

# WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

## Overview of Committee, Board, Panels, and Other Entities

2023-2024

Note: Section Executive Committee information and applications can be found online [here](#).

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### WSBA Committees and Councils (created by the Board of Governors)

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The mission of the Washington State Bar Association is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice.

#### [Committee on Professional Ethics](#)

[See detailed position description](#)

Provides guidance to WSBA members on legal ethics issues in the form of Advisory Opinions, considers and proposes to the Board of Governors (BOG) amendments to the Washington Rules of Professional Conduct, and considers and reports to the BOG on amendments and proposed amendments to the Washington Rules of Professional Conduct and the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct. The Committee may also conduct periodic outreach to the membership on these subjects. Appointment is for a three-year term.

#### [Continuing Legal Education \(CLE\) Committee](#)

[See detailed position description](#)

Supports WSBA and its practice sections in the delivery of high quality, mission-focused Continuing Legal Education by advising on content, speakers, and delivery models, and by helping to identify trends and gaps in legal education that WSBA is uniquely positioned to fill. Appointment is for a three-year term.

#### [Council on Public Defense \(CPD\)](#)

[See detailed position description](#)

Unites representatives of the bar; private and public criminal defense attorneys; judicial representatives appointed by the Washington Supreme Court, the Superior Court Judges Association and the District and Municipal Court Judges Association; current and former prosecutors; and the public to address new and recurring challenges that impact the public defense system. The CPD educates and informs policy makers on issues that need reform and provides concrete proposals that are enhanced by the comprehensive nature of the CPD membership. Prerequisite: The CPD is seeking one at-large public member, two current or former prosecutors, two at-large members who may be an attorney or a public member, one representative from local government or a public defense administrator who can be an attorney or a public member. Terms are for two years with eligibility to renew membership for up to four additional years.

#### [Court Rules and Procedures Committee](#)

[See detailed position description](#)

Studies and develops suggested amendments to designated sets of court rules on a regular cycle of review. Performs the rules study function outlined in General Rule 9 and reports its recommendations to the Board of Governors. Appointment is for a two-year term.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council**

[See detailed position description](#)

Works to advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and address the problems of bias, systemic inequities and underrepresentation in the legal profession. This Council comprises members of the WSBA Board of Governors, bar members, judicial officers, law students and members of the public who work with staff to review, advise and implement policy, programs and activities of the WSBA that promote DEI. The Council prioritizes working in partnership with Minority Bar Associations and others working to advance DEI. Appointment is for a two-year term that can be renewed for another term.

### **Editorial Advisory Committee**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Editorial Advisory Committee is the “think tank” behind the WSBA’s official magazine, *Washington State Bar News*, working closely with the editor to ensure the content engages, excites, and informs its readers—members of the WSBA. Committee members may identify and develop article topics, write articles themselves or identify and recruit authors, review and critique issues of the magazine, work with staff to develop editorial policy, and guide the WSBA in relaying its own news. Appointment is for a two-year term.

### **Judicial Recommendation Committee**

[See detailed position description](#)

Screens and interviews candidates for state Court of Appeals and Supreme Court positions. Recommendations are reviewed by the WSBA Board of Governors and referred to the state governor for consideration when making judicial appointments. Appointment is for a three-year term.

### **Legislative Review Committee**

[See detailed position description](#)

Supports the WSBA’s outreach and legislative affairs efforts at a crucial decision-making intersection. Reviews all Bar-request bills and forwards to the Board of Governors with recommendations, insight, and comments where appropriate. Depending on the makeup of the Committee, it may also be able to provide technical support to Sections in drafting bills. Appointment/reappointment is for a one-year term.

### **Long Range Strategic Planning Council**

The Long-Range Strategic Planning Council develops and makes recommendations to the WSBA Board of Governors for adoption of Organizational Goals and Objectives, together with policy-level recommendations for their implementation.

