

AMSANT Communication and Campaigning Protocols for the Election of NACCHO Elected Directors- *Summary*

**Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory Aboriginal Corporation (AMSANT)
Communication and Campaigning Protocols for the Election of NACCHO Elected Directors-
September 2026**

This summary explains the main rules. It does replace the full Protocols.

What are these Protocols for?

The Protocols are designed to make sure the election is fair, respectful and honest. They give all candidates a reasonable opportunity to explain why they are suitable for the NACCHO Elected Director role.

Candidates can talk about their experience, skills, qualifications, ideas and views about NACCHO and the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health sector. They can also criticise policies or decisions. The important point is that campaigning must be respectful and must not interfere with the election.

Who must follow the rules?

- Candidates.
- People who campaign or act on behalf of a candidate.
- Campaign material and messages intended to influence voters.

Candidates should take reasonable steps to make sure people supporting their campaign follow these rules.

The main rules

1. Be fair and respectful

- Treat other candidates, AMSANT, NACCHO and member organisations with respect.
- Do not bully, threaten, harass, intimidate or abuse people.
- Do not use discriminatory or vilifying language.
- Do not deliberately humiliate another candidate.
- Do not behave in a way that could discourage someone from voting.

You can strongly disagree with another candidate. You can question their experience, qualifications, record, policies or publicly expressed views. The rules are about how this is done, not about preventing legitimate debate.

2. Tell the truth

- Campaign information should be accurate and not misleading.
- Do not knowingly make false statements about another candidate, AMSANT, NACCHO, the election or how voting works.
- Do not deliberately edit or present a photograph, quotation, document or other material so that it gives a materially different impression.
- If you make a factual allegation about another candidate, you should have a reasonable basis for saying it.

Candidates can express opinions and predictions. Where necessary, make it clear that something is an opinion rather than a fact.

3. Do not pretend that AMSANT or NACCHO supports you

- AMSANT will not endorse or recommend a candidate.
- Candidates must not say or suggest that AMSANT, NACCHO or an ACCHS supports them unless that organisation has actually authorised the statement.
- Do not use AMSANT or NACCHO logos, official letterhead or other organisational material in campaign communications.
- Campaign material should not look like an official AMSANT or NACCHO election message.

4. Protect voter information

- Do not use confidential member contact details, mailing lists or databases for campaigning.
- Do not ask AMSANT for voters' email addresses, telephone numbers or other personal information.
- An ACCHS can communicate with its own members through its normal governance arrangements, subject to these rules.

Candidates must also respect people's privacy. Do not publish private phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, personal correspondence, photographs, family information or other personal information without consent or another lawful basis.

5. Do not misuse organisational resources

- Do not use AMSANT staff time, vehicles, offices, equipment, funds, databases, mailing lists or social media accounts to campaign unless AMSANT has agreed.
- A candidate must not suggest that their employer or ACCHS supports them unless the organisation has formally authorised that statement.
- An employee or representative of an ACCHS can support a candidate in their personal capacity, subject to their organisation's policies and these Protocols.

6. Use social media responsibly

- The same campaign rules apply online and on social media.
- Do not use fake accounts or pretend to be another person.
- Do not deliberately manipulate digital material to mislead voters.
- Check information from other people before sharing it.
- Do not use AI-generated images, audio or video to impersonate another candidate or create a materially misleading impression.
- Where it is not obvious, substantially AI-generated campaign material should be identified as such.

7. Keep campaigning separate from voting

- Do not interfere with the voting process.
- Do not try to find out how an ACCHS has voted.
- Do not ask an ACCHS to prove how it voted.
- Do not give voters incorrect instructions about completing or returning a ballot paper.

8. Endorsements

People and organisations can publicly support a candidate. Candidates must accurately describe that support. A candidate must not turn an individual's personal support into a claim that the organisation officially supports them.

9. If there is a complaint

A candidate or ACCHS can complain to the Returning Officer if they believe these Protocols have been broken.

- Complaints should be made as soon as possible.
- The complaint should explain what happened and identify the candidate or person involved where known.
- Evidence should be provided where available.
- The person complained about will have a reasonable opportunity to respond.

The Returning Officer will consider complaints fairly and impartially. The Returning Officer is not there to decide whether a political opinion is right or wrong.

10. What can happen if the rules are broken?

Depending on the seriousness of the issue, the Returning Officer may:

- give a warning;
- ask the candidate to stop the conduct;
- ask for information to be corrected or clarified; or
- refer the matter to NACCHO if it may affect the integrity of the NACCHO election.

The response should match the seriousness and impact of the breach. Candidates who discover that they have distributed materially inaccurate information should take reasonable steps to correct it.

11. The role of the Returning Officer

- The Returning Officer administers these Protocols independently and fairly.
- The Returning Officer can give reasonable directions to protect the election.
- The Returning Officer should not interfere with legitimate debate simply because someone disagrees with what has been said.
- If an issue involves the NACCHO Constitution or could materially affect the election, the Returning Officer should seek advice from NACCHO.

The simple message

Campaign fairly. Be respectful. Tell the truth. Protect people's privacy. Do not misuse AMSANT or other organisational resources. Do not pretend that AMSANT, NACCHO or an ACCHS endorses you when it does not. Keep campaigning separate from the voting process.

Candidates remain free to put forward strong views and to debate the issues. These Protocols are about ensuring that the election is conducted fairly and that voters can make an informed choice.

For detailed requirements, including specific rules and procedures, refer to the full AMSANT Communication and Campaigning Protocols – 2026.