

## **Council on Membership, Ethics and Judicial Concerns (COMEJC)**

### **Spring 2025 Update**

#### **HOD Resolutions**

- COMEJC is submitting resolutions to the 2025 AAO House of Delegates to propose the following:
  - Amend the dues waivers policy to clarify that “primary caregiver” waivers should be used for individuals with medical necessities, and applications should be accompanied by a physician’s statement. Additionally, the amendment proposes a 25% waiver for members who take parental leave following the birth of a child.
  - Change the nomination and selection process for Honorary Members to go through the Distinguished Service Awards Committee (DSAC). The resolution proposes for DSAC to determine the selection criteria, as well.
  - Amend Bylaws to allow Retired Members to serve the AAO in appointive (but not elective) positions.
  - Amend Bylaws to allow orthodontic interns to be eligible for student membership.
  - Amend Bylaws to clarify that International Members may not practice or teach orthodontics or dentistry within the United States or Canada to be eligible for international status.

#### **Membership Trends**

- COMEJC continues to monitor membership data and trends, including 2024-25 membership renewals. Through January 2025, 95.6% of Active Members have renewed, down from 96.4% at the same time in 2024. Primary drivers of the decline are new and younger members (0-4 years in practice), as well as mid-career (10-19 years) members. Other highlights include:
  - Renewed 95.1% of Life Active Members (compared to 97.6% year-over-year).
  - Renewed 93.4% of Student Members (compared to 94.8% year-over-year).
  - Renewed 84.9% of International Members (compared to 85.2% year-over-year).
  - Renewed 46.9% of International Student Members (compared to 36.1% year-over-year).
- In response to a decline in renewals among OSO members each of the past two years, COMEJC has formed a subcommittee to consider a corporate membership structure that may entail a volume-based dues structure for OSOs, DSOs and large group practices. The subcommittee will make a formal recommendation to COMEJC later this year.
- As of May 31, 2024, the AAO’s market share is 85.8% among U.S. orthodontists and 51.1% among Canadian orthodontists. These numbers are updated annually as fiscal year-end.

#### **Member Programs**

- COMEJC continues to oversee the Resident Vitals and Financial Management for Residents presentations that are offered to residency programs annually (either in-person or virtually).

- Through February 15, 2025, 12 orthodontic programs have scheduled or hosted the Resident Vitals presentation, down from 18 for all of 2023-24 and 24 for all of 2022-23. Seven programs have scheduled or hosted the Financial Management for Residents presentation, down from 15 for all of 2023-24 and 21 for all of 2022-23. Programs may request presentations at <https://www2.aaoinfo.org/programs-for-residents-and-educators/orthodontic-program-presentations/>.
- In response to the decrease in programs that have hosted presentations, COMEJC and staff are currently considering changes to the processes used to solicit and sign up program participants.
- Following recommendation from COMEJC, a group of six highly engaged and influential members have been approved to serve as designated Resident Vitals presenters.
- Following approval by the Board of Trustees in February 2025, COMEJC will oversee a pilot program to deliver virtual presentations, similar to Resident Vitals, at 5-10 reputable international orthodontic residency programs.

### **COMEJC Meetings**

- The next in-person COMEJC meeting will be Friday, January 9, 2026 at AAO headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri.

### **Submitted by:**

Riyad Al-Qawasmi, BDS, MSD, FRCDC, PhD  
GLAO Representative to the AAO Council on Membership, Ethics and Judicial Concerns (COMEJC)  
[ortho@udmercy.edu](mailto:ortho@udmercy.edu)