### **Member Engagement Council**

The Council’s purpose is to educate members in a proactive manner about WSBA’s and Board of Governor’s actions and work, to seek input and involve members in decision-making process, build relationship between members and WSBA governance and ensure ongoing updates to members on WSBA processes and measurement. In carrying out these goals, the Council shall seek to create mutual understanding between the board and members, drive board priorities, form relationships with WSBA sections, specialty, minority and regional bars and share opportunities across regions of the state and members resident outside the geographical area of the state.

### **Pro Bono and Public Service Committee**

[See detailed position description](#)

Works to break down barriers that members face when engaging in public service and pro bono work, promotes pro bono opportunities, liaises with entities engaged in pro bono, and develops public service resources to support members doing pro bono work. The Committee works with staff to collaborate

with the Alliance for Equal Justice to advance efforts to engage members in pro bono. Appointment is for a two-year term.

#### **[Small Town and Rural Committee \(STAR\)](#)**

[See detailed position description](#)

The WSBA Small Town and Rural Practice (STAR) Committee is committed to strengthen and support the practice of law in the rural communities throughout Washington state. Members of the STAR Committee will work to ensure that the practice of law in rural communities is present, growing, and thriving. The STAR Committee members will guide policy and program development, serve as ambassadors between the WSBA and these communities, explore and advocate for creative and innovative solutions, and regularly assess the legal landscape in rural communities to determine if WSBA policy, advocacy, and program development require further resource for sustainability and improvements consistent with the [STAR Committee Charter](#).

#### **[Washington Young Lawyers Committee \(WYLC\)](#)**

[See detailed position description](#)

Works to actively engage new and young lawyers in the activities of WSBA, develops and conducts activities of value to new and young lawyers, and connects these lawyers to all WSBA resources. The WYLC comprises 18 members representing the interests of WSBA's 7,100 new and young lawyers.

Prerequisite: Committee members must meet the definition of 'Young Lawyer' as stated in the WSBA Bylaws. Appointment is for a three-year term unless otherwise specified.

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### **WSBA Regulatory Boards and Panels (created by Court Rule)**

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#### **[Adjunct Disciplinary Counsel \(ADC\) Panel](#)**

[See detailed position description](#)

Assists in carrying out the functions of the lawyer discipline system as needed pursuant to Rule 2.9 of the Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct (ELC). ADC panel members may be asked to assist staff disciplinary counsel with the investigation of a grievance; serve as independent special disciplinary counsel in the investigation of a grievance or prosecution of a disciplinary case; provide staff disciplinary counsel with an outside opinion on an area of law; serve as a practice monitor following imposition of a disciplinary sanction or suspension; or consult with a lawyer under the terms of a diversion contract. Prerequisite: ADCs must have been an active attorney or judicial member of the WSBA for at least seven years at the time of appointment, be on Active license status, and have no record of disciplinary action. Appointment is for a five-year term.

#### **[Board of Bar Examiners](#)**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Board of Bar Examiners grade the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE) and the Multistate Performance Test (MPT) answers for the Uniform Bar Examination for lawyers and produce the content for the Washington Law Component test under the direction of the WSBA Board of Governors, in accordance with the Admission and Practice Rules approved by the Washington Supreme Court. Members attend mandatory training sessions and four-day grading conferences in March and August. All positions are funded.

#### **[Character and Fitness Board](#)**

[See detailed position description](#)

Carries out the functions and duties assigned to it according to the Admission and Practice Rules adopted by the Supreme Court. Deals with matters of character and fitness bearing on qualifications of applicants for admission and licensing to practice law in Washington, conducts hearings on the

admission of any applicant, makes recommendations to the Washington Supreme Court, and considers petitions for reinstatement after disbarment. The Board shall consist of not less than three community representatives who are not licensed to practice law, and not less than one lawyer, LLLT or LPO member from each congressional district. The Board generally meets one full day per month for hearings. Considerable reading and meeting preparation time are required. Each member should expect to write at least one decision per year; assistance is provided as needed. *Prerequisite:* Board members (other than public members) must have been an active member of the WSBA for at least five years at the time of appointment. Appointment is for a three-year term. Members shall continue to serve until replaced.

