Indemnification

Directors and officers of the Association are indemnified against claims or lawsuits to the full extent permitted under the law.

* * *

Support Statement

Motion Concept:

These proposed amendments are intended to clarify and remove contradictions in existing APTA bylaw language and greater align the Bylaws with the APTA Articles of Incorporation and the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act. This language has been drafted and reviewed by internal and external APTA counsel.

What is this motion seeking to achieve?

Alignment with the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act.

How does this motion contribute to achieving the Vision?

APTA's governing structure and processes are the building block on which all association initiatives are achieved and although these edits may not directly contribute to achievement of the Vision, they are necessary to align with the Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act and provide clarification to our governing documents.

How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?

These changes support the APTA Strategic Plan by providing clarity of our governing structure and processes that allow the association to achieve its goals and objectives.

1 **How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?**

2 Alignment with the Not for Profit Corporation Act of the state in which APTA is incorporated creates
3 clarity for the national association.

5 **What previous or current initiatives and positions of the Association address this topic?**

6 APTA Bylaws were amended by revision in 2021 with more detailed information available on the
7 House Community [via the 2021 House archives](#).

9 **What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?**

10 The impact of these changes will be minimal to members and serve only to align APTA with the
11 Illinois Statute.

13 **Additional background information.**

14 The proposed Bylaws changes are brought forward to the House based on legal review to bring the
15 APTA Bylaws in proper alignment with Illinois General Not for Profit Corporation Act in which APTA,
16 which was incorporated in Illinois, must comply with law.

19 **Last Updated:** 05/06/2025

20 **Contact:** governancehouse@apta.org

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

Proposed by: Oregon Chapter and the PTA Council

AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION TO GRANT PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT MEMBERS THE RIGHT TO SERVE AS A DIRECTOR TO THE ASSOCIATION

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association be amended to grant Physical Therapist Assistant members the right to serve as a director to the Association.

This is a motion with two conforming amendments: Parts A and B. Triple asterisks (* *) indicate language that is not being amended and therefore has not been included to make the document more concise.*

PART A

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article III. Members, Section 2. Rights of Members, be amended by inserting the words "serve as a director of the Association as permitted in these bylaws;" after the words, "...except as defined in these bylaws;" so that it would read:

ARTICLE III. MEMBERS

* * *

Section 2: Rights of Members

* * *

C. Except as provided in these bylaws, the following membership categories have the following rights:

* * *

- (2) Physical Therapist Assistant: subject to component bylaws, to make motions and vote at component meetings; serve on a component's board of directors except as defined in these bylaws; serve as a director of the Association as permitted in these bylaws; serve as a delegate from the Physical Therapist Assistant Engagement Group to the House; serve as a component delegate to the House; serve on the Nominating Committee of a component; and serve on committees as permitted in these bylaws.

PART B

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article VI. Board of Directors, Section 2: Composition, Section 3: Qualifications, and Section 5: Tenure, be amended by substitution.

ARTICLE VI: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

* * *

Section 2: Composition

A. Board of Directors

The six officers of the Association together with 10 directors, one of whom shall be a Physical Therapist Assistant and one of whom shall be the public member, shall constitute the Board

B. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one of the 10 directors, other than a Physical Therapist Assistant or the public member. This fifth member shall be elected to the Executive Committee annually by members of the Board who are not members of the Executive Committee.

Section 3: Qualifications

A. Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant members in good standing are eligible to serve. Only Physical Therapist members may serve as Officers of the Association.

* * *

Section 5: Tenure

A. The members of the Board shall be divided into four classes. Each of the first three classes will include one-third or approximately one-third of the members who are neither officers nor the public member, plus two officers. The Secretary and the Vice Speaker of the House of Delegates shall belong to the first class, which shall be elected in years that are multiples of three. The Treasurer, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, and one director who is a Physical Therapist Assistant shall belong to the second class, which shall be elected the year after the first class. The President and the Vice President shall belong to the third class, which shall be elected the year after the second class. The fourth class shall consist of the public member, who shall be appointed by the Board.

Support Statement

Motion Concept:

The concept of this bylaw amendment is to seat one PTA on the APTA Board of Directors.

