



# Electoral Guidelines for AFC Elections





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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article	Contents	Page
<b>DEFINITIONS</b>		5
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>		7
1.	SCOPE OF APPLICATION	7
2.	PROHIBITION ON CAMPAIGNING PRIOR TO APPROVAL	7
3.	GENERAL CONDUCT	7
4.	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY	8
5.	CAMPAIGN DOCUMENT	8
6.	PROMOTION OF CANDIDATURE	8
7.	CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY DURING AFC EVENTS	9
8.	PROMISES AND UNDERTAKINGS	9
9.	ABUSE OF OFFICIAL POSITION	10
10.	NO OFFERING OR ACCEPTANCE OF BENEFITS	10
11.	INDEPENDENCE OF THE CANDIDATE	10
12.	DUTY OF RESPECT	11
13.	RELATIONS WITH THE AFC GENERAL SECRETARIAT	11
14.	RELATIONS WITH THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE	11
15.	INFRINGEMENTS OF THE ELECTORAL GUIDELINES	11
16.	AMENDMENT	12
17.	MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR	12
18.	ENFORCEMENT	12

# DEFINITIONS

In these Electoral Guidelines for AFC elections, capitalised terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context specifically indicates otherwise:

<b>AFC</b>	The Asian Football Confederation.
<b>AFC General Secretariat</b>	A body of the AFC as promulgated in the AFC Statutes with its headquarters at AFC House, Jalan 1/155B, Bukit Jalil, 57000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
<b>Campaign Document</b>	A document containing the plans, views and campaign agenda of a Candidate.
<b>Candidates</b>	Official Candidates and Potential Candidates.
<b>Electoral Campaign Period</b>	The period starting from the publication of the list of Candidates until the day of the conclusion of the elections.
<b>Electoral Guidelines</b>	These Electoral Guidelines for AFC elections.
<b>Electorate</b>	The Member Associations composing the AFC Congress which are entitled to vote.
<b>FIFA</b>	The Fédération Internationale de Football Association.
<b>Football Association</b>	The controlling body for football within a country or territory recognised by the AFC.
<b>Member Association</b>	A Football Association which is a member of the AFC.

<b>Officials</b>	All office bearers and members of committees, managers, coaches, trainers, match officials, medical officials, staff and any other person responsible for technical, medical and administrative matters in the AFC, Regional Associations, Football Associations, leagues or clubs, as well as all other persons obliged to comply with the AFC Statutes. For the purposes of these Electoral Guidelines, this definition shall include players.
<b>Official Candidate</b>	Any individual approved by the Electoral Committee to stand for election for a position on the AFC Executive Committee.
<b>Potential Candidate</b>	Any individual who undertakes an activity linked to his impending candidature prior to the commencement of the Electoral Campaign Period.
<b>Regional Association</b>	A group of Member Associations recognised by the AFC that belong to the same geographic zone.

For the purposes of these Electoral Guidelines, and provided the context so permits:

- (a) the singular shall include the plural and vice versa;
- (b) the masculine gender shall include the feminine and vice versa; and
- (c) reference to persons shall include any legal person or corporation.

# INTRODUCTION

The Electoral Committee is the organising and supervisory body for all matters relating to the elections to all AFC bodies promulgated within the AFC Statutes and the AFC Electoral Code.

The Electoral Committee is responsible for ensuring that the campaigns of all Candidates for election are conducted in accordance with the fundamental principles set out in these Electoral Guidelines. The purpose of these Electoral Guidelines is to ensure fair, honest and credible elections.

These Electoral Guidelines are issued in accordance with Article 25.1 of the AFC Statutes, Article 7 of the Standing Orders of the Congress of the AFC Statutes, and Articles 2.3 and 4 of the AFC Electoral Code.

## 1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

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- 1.1. These Electoral Guidelines are applicable to the elections to the AFC Executive Committee.
- 1.2. These Electoral Guidelines shall apply to all Candidates, Officials, Regional Associations and Member Associations.

## 2. PROHIBITION ON CAMPAIGNING PRIOR TO APPROVAL

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- 2.1. No individual may undertake any electoral campaign to promote his candidacy outside of the Electoral Campaign Period or prior to their approval by the Electoral Committee.

## 3. GENERAL CONDUCT

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- 3.1. Each Official Candidate may promote their candidature by conducting an electoral campaign in a manner deemed appropriate, subject to the provisions of the AFC Statutes, AFC Electoral Code, the AFC Code of Conduct, the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code and these Electoral Guidelines.
- 3.2. Election campaigns shall be conducted with dignity and moderation.

## 4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

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- 4.1. Candidates shall, while conducting an electoral campaign, respect and acknowledge the rights of all Candidates, the AFC Congress and the AFC General Secretariat.
- 4.2. Candidates have the right and freedom to convey their messages to the Electorate without hindrance or interference.
- 4.3. Candidates shall not undertake any defamatory, derogatory and/or insulting attacks on other Candidates.
- 4.4. For the avoidance of doubt, the AFC Executive Committee positions identified in the AFC Statutes as being “*Female*” are reserved for females only. This requirement, however, does not prevent females being nominated for other positions in the AFC Executive Committee. Accordingly, it should be noted that females may be nominated for any AFC Executive Committee position, not only the positions identified as “*Female*”. The number of “*Female*” positions on the AFC Executive Committee is to be understood as a minimum of female representation in the AFC Executive Committee, not a maximum.