#### **Client Protection Board**

[See detailed position description](#)

Pursuant to APR 15, reviews claims for reimbursement of financial loss sustained by reason of a licensed legal professional's dishonest actions or failure to account for client funds. The Board decides claims up to \$25,000 and makes recommendations to the Board of Governors on claims for greater amounts. The Board meets four times a year. The Board has thirteen members, eleven of whom are lawyers or Limited License Legal Technicians, and two of whom are public members. Appointment is for a three-year term.

#### **Law Clerk Board**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Law Clerk Program is an alternative to law school designed to provide educational and practical experience through a combination of work and study with an experienced lawyer or judge. The Law Clerk Board oversees the Law Clerk Program in accordance with Rule 6 of the Admission and Practice Rules. The board considers applications for enrollment in the program, interviews applicants, follows the progress of law clerks, interviews and evaluates law clerks and tutors during the course of study, and certifies that law clerks have successfully completed the program and meet the educational requirement to take the bar examination for lawyers. The board meets quarterly. Appointment is for a three-year term.

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## **Supreme Court Boards and Panels Administered by the WSBA**

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#### **Access to Justice Board**

[See detailed position description](#)

Recognizing that access to the civil justice system is a fundamental right, the Access to Justice Board works to achieve equal access for those facing economic and other significant barriers. The ATJ Board has two open positions. If you have a demonstrated commitment to equal justice principles, please join us. Appointments are made by the Washington Supreme Court upon nomination of the Washington State Bar Association Board of Governors. The positions may be filled by an attorney or a person who is not an attorney. For additional information, visit the [Alliance for Equal Justice's website](#). Appointment is for a three-year term.

#### **Disciplinary Board**

[See detailed position description](#)

Carries out the functions and duties assigned to it according to the Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct adopted by the Supreme Court. The full board meets monthly via teleconference, and in person as needed, reviewing hearing officer decisions and stipulations. Four review committees, each composed of three D-Board members, review disciplinary investigation reports and dismissals. Each review committee meets four times per year via teleconference. Considerable reading and meeting preparation is required. The Board consists of 4 community members and 10 lawyer members. Prerequisites: Lawyer Board members must have been an active member of the WSBA for at least five years at the time of appointment and have no record of public discipline. Lawyer Board members may not knowingly advise or represent individuals regarding pending or likely disciplinary grievances or

proceedings. Board members are recommended by the WSBA Board of Governors in consultation with the Disciplinary Selection Panel and appointed by the Supreme Court. Appointment is for a three-year term.

### **Hearing Officers**

#### **[See detailed position description](#)**

Serves as hearing officer for licensed legal professional disciplinary and disability matters, making evidentiary rulings, ruling on motions, conducting settlement conferences, and preparing written findings of fact, conclusions of law, and (as necessary) sanction recommendations according to strict deadlines. Annual training is required. Hearing officers are subject to the representation restrictions in ELC 2.14. The Supreme Court appoints hearing officers upon recommendation of the Board of Governors in consultation with the Disciplinary Selection Panel. Applicants must submit a writing sample. Prerequisites: A hearing officer must be an active member of the WSBA, have been an active or judicial member of the WSBA for at least seven years, have no record of public discipline, and have experience as an adjudicator or advocate in contested adjudicative hearings. Please review the Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct, particularly ELC 2.5 to 2.6 and ELC Title 10, prior to applying.

### **Limited License Legal Technician (LLLT) Board**

#### **[See detailed position description](#)**

The Limited License Legal Technician (LLLT) is licensed to provide limited legal assistance and advice in the area of family law. The LLLT Board is responsible for recommending to the Washington Supreme Court appropriate changes to rules relating to the practice of LLLTs. The board has the duty and power to develop and approve standard practice forms for LLLTs, oversee the provision of continuing legal education to LLLTs, and assess changes in the law that affect the practice of LLLTs. The board also plays a role in the LLLT discipline system. The board generally meets bi-monthly. Appointment is for a three-year term.