What is this motion seeking to achieve?

The expected outcome of this motion is that one physical therapist assistant (PTA) will be elected to serve as a director on the APTA Board of Directors (Board). This PTA will fill one of the current 10 director positions of the Board. No PTA will be permitted to serve on the executive committee or as Speaker of the House or Vice Speaker of the House.

1 **How does this motion contribute to achieving the APTA Vision?**

2 The Vision calls on us to transform society by optimizing movement. To do our best work toward
3 achieving the Vision, we must work together across the profession and include all voices. This bylaw
4 amendment would ensure PTA engagement at the highest level of our association's governance, and
5 support a Board that can work at its highest efficiency. Including the PTA perspective on the Board
6 will ensure that the work will move forward without time needed to seek that perspective in other
7 ways, therefore, allowing the Board to be more nimble in its processes.

8
9 **How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?**

10 The motion supports the priority of Member Value within the APTA Strategic Plan 2022-2025. By
11 expanding opportunities to "belong, engage, and contribute"¹, it promotes additional and sustained
12 membership, and provides expanded representation and leadership opportunities for PTA members.
13 Including a PTA on the Board demonstrates the value of PTAs within the association, leading to
14 greater engagement of PTAs across the association, chapters, academies, sections, and education.

15
16 **How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?**

17 This bylaw amendment supports both the Mission and the Vision for the Physical Therapy profession
18 by including a PTA at the national level of APTA governance. The APTA Mission specifically calls on
19 us to build community to advance the profession. This bylaw amendment aims to increase
20 engagement of PTAs at a national level by creating the opportunity to serve on the APTA Board of
21 Directors. By seating a PTA the Board is able to hear and consider a perspective that has been
22 historically missing.

23
24 **What previous or current initiatives and positions of the Association address this topic?**

25 The APTA has seen multiple changes fostering more inclusion of PTAs. The following work of the
26 House of Delegates shows the efforts of the last ten years.

27
28 2014: House charged the BOD to create a plan for increasing the value of APTA membership for the
29 PTA (RC 11-14), then present the plan to the 2015 House of Delegates. The plan was to include at
30 least the following:

- 31 • Designated positions on the APTA Board of Directors for PTA members
32 • Eligibility of PTA members to serve on the APTA Board of Directors
33

34 2015: As a result of RC 11-14, the Board presented three motions to the House to increase PTA
35 member value. They included one motion giving components the option to give a full vote to PTAs
36 (RC 3-15), one motion giving chapters the option to allow a PTA to serve as chapter delegate (RC 4-
37 15), and one motion giving PTAs the opportunity to serve on APTA Board (RC 7-15). Of these three
38 motions the only one to pass was RC 3-15, option for components to give PTAs a full vote at the
39 component level.
40

2021: House adopted bylaw changes to allow the PTA Engagement Group to have 2 voting delegates (RC 1-21).

2023: House adopted bylaw changes give components the option of seating a PTA to serve as a component delegate (RC 25-23)

These recent changes to the APTA bylaws demonstrate the evolution of the PTA and of APTA. Of the three motions presented by the Board in 2015, the only concept that has yet to be passed is a PTA serving on the APTA Board of Directors. This motion will be the next step in this evolution.

What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?

Parties impacted by this motion will be all members, chapters, and sections/academies of the association by increasing national leadership opportunities for PTA members. Chapters, sections, and academies will be part of the larger process of promoting leaders to the national level, identifying PTAs within their membership who have shown specific leadership skills that will be beneficial to the APTA Board.

Additional background information.

Physical Therapist Assistants serve in many leadership positions across all components. These positions include, but are not limited to, committee chair, SIG chair, nominating committee and chair, and Board of Director positions such as director, secretary, treasurer, including positions on the executive committee.

The current data of PTAs in leadership positions shows 26 components allow PTAs to serve on the nominating committee/chair, 41 components allow a PTA to serve on the Board of Directors, 26 of which have PTA designated positions, with 34 of those components allowing a PTA to serve on the executive committee, as APTA bylaws allow a PTA to serve any Board position that does not succeed to president. (Article IV, Sec 4.B)

As a member of their component Board, PTAs work with their Board peers to foster growth and development of the component. This includes 1) directing all business and financial affairs for the component, 2) ensure the maintenance of records for the component, 3) provide an annual report of the financial status of the component to the members, 4) appoint and employ an executive manager, 5) fill vacancies on the Board and committees, 6) be responsible for the creation, appointment, purposes, and activities of such committees and other work groups, 7) adopt component policy, 8) enter into relationships on behalf of the component with related organizations. These are the same responsibilities of all APTA Board members.

Additionally, 30 states allow a PTA to serve on their licensing Board, currently including seven as chair/vice chair, and PTAs are allowed to serve on the CAPTE board. PTAs also serve in other areas of leadership as owners and managers of physical therapy services, including employing and

overseeing PTs. This work requires them to manage staffing, personnel, productivity, budgets, and business growth, all of which are skills beneficial to any prospective member of the Board of Directors.

There is precedent for assistant members serving on the Board of Directors of a professional association. The bylaws of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)² include one designated position for an Occupational Therapist Assistant (OTA) on their Board of Directors, and beyond ensuring one member be an Occupational Therapist, do not otherwise limit the number of positions an OTA can hold. Currently, two OTAs serve on the AOTA Board of Directors.³

References:

1. American Physical Therapy Association. (2022, January 1). APTA Strategic Plan. Retrieved March 9, 2025, from <https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/leadership-and-governance/vision-mission-and-strategic-plan/strategic-plan>
2. American Occupational Therapy Association. (2024). The Official Bylaws of The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. Retrieved October 24, 2024, from <https://www.aota.org/about/leadership-governance/-/media/c4535d11b67944c3bfa55eae42541314.ashx>
3. American Occupational Therapy Association. (2025). Meet AOTA's Board of Directors. Retrieved March 9, 2025, from <https://www.aota.org/about/leadership-governance/board-of-directors>

Last Updated: 05/05/2025

Contact: governancehouse@apta.org

Motion to 2025 House of Delegates



Bylaws Amendment

Proposed by: APTA Oregon and the Student Council

AMEND: BYLAWS OF THE AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION TO PROVIDE VOTING RIGHTS FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT GROUP DELEGATES

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, be amended to provide voting rights for Student Engagement Group delegates.

*This is a motion with six conforming amendments: Parts A–F. Triple asterisks (***) indicate language that is not being amended and therefore has not been included to make the document more concise.*

PART A

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section 6. Voting Delegates, be amended by substitution, so that it would read:

Section 6: Voting Delegates

B. Qualifications of Voting Delegates

- (1) Chapter and section/academy delegates: Only Physical Therapist members in good standing and, subject to component bylaws, one Physical Therapist Assistant member in good standing per delegation may serve as component delegates.
- (2) Physical Therapist Assistant Engagement Group delegates: Only Physical Therapist Assistant members who are Association members in good standing may serve as delegates.
- (3) Student Engagement Group delegates: Only Student Physical Therapist and Student Physical Therapist Assistant members who are in good standing may serve as delegates. Student Engagement Group delegates who have converted to Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant members may serve as Student Engagement Group delegates until the end of the calendar year in which they graduate.
- ~~(34)~~ A delegate of a member group may not serve concurrently as a delegate of another member group.

C. Number of Voting Delegates

- (1) The number of voting delegates in the House shall be the sum of the chapter delegates, section/academy delegates, ~~and~~ Physical Therapist Assistant Engagement Group delegates,

and Student Engagement Group delegates as determined in accordance with the standing rules.

- (2) No chapter shall have fewer than two voting delegates, and each section/academy, ~~and the Physical Therapist Assistant Engagement group, and Student Engagement Group delegates~~ shall be allotted two voting delegates.

PART B

That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section 7: Nonvoting Delegates, be amended by substitution, so that it would read:

Section 7: Nonvoting Delegates

A. Nonvoting Body

Nonvoting delegates of the House shall be the ~~Student Engagement Group delegates,~~ institutional member group delegates, Ethics and Judicial Committee delegates, Bylaws and House Documents Committee delegates, special committees of the House, and the members of the Board.

B. Qualifications of Nonvoting Delegates

~~(1) Student Engagement Group delegates: Only Student Physical Therapist and Student Physical Therapist Assistant members who are in good standing may serve as delegates. Student Engagement Group members who have converted to Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant members may serve as Student Engagement Group delegates through adjournment of the House immediately following graduation.~~

(2) A nonvoting delegate may not serve concurrently as a voting or nonvoting delegate of another member group.

C. Number of Nonvoting Delegates

~~(1) Student Engagement Group delegates: Two delegates selected by the Student Engagement Group.~~

(2) Institutional member group delegates: Two delegates, who shall be selected by each institutional member group.

(3) Ethics and Judicial Committee delegate: Two delegates, who shall be selected by the committee.

(4) Bylaws and House Documents Committee delegate: Two delegates, who shall be selected by the committee.

(5) Special committees of the House of Delegates: Two delegates, who shall be selected by the committee.

(6) Board of Directors: All members of the Board shall serve as delegates.

1 PART C

2

3 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section

4 8: Conduct of Business, B. Quorum, be amended by inserting the words ", Student Engagement

5 Group," after the word "Group" so that it would read:

6

7 Section 8: Conduct of Business

8 B. Quorum

9 Delegates representing one-third of the total number of chapters, Physical Therapist

10 Engagement Group, Student Engagement Group, and sections/academies and numbering one-

11 third of the total number of votes that could be cast if all voting delegates were present shall

12 constitute a quorum.

13

14 PART D

15

16 That Bylaws of the American Physical Therapy Association, Article V. House of Delegates, Section

17 8: Conduct of Business, C. Elections, (2) be amended by substitution, so that it would read:

18

19 Section 8: Conduct of Business

20 C. Elections

21

22 (2) Except for appointed positions, on petition of at least five eligible petitioners, a qualified

23 consenting member shall be placed in nomination for a position as an officer or as a member

24 of the Board or Nominating Committee. Eligible petitioners include components, ~~and~~ the PTA

25 Engagement Group, and the Student Engagement Group delegations. Such petition must be

26 filed with the House Officers no later than 45 days after the slate of candidates prepared by

27 the Nominating Committee has been distributed to members. A candidate nominated by

28 petition shall be afforded similar opportunities for publication of candidacy to the

29 membership as those afforded a candidate nominated by the Nominating Committee but

30 shall be identified as nominated by petition.

31

32 PART E

33

34 That Standing Rules of The American Physical Therapy Association, Standing Rule 4.

35 Determination of the Size of the House, be amended by inserting a new D., so that it would read:

36

37 4. DETERMINATION OF THE SIZE OF THE HOUSE

38 The size of the House is:

39 A. The number of chapter voting delegates.

- (1) Add the number of Physical Therapist and the number of Physical Therapist Assistant members of the Association who are assigned to chapters at the end of the month of the year preceding the House in which they will serve.
 - (2) Divide the total found in Step 1 by 400. The resulting number shall be the apportionment number.
 - (3) Divide the total number of Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant members for each chapter by the apportionment number.
 - (4) Chapters shall be allowed one delegate for each whole number and one additional delegate for any remainder equaling or exceeding 50% of the apportionment number.
 - (5) Any chapter that would be entitled to fewer than two delegates according to the above shall be allowed two delegates.
- B. The number of section/academy voting delegates, which is twice the number of sections/academies.
- C. The number of PTA Engagement Group Delegates, which is two.
- D. The number of Student Engagement Group Delegates, which is two.
- ~~D~~E. The number of nonvoting delegates as listed in the bylaws.

Support Statement

Motion Concept:

This motion is an amendment to the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the American Physical Therapy Association to provide voting rights to the 2 Student Council delegates. This requires a conforming amendment to amend language in several places of the bylaws as well as the Standing Rules. In most cases, it simply deletes language that includes student delegates when describing the rights of non-voting delegates and inserts it into similar descriptions of voting delegates. It adds a new line in the list of voting delegates in Standing Rule 4 to include the student delegates in the calculation to determine the size of the House of Delegates. These amendments do not otherwise change the rights or number of Student Council delegates.

What is this motion seeking to achieve?

The expected direct outcome of this motion is to grant voting rights to 2 Student Council delegates in the House of Delegates. This aligns with 2 voting delegates for each section/academy and the PTA Council, and the minimum of 2 voting delegates per chapter. It equates the voting rights for the only Councils with delegates in the House of Delegates, namely the PTA and Student Councils. There are also long-term outcomes. Voting makes students accountable for APTA's direction and decisions by promoting a sense of shared responsibility. Although the quantitative impact of 0.45% voting strength may appear to have minimal effect, particularly for 31% of APTA membership, the qualitative impact is immeasurable. It encourages students, who will become new professionals, to retain membership and stay informed and engaged in shaping the future of our Association and profession as the next generation of leaders, which is pivotal to our sustainability.

1 **How does this motion contribute to achieving the Vision?**

2 This motion contributes to achieving the Vision by empowering students to take ownership of
3 initiatives that optimize movement and improve lives, promoting a continuous evolution of the
4 profession. This continuous engagement strengthens its capacity to uphold the Vision now and in
5 the future, building loyalty and commitment and strengthening APTA's sustainability through
6 member retention and active involvement.

8 **How does this motion support APTA priorities as reflected in the current APTA Strategic Plan?**

9 This motion directly addresses the priorities in the Strategic Plan in the following ways:

11 Mission: Including students in our decision-making community aligns with our Mission, "Building
12 a community that advances the profession of physical therapy to improve the health of society."
13 Student Physical Therapist and Student Physical Therapist Assistants are the only membership
14 categories in the APTA qualified to serve as a delegate that do not have the right to vote. This is
15 a significant detriment for 31,000 student members, which is 31% of membership in the APTA.¹
16 This may also relate to a pivotal finding in the recent APTA Strategic Planning Survey regarding
17 satisfaction with the APTA: "Respondents older than 55 are most satisfied and those who
18 graduated in the last 5 years are least satisfied."² The lack of voting rights as students to engage
19 in decisions that impact our profession may contribute to the sense of dissatisfaction with our
20 Association in the early years post graduation.

22 Member Value: This motion increases member value by ensuring APTA delivers unmatched
23 opportunities to belong, engage, and contribute. Adding a vote to their voice demonstrates
24 value to their contributions, and moves their input into decision-making.

26 Sustainable Profession: As described in the Goals and Outcomes related to this component of the
27 Strategic Plan, it is imperative to reduce the cost of education and resultant burden of student
28 debt and increase payment for services. Students and new professionals are directly impacted by
29 these financial issues. Student engagement in these decisions invites new perspectives to achieve
30 the listed Goals and Outcomes. It inspires continued engagement as students transition their
31 membership to new professionals in component leadership positions.

33 **How is this motion's subject national in scope and importance?**

34 The Student Council is a national level organization composed of a student representative from each
35 chapter and section/academy. Chapter representatives provide nationwide input on issues that
36 impact our profession. Although the voice of the Council is currently through 2 non-voting
37 delegates, a vote adds a level of responsibility that ensures engagement on a national level to make
38 informed decisions on all voting matters that confront the House of Delegates.

1 **What previous or current initiatives and positions of the association address this topic?**

2 Historically, since 1998, when the House of Delegates rescinded voting rights for physical therapist
3 assistants in that body, it has been opposed to expanding voting rights beyond chapter delegates.
4 More recently, the House has taken evolutionary actions to expand voting rights and be more
5 inclusive:

- 6
- 7 • 2020: Bylaws amendment to provide voting rights for 2 delegates from each section/academy
8 was adopted with a 76% affirmative vote (RC 6-20).³
- 9 • 2021: Bylaws amendment to provide voting rights for 2 PTA Caucus delegates (now PTA
10 Council delegates) was adopted with a 74% affirmative vote (RC 1-21, Amendment A).⁴
- 11

12 It is also worthy to note that in 2021, a bylaws amendment to provide voting rights to 2 Student
13 Assembly delegates was moved and defeated. Although there was a substantial number of votes in
14 the affirmative, it did not achieve the threshold of 67% for a bylaws amendment. In contrast to that
15 motion, which was moved by the Student Assembly exclusively, for the current motion, the APTA
16 Oregon delegation is the primary motion maker and the Student Council is a co-maker. This
17 demonstrates that a chapter, the largest voting contingent in the House, is leading this action in
18 2025.

