Washington New Members Committee

Washington New Members Committee Meeting | Virtual via Microsoft Teams
Saturday, November 14, 2026| 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Via Teams | Meeting ID: 289 382 929 176 080 | Passcode: bW6bT6yH

AGENDA:

1. Welcome, Introductions, Approval of October Minutes – Janta (10 mins)
2. WSBA Updates –Jordan, Chelle (20 mins)
3. ABA Scholarship Application Voting – all (10 mins)
4. February Bar Exam Social Vote – all (10 mins)
5. Regular Meeting Schedule Confirmation – all (5 mins)
6. WNMC Orientation – Chelle (75 mins)
   Break for Lunch (30 mins)
7. Project Team Discussions – all (15 mins)
   a. FY26 Review & FY27 Planning (30 mins)
   b. Defining Smart Goals (30 mins)
   c. Report Out (15 mins)
8. Adjournment – Janta

WASHINGTON STATE
BAR ASSOCIATION

CHARTER

WASHINGTON NEW MEMBERS COMMITTEE

Adopted: September 24, 2026.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the WNMC shall be to support the professional development of new members of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) by providing mentorship, leadership opportunities, and resources that address pressing challenges such as student debt and practical skills gaps. The committee aims to serve as a trusted resource for stakeholders and foster meaningful new member engagement within the legal community.

Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1. Be Data-Driven.

- *Objective A*: Collect and analyze data on new members' needs through post-licensure surveys and other evaluative forms.
- *Objective B*: Produce reports and provide recommendations to the Board of Governors based on data-driven insights.
- *Objective C*: Regularly explore and develop independent committee projects and participate in projects across WSBA in line with appropriate data.

Goal 2: Advocate.

- *Objective A:* Represent, advise and advocate for new members within the WSBA Board of Governors and other decision-makers to ensure new member issues and voices are included in decision-making.
- *Objective B:* Address regular and emerging challenges unique to new members, such as transition to practice and opportunities for practical skills development.

Goal 3. Grow and Connect.

- *Objective A:* Establish robust pathways and partnerships to ensure new members feel supported in the profession.
- *Objective B:* Strengthen connections with law schools, affinity bars, along with WSBA entities and programs.
- *Objective C:* Foster a positive culture and meaningful networks of support.

Goal 4: Pro Bono Empowerment.

- *Objective A:* Build and promote partnerships that enable and encourage new members to engage in pro bono work.
- *Objective B:* Provide a positive example of volunteerism within the Washington State Bar Association.

Goal 5: Professional Development.

- *Objective A:* Promote CLEs, experiential learning, and leadership opportunities tailored to new members.
- *Objective B:* Increase engagement through section liaison roles and other leadership opportunities.
- *Objective C:* Develop and/or promote formal and informal mentorship programs to facilitate development of legal practice skills.

Meetings

- Time and Place: The WNMC shall aspire to meet monthly, unless otherwise noted by this Charter or at the discretion of the Chair;
    - Additionally, the WNMC shall aspire that one meeting per quarter is held in-person or a hybrid fashion.
        - If such meetings are held, at least one should be set for a time and place that aligns with a regular Board of Governors meeting.
- Meeting Expectations:
    - The Chair shall establish an agenda for each meeting and ensure such agendas are distributed approximately one week prior to each meeting, in coordination with the WNMC Staff Liaison(s).
    - If the Chair is unable to attend any scheduled meeting, the Chair-Elect shall assume the role and its responsibilities for that meeting; if the Chair-Elect is also unavailable, then the Immediate Past Chair shall assume the same.
    - It is expected that all members of the WNMC shall have no more than two unexcused absences from regular meetings.
    - It is expected that all members of the WNMC shall actