



DISTRICT CHARTER

District Definition

Districts are created under Article 6 of the OMA By-Laws to provide a structure for OMA (Ontario Medical Association) members in a specific geographic area to come together to discuss regional issues that affect the medical profession and to advance its members' perspective to the OMA. More specifically, districts serve to support the following core functions:

- Represent the local physician voice
- Community engagement
- Engage and develop local leaders through social connection and information sharing
- Local advocacy
- OMA Governance Requirements

District Mandate

In carrying out the functions described above, District responsibilities may include the following:

- Applying a regional lens to identify issues, opportunities and successes for the OMA and other health system stakeholders.
- Acting as a credible and informed resource for the OMA and local membership, playing a key role of connecting members, the association and other decision makers in the health care system.
- Through the general assembly, providing input into the broad directions of the OMA strategic plan and the development of key OMA initiatives and priorities.
- Establishing personal connections with members in the district to help build a supportive community for physicians across specialities, clinical settings, and regions.
- Facilitating communication with membership to advance professional harmony, support collaboration, knowledge sharing and issue identification.
- Bringing together branch societies at the regional level to foster engagement and enable members' input into the priorities and initiatives of the OMA.
- Supporting succession planning and leadership development within the district.
- Supporting advocacy activities related to locally identified health care issues and opportunities that have an impact on patients in the region and the profession and mobilize grassroots members as needed.

- Connecting members and regional physician leaders to local healthcare organizations and decision makers.
- Actively participating in the general assembly by selecting two (2) delegates and encouraging members to have their voices and issues heard by submitting ideas to the general assembly
- Holding an annual general meeting to report to all district members on pertinent activities and share financial statements and activities.

District Composition

- The geographic territory of the province of Ontario is divided into 11 districts
- The board of directors may change boundaries, create a new district, or remove a district, altering the boundaries of other districts as appropriate, as described in the OMA By-Laws and OMA Governance Policy.
- Districts are comprised of smaller geographic areas within their boundaries that are referred to as branch societies (or OMA territorial divisions). Branch societies are mainly independent from the OMA and provide a venue for discussion and representation of local, grassroots issues.
- The district membership is comprised of OMA members who have, through their practice address provided to the OMA (or home address if not available), been assigned to one of the districts. All OMA members belong to and are automatically assigned to a district.

District Leadership Group Composition

The district leadership group includes the district executive and appointed external district physician leaders, including the branch society presidents.

District Executive*

The executive comprises those positions elected by the district membership through the OMA single election process plus the past-chair, and includes the following:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Past-Chair (optional)
- Secretary/Treasurer (optional)
- 4 Members-at-Large plus one (1) for every increment of 5000 members

Executive Position Descriptions

Chair

The Chair's responsibilities shall include:

- Understanding the issues that are most important to district members with respect to their geographic region and represents these to the OMA, health system stakeholders and media on behalf of the district.

- Calling the first meeting of the district executive. Subsequently, meetings may be at the call of the chair or upon a request of a member of the district executive made to the chair.
- Facilitating and optimizing the constructive involvement and participation of all members of the district executive and broad leadership group
- Approval of district communications to be sent to members.
- Calls, and oversees the organizing of the district annual general meeting.
- The primary point of contact for district business, via other OMA physician leaders and [assigned OMA staff](#).

Vice Chair

The Vice Chair’s responsibilities shall include:

- Understanding the issues that are most important to district members with respect to their geographic region and represents these to the OMA, health system stakeholders and media on behalf of the district.
- Assisting the chair in their duties and assumes the powers of the chair when absent or unable to perform the chair's duties.
- Supporting the chair in providing leadership and in communicating regularly with members.

Past Chair (optional)

- The Past Chair shall be held by the immediate past Chair of the district. The responsibilities of the Past Chair shall include: Attending executive meetings, including the district annual general meeting, to maintain continued communication within the district executive.
- Assisting in member engagement and succession planning.
- Advising the chair, as necessary, for continuity and mentorship purposes.

Member-at-Large*

- Attending executive meetings to discuss, debate and vote on agenda items/issues to support the work of the district.
- Providing input into issues based on their clinical expertise, geographic familiarity, and/or other criteria, as determined by the district executive.

*The district executive has the flexibility to assign duties of Member-at-Large positions based on individual district priorities.

Secretary and/or Treasurer (optional)*

A district may choose one of the following for its executive composition, as it relates to the secretary and treasurer:

- a) Elect a combined secretary/treasurer (one position)
- b) Elect both a secretary and treasurer (two separate positions)

- c) Elect a secretary only
- d) Elect a treasurer only
- e) No secretary or treasurer

The responsibilities of the secretary shall include:

- Working closely with the district chair in the planning of meetings of the district executive and the district annual general meeting.
- Ensuring agendas and other meeting materials, including meeting minutes, are distributed to the members of the district executive, secretaries of branch societies, and the district membership, with OMA staff support.

The responsibilities of the treasurer shall include:

- Managing the financial affairs of the district in accordance with the district Service Level Agreement with the OMA.

*If a district opts to forego election of the secretary and/or treasurer position(s), these duties can be assigned to another district executive member(s), including member-at-Large.

Broader Leadership Group

Each district shall also have a broader district leadership group that is advisory (non-voting) to the district executive. The Broader Leadership Group includes the branch society presidents and other physician leaders, as determined, and appointed by the district executive. The specific duties of broader leadership group members are determined by the district executive and may vary from district to district.

District Executive Meetings

District executive meetings shall be carried out as follows:

- Meetings of the district executive shall be called by the chair, or upon the request of a member of the district executive to the chair. Notice of all executive meetings shall be in writing upon no less than 2 days prior notice.
- Meetings may be held in person, or through virtual electronic means that permit all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.
- The quorum for executive meetings shall be 50% plus one (1) of the executive membership.
- In the case of a deadlock of a vote at a district executive meeting, the otherwise neutral chair shall have a casting vote.
- Broader district leadership group members, including the branch society presidents, are eligible to attend meetings of the executive at the discretion of the chair, to provide advice and take part in the discussion, without voting privileges.

District Executive Elections

- District executive positions are elected in accordance with the OMA Elections Policy.
- A member may only run for and vote in elections in the district in which they are a member.
- Vacancies shall be filled via a by-election, in accordance with the OMA Elections Policy or via the established appointment process where a member of the district may, by an instrument in writing signed by the majority of the executive, fill such vacancy.
- Appointments and positions elected during a by-election are for the remainder of the term or until the next regularly scheduled Single Election Period, whichever is less.

District Leadership Group Terms

- The term of office of the district chair, vice-chair is two years and shall commence immediately after the single election period.
- The term of office of the secretary/treasurer (optional) and members-at-large is one to two years, as determined by the chair, and shall commence immediately after the single election period.
- The term of office of the past chair (optional) is a minimum of one year, as determined by the district executive and shall commence immediately after the single election period.
- A member, after serving on the district executive for 10 consecutive years, is no longer eligible to be elected as chair or vice-chair for that district for a period of two years.
- A member may not serve on the district executive for more than 20 years in total.
- Terms for broader district leadership group members are at the discretion of the district executive and/or branch societies.

District General Meetings

- A general meeting of a district's membership whether in-person, virtual or mix medium that permits all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting and shall be held annually at a time and place to be determined by the executive members.
- Meetings may be held in person, or through virtual electronic means that permit all participants to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting.
- Arrangements for the annual general meeting shall be the responsibility of the district executive, with support from OMA staff.
- Notice of such annual general meeting shall be given to all members in writing at least 30 days prior to the date of such meeting.
- Quorum for district general and special meetings is at ten (10) members in good standing.
- In the case of a deadlock of a vote at a district annual general meeting, the otherwise neutral chair shall have a casting vote.

Special Meetings

- A special meeting of the district may be called by the chair at any time with at least two weeks notice to all members of the district

- The district executive may, upon its own authority and shall, upon presentation of a request made in writing by no fewer than fifty (50) district members, give notice to each member of the district of a special meeting of the members in that district. Any such request and the notice shall specify the matters to be considered at such meeting or shall state that such meeting is to consider all matters within the jurisdiction of a general meeting of the members of the district. Any such notice shall be given not more than seven days after any such request is received by the district executive, and any such special meeting shall be held not more than three weeks after notice thereof is given. A copy of the notice of any such special meeting shall be forwarded to the corporate secretary of the OMA at the same time that it is sent to the members of the district.

Delegates to OMA Priority & Leadership Group

- The executive will have the authority to appoint delegates to the Priority and Leadership Group, in accordance with the Priority and Leadership Group eligibility criteria.

Sub-Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups

- The executive shall establish, as required, sub-committees, task forces and/or working groups to develop a specific policy and/or to accomplish a specific task.

Funding and Remuneration

- The OMA will provide funding to support the work of the districts, in accordance with the OMA constituency finance policy.

Amendments

- Amendments to this charter are subject to approval of the OMA board of directors.

Approved by the OMA Board of Directors: February 1, 2023.