



POLICY ON PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY ACOG OFFICERS AND THOSE SEEKING NOMINATION FOR OFFICE

This statement must be signed and acknowledged by all those in ACOG Officer and advisory council positions (including, without limitation, legislative chair and vice chair positions) whether or not determined by an election process (collectively "Officer") and those seeking Officer positions. This statement is not intended to govern debate within internal ACOG leadership meetings, nor to inhibit educational or academic discussions regarding care options.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is a membership organization dedicated to the advancement of women's health care and the professional and socioeconomic interests of our members through continuing medical education, practice, research, and advocacy. Although our membership is dispersed among 12 Districts for administrative and functional reasons, we are one organization. ACOG's policies, positions, and clinical guidance are reviewed and approved in accordance with the policies and procedures of ACOG's Board of Directors.

ACOG recognizes that some women's healthcare issues are the subject of controversy in the public and political arena and our members hold a wide variety of personal opinions regarding these topics. In its commitment to diversity and inclusion in the broadest definition, ACOG strives to encourage diversity in its membership while seeking to provide evidence-based guidance on clinical practice regarding women's health.

As the premier organization for women's health care in the United States, ACOG and its representatives are frequently called upon to provide advice and guidance on women's healthcare policy and practice. Officers, including those at the district and section level, hold unique positions in the organization where the public expressions and statements they make (including statements on social media, in meetings with stakeholders, and in public forums) regarding women's health care and healthcare policy can be associated with or attributed to ACOG. When Officers of our organization are called upon to provide statements or opinions regarding women's healthcare topics, it is critical that all public statements and other information they provide are uniformly consistent with established ACOG policies and clinical guidance, regardless of personal beliefs. Even when Officers make public statements outside of their official capacity as an ACOG Officer, their position is often recognized and their comments interpreted to represent an official ACOG position.

Upon accepting a position as an ACOG Officer at any level or seeking to be considered for nomination, it is critical to understand that Officers must present statements consistent with ACOG policy when providing comment to or answering inquiries from any public source. Resources are available to all Officers or those seeking nomination to confirm relevant policy when needed. While it is not the intention of ACOG to impede the freedom of opinion or speech by its members or Officers, in those circumstances where the Officer's or nominee's personal opinion differs from ACOG policy and the Officer or nominee is not comfortable advocating for or speaking about ACOG's policy, the individual can refer those asking for information to another ACOG Officer or representative of ACOG. Officers and nominees should not discourage ACOG members from publicly advocating for ACOG's policy positions and guidance. Further, in no case should an Officer or nominee whose personal view conflicts with ACOG guidance, policy, or position undermine ACOG's position publicly or provide conflicting information.

Officers and nominees should use their reasonable efforts in complying with the spirit of this policy. If an Officer or nominee has questions about whether certain public statements or conduct would be prohibited by this policy, they are encouraged to seek advice and counsel from ACOG's Board of Directors and Executive Team.

I, (print name) _____ acknowledge and agree to this policy, which is effective immediately and continues through the duration of my Officer position(s).

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Approved by the Board of Directors January 2021