## 5. CAMPAIGN DOCUMENT

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- 5.1. Candidates may present their plans, views and campaign agenda in the form of a Campaign Document.
- 5.2. The content of a Campaign Document shall be confined to proposed policies, proposed programmes, past record, past work and any other information that solely relates to the particular position for which the individual is a Candidate.
- 5.3. A copy of any Campaign Document shall be furnished to the Electoral Committee.

## 6. PROMOTION OF CANDIDATURE

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- 6.1. Candidates are permitted to promote their candidature by way of campaign propaganda material, including:
  - 6.1.1. dedicated electoral campaign website(s);

- 6.1.2. dedicated social media platform(s);
  - 6.1.3. their personal website(s);
  - 6.1.4. their personal social media platform(s); and
  - 6.1.5. printed flyers, letters and pamphlets.
- 6.2. Any promotion or advertising of a Candidate by any sponsors and/or commercial partners shall not be permitted. Candidates shall not promote or advertise any sponsor and/or commercial partner in connection with their candidature.
- 6.3. All media interviews shall remain neutral whilst strictly respecting the dignity of other Candidates. The content of such interviews shall be in compliance with Article 4.3 of these Electoral Guidelines and not be prejudicial to the AFC Congress, the Electoral Committee and the AFC General Secretariat.
- 6.4. Candidates shall not commission (whether gratis or for consideration) any person (including any type of media organisation or representative) to disparage another Candidate.

## **7. CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY DURING AFC EVENTS**

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- 7.1. Candidates shall refrain from undertaking any campaign activity (including organising any event) at official functions organised by the AFC. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, no Candidate shall be allowed to address the AFC Congress in connection with their candidacy.

## **8. PROMISES AND UNDERTAKINGS**

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- 8.1. Candidates shall not make any promise or undertaking in connection with their Candidature, regardless of the timing of the performance, to the Electorate or any third-party individual or organisation, where the Electorate or third-party individual or organisation may acquire a direct or indirect benefit, pecuniary or otherwise, which is contrary to the objectives set out in Article 2 of the AFC Statutes.
- 8.2. Candidates shall not make any promise or undertaking to the Electorate or any third-party individual or organisation in connection with their Candidature, the performance of which might jeopardise their independence during and after the election process.

## 9. ABUSE OF OFFICIAL POSITION

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- 9.1. Candidates that hold one (1) or more official positions on bodies of FIFA, the AFC, Member Associations, Regional Associations and/or any other sporting institutions associated with football may remain in office during their election campaign.
- 9.2. Candidates shall not utilise such official positions to obtain any undue advantage or benefit to their candidature.
- 9.3. Candidates shall not utilise the assets and resources of the organisations where they hold such official positions to conduct their electoral campaign.

## 10. NO OFFERING OR ACCEPTANCE OF BENEFITS

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- 10.1. No Candidate, Member Association, Regional Association or Official shall offer any gift, financial benefit or any other benefit in return for the support of one (1) or more Candidates.
- 10.2. No Candidate, Member Association, Regional Association or Official shall accept any gift, financial benefit or any other benefit in return for the support of one (1) or more Candidates.
- 10.3. Candidates, Member Associations, Regional Associations and Officials have a duty to report to the Electoral Committee any offer to them of a gift, financial benefit or any other benefit in return for the support of one (1) or more Candidates.

## 11. INDEPENDENCE OF CANDIDATES

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- 11.1. Candidates shall not accept any instructions from any third party in connection with their Candidature.
- 11.2. No Regional Association, Member Association or Official shall undermine the independence of any Candidate.
- 11.3. All Candidates must be neutral in matters of politics and religion.

## 12. DUTY OF RESPECT

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- 12.1. Candidates shall at all times respect the dignity of all other Candidates, the Electorate, the Electoral Committee, Officials, the AFC General Secretariat and all third parties associated with the election.

## 13. RELATIONS WITH THE AFC GENERAL SECRETARIAT

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- 13.1. The AFC General Secretariat shall maintain a strict duty of neutrality and independence at all times.
- 13.2. No Candidate shall interfere with the conduct of and shall at all times respect the AFC General Secretariat in relation to their administering the electoral process.
- 13.3. No Candidate shall solicit any services from any individual or department within the AFC General Secretariat to act in support of his candidature.

## 14. RELATIONS WITH THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE

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- 14.1. Candidates shall accept and cooperate with all decisions of the Electoral Committee.
- 14.2. No Candidate shall interfere with the conduct of and shall at all times respect the Electoral Committee in relation to their administering of the electoral process.
- 14.3. The Electoral Committee shall monitor the compliance of Candidates with these Electoral Guidelines as well as any other AFC regulations.

## 15. INFRINGEMENTS OF THE ELECTORAL GUIDELINES

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- 15.1. The Electoral Committee shall make all decisions relating to any infringements of these Electoral Guidelines, and in serious cases, may refer such infringements to the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee.
- 15.2. All disciplinary measures in relation to the election shall be undertaken in accordance with the AFC Statutes and the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code.

## 16. AMENDMENT

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- 16.1. The Electoral Committee may amend these Electoral Guidelines at any time. Such amendments shall come into force upon notification to the Regional Associations, Member Associations and publication on the AFC website.

## 17. MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR

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- 17.1. Matters not provided for in these Electoral Guidelines shall be decided by the Electoral Committee.

## 18. ENFORCEMENT

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- 18.1. These Electoral Guidelines were ratified by the Electoral Committee on 16 November 2023 and come into force immediately.
- 18.2. These Electoral Guidelines shall be issued in English. If these Electoral Guidelines are translated into another language, the English version issued by the AFC shall prevail.

For the Electoral Committee

**Jahangir Baglari**  
*Chairperson*





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