

2025-2030 WSBA EQUITY AND JUSTICE PLAN

The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) recognizes the crucial role that diversity and inclusion play in advancing equity in our legal profession and justice in our legal system. We believe that a legal profession that reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve and fosters inclusion and belonging among its members will improve public trust and confidence in the profession. The Equity and Justice Plan aims to strengthen our legal profession, advance a legal system that is fair and accessible, and demonstrate our commitment to equitable decision-making. The authority for this work stems from the Washington State Supreme Court’s inherent and plenary authority to regulate the practice of law. Through General Rule 12.2, the Court explicitly delegates to WSBA the responsibility to “promote diversity and equality in the courts and legal profession” and “promote an effective legal system, accessible to all.” This plan honors the mandates set forth by the Washington Supreme Court and is informed by the 2024 membership demographic study and input from a broad representation of our membership including members who are underrepresented and historically marginalized. The plan’s goals affirm WSBA’s unwavering commitment to its mission—to serve the public and members, ensure the integrity of the profession, and champion justice.

EQUITY AND JUSTICE PLAN’S THREE GOALS



GOAL #1: Strengthen the legal profession by fostering belonging and building community.

VISION FOR SUCCESS: The legal profession reflects the public we serve, and every legal professional feels they belong in the legal community and can thrive regardless of their social identity and background.

STRATEGIES:

- Partner with affinity bar associations, underrepresented communities and organizations working to make the legal profession more reflective of the public we serve and accessible to all communities, particularly those who are underserved.
- Leverage and improve data collection, analysis and reporting to learn from the data, identify inequities, ease entry and acceptance into the profession and reduce and eliminate disparities in the delivery of legal services.
- Equip legal leaders including employers and the judiciary to meaningfully remove barriers to inclusion and belonging for legal professionals regardless of their social identity and background.
- Support opportunities that promote wellness, mentorship, leadership, accessibility and community for all members regardless of their social identity and background.
- Explore and support innovative pathways to the profession.

GOAL #2: Advance a fair, inclusive, effective, and accessible legal system for all people in our State.

VISION FOR SUCCESS: All Washingtonians have access to high quality and affordable legal services delivered with cultural humility.

STRATEGIES:

- Support innovative legal services delivery models that provide more affordable legal services to the most underserved and marginalized communities in our state.
- Implement changes that make WSBA more accessible for people with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency.
- Equip Bar members and other legal practitioners with knowledge and tools to improve the quality of legal services for all including underserved and marginalized communities.
- Support policymaking efforts that address a lack of quality legal services.

GOAL #3: Deepen and broaden the Bar’s commitment to equitable decision-making.

VISION FOR SUCCESS: Members of the Bar act and practice in ways consistent with WSBA’s mission and values of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and justice for all and the public express confidence and trust in the legal profession.

STRATEGIES:

- Authentically engage the public by moving from informing and consulting to involving and collaborating.
- Equip Bar leaders and volunteers to apply an equity lens to their work so equitable decision-making is advanced.
- Facilitate a culture of belonging and inclusion among all Bar entities.
- Create and share accessible and digestible reports on progress on equitable decision- and policymaking.