### **Limited Practice Board**

#### **[See detailed position description](#)**

A Limited Practice Officer (LPO) is licensed to select, prepare, and complete legal documents pertaining to the closing of real property and personal property transactions. The Limited Practice Board is responsible for developing and recommending to the Washington Supreme Court general policy and requirements for the LPO license. The board works with exam writing experts to write and grade the LPO examination, develops and approves forms for use by LPOs, and plays a role in the LPO discipline system. The board members act as ambassadors of the LPO license for the broader legal profession and the public. The board meets four to six times per year. Appointment is for a three-year term.

### **Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Board**

#### **[See detailed position description](#)**

Legal professionals in the state of Washington must continue their legal education throughout their careers in order to remain eligible to practice law. The MCLE Board plays a critical role in defining and determining compliance with the minimum education requirements under APR 11. The Board meets five times a year to consider MCLE policy issues and makes determinations on petitions, appeals, and special requests submitted by licensed legal professionals and CLE sponsors. This includes reviewing requests for waiver and extension of time to meet the minimum education requirements and holding hearings on denied requests. Board members also audit CLE courses throughout the year to ensure CLE providers are complying with APR 11. In addition to attending what are usually half-day meetings, members should expect to spend several hours reviewing materials prior to the meetings. Individuals with diverse backgrounds, teaching experience, and technology skills are encouraged to apply. Appointment is for a three-year term; two consecutive terms may be served.

### **Practice of Law Board**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Board educates the public about how to receive competent legal assistance, considers new avenues for people not authorized to practice law to provide legal and law-related services, and may receive complaints alleging the unauthorized practice of law in Washington by any person or entity. The Board will review and may refer complaints that allege harm to the public interest to appropriate enforcement agencies. The Supreme Court appoints members after considering nominations from the Practice of Law Board, the WSBA Board of Governors and other interested people and organizations. GR 25(a) says: “A minimum of five board members must be persons not currently authorized to practice law.” There are no other restrictions on members. Appointment is for a three-year term.

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## Other Positions

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### **Conflicts Review Officer (CRO)**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Conflicts Review Officers (CRO), with support from the Office of General Counsel, are lawyers outside the discipline system who review and make initial (intake) determinations for grievances filed against disciplinary counsel and other lawyers involved in the discipline system. The CRO acts independently of disciplinary counsel and the WSBA. The CRO may dismiss, defer, or have a grievance assigned to special disciplinary counsel for further investigation. The Supreme Court appoints three CROs based on recommendations from WSBA’s Board of Governors in consultation with the Disciplinary Selection Panel. *Prerequisites:* CROs must have prior experience as a Disciplinary Board member, disciplinary counsel, or special disciplinary counsel, and have no other role in the disciplinary system while serving as CRO. Additionally, CROs are subject to the Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct (ELC) 2.14 restrictions on advising or representing individuals regarding pending or likely disciplinary grievances or proceedings. Please review [ELC 2.7](#) before applying.

### **Disciplinary Advisory Round Table (DART)**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Disciplinary Advisory Round Table (DART) acts as a forum for the discussion of issues affecting the discipline system for licensed legal professionals in Washington State. DART provides an annual report to the Washington Supreme Court and the Board of Governors and makes recommendations for change and the identification of concerns or issues. Appointment is for a three-year term.

### **Records Request Appeals Officer (RRAO)**

[See detailed position description](#)

The Records Request Appeals Officer (RRAO) conducts any requested second-level review, following a first-level review by the Executive Director, of records disclosure decisions made by WSBA’s public records officer in response to a records request. Review by the RRAO is informal and summary but, in the sole discretion of the RRAO, may include briefing and oral argument. Decisions of the RRAO are final unless the requestor asks for, and the Washington Supreme Court decides to grant, discretionary review. See Washington General Rule (GR) 12.4(h)(2) (Washington State Bar Association Access to Records). Although there are certain key differences between GR 12.4 and the Washington Public Records Act, RCW 42.56, lawyers with Public Records Act experience are encouraged to apply. Initial appointment is for one year, and may be followed by reappointment for two-year terms. Applicants must be active Attorney members of the WSBA.