



WSBA Diversity

Demographic Highlights for WSBA Members of Racial Minorities

In 2012, the Washington State Bar Association conducted a statewide demographic survey of its membership. The goals of this effort were to understand the composition of those in the profession and examine career transitions. At the time of the study, WSBA membership totaled more than 35,000 attorneys. Data was collected and analyzed from active, inactive, and former members (those who ceased membership in the last five years). Seven diversity groups were identified and data was analyzed on group characteristics and job setting experiences. These groups included **racial minorities**, older members (40+), sexual minorities, women, primary parents and caregivers to older or disabled adults, persons with disabilities, and military personnel and veterans.

Quick Facts

For racial minorities

- 8%** Report being a parent or caregiver
- 7%** Report having a disability or impairment
- 3%** Report being in the military or a veteran
- 9%** Report being 40 years or older
- 4%** Report being a sexual minority

Membership

Racially diverse members represent **12%** of the Washington State Bar Association membership

Racially diverse members report an average age of 43 years.

18% of all WSBA members practice outside of Washington. Of those, **20%** report being racially diverse.

Practice

Average years licensed for racially diverse members is **13** years.

Employment Settings for Racially Diverse Members

(includes active and inactive members)

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Group Law Firm | 32.5% |
| Solo Practice | 14% |
| Govt., Fed./State/ Local/Tribal | 14.9% |
| Retired | 1.8% |
| Corporate | 8.8% |
| Business, Outside Law | 8.8% |
| Unemployed | 5.3% |
| Public Interest/Other | |
| Nonprofit | 4.4% |
| Education | 3.5% |
| Public Interest, Legal | 1.8% |
| Superior/District courts | 2.6% |
| Mediation | * |
| Federal Court | * |
| Appellate Court | .9% |
| Local/Municipal Court | .9% |

* less than 1%

Key Findings

- **12%** of WSBA members fall within a protected class because they are racial minorities.
- Racial minorities experienced **barriers** to opportunity and advancement at a rate higher than all other diversity groups.
- **31%** of active members who are racially diverse are solo practitioners.
- WSBA members who identify as **racial minorities** are primarily located in King, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties.

The profession is changing. The business interests of attorneys, employers, and clients call for more diverse legal representation across the state. WSBA is committed to supporting and advancing diversity and inclusion in the profession. In demonstration of its ongoing commitment, WSBA seeks to:

- Ensure a more racially diverse Continuing Legal Education faculty that better reflects its membership and the clients they serve.
- Increase networking opportunities in partnership with minority bar associations to connect racially diverse members to the larger membership.