19

20 **What interested parties will be impacted by this motion?**

21 The direct impact is on more than 31,000 student members representing 31% of APTA membership.
22 They are the future of our profession. They engage in deliberation of issues that confront our
23 profession with visionary perspectives, and have the ability to do their diligence to make informed
24 decisions via a vote.

25

26 The extended impact is on component leadership. Data provided by APTA staff demonstrate how
27 student leaders in the House of Delegates follow that experience with long-term engagement as
28 components leaders: *Within the last 10 years, of the students who had served as Core Ambassadors or*
29 *Student Assembly Board of Directors, 68 individuals served in a component leadership role, 21*
30 *individuals have served as component presidents, and 9 individuals have served as delegates, 7 of*
31 *whom have been chief delegates.* These demonstrate how students become the future of our
32 profession.

33

34 **Additional Background Information.**

35 Students who have sought and been elected to the position of Student Council Delegate are
36 extraordinary leaders who have excelled in learning and applying cutting edge knowledge and skills
37 in their academic and clinical achievements. These traits apply to making informed decisions via a
38 vote in the House of Delegates. Experienced delegates do the same when confronted with issues of
39 limited experience or background. In many cases, they learn and reflect from students who offer
40 current knowledge and probing questions. Further, the current interest in "intellectual humility" in

our profession recognizes that, regardless of our experiences, we are all lifelong learners and continue to seek new knowledge to make informed decisions.

The new structure and operation of the Student Council also contributes to their readiness to assume the responsibilities of a voting delegate. Two year terms provide continuity, development, sustainability, and mentorship. The result is that the Chief Delegate tends to be a 3rd-year student while the Student Council Delegate is a 2nd year. Depending on the academic program calendar, a student Chief Delegate may have graduated, tested, and passed their NPTE before the in-person House of Delegates in their final year and still will be representing the student membership.

Evidence of student engagement, and readiness to make informed decisions on contemporary issues was demonstrated in the 2024 session of the House of Delegates. Regarding artificial intelligence and its impact on our profession, the Student Council was a co-maker on 2 motions (RCs 11-24 and 12-24), and was the exclusive maker on a 3rd (RC 13-24).⁵ They were also a co-maker on a motion on Trauma Informed Care (RC 7-24), which eventually was on the Consent Calendar demonstrating unanimous support.⁵ It is important to note that the genesis of RC 7-24 came from students in a discussion on topics to bring to the House in the physical therapist education program at Pacific University, which demonstrates how students contribute to the motto of our profession "Move Forward".

During discussions of the motion concept with key individuals, the question arose whether students would support 2 Student Council delegates to have the right to vote. To answer that question, a poll was conducted of students in 897 accredited and developing PT and PTA academic programs. Responses were received from 843 students in 88 PT and 35 PTA programs, and revealed that 96% of the respondents selected "Yes", they believe that 2 Student Council Delegates should have the right to vote in the APTA House of Delegates. Further description of the poll and results are available in a link posted on the House Community.

It is important to note that several other significant related health care and academic organizations accord students the right to vote, and in many cases it's more than 2 students. Examples include the American Occupational Therapy Association, American Medical Association, American Academy of Physician Assistants, American Osteopathic Association, American Pharmacist Association, American Optometric Association, Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists, American Society of Radiologic Technologists, Ithaca College Board of Trustees, Utah Board of Higher Education, and the Board of Regents of the University of Washington. It is timely and appropriate to add the American Physical Therapy Association to this list by adopting this motion.

References:

1. [APTA 2024 Annual Report.](#)
2. [APTA Strategic Planning 2024 Survey Results.](#)
3. [2020 House of Delegates Minutes.](#)

- 1 4. [2021 Packet I Main Motions to the House of Delegates.](#)
- 2 5. [Motions for the 2024 House of Delegates.](#)
- 3

4 **Last Updated:** 05/05/2025

5 **Contact:** governancehouse@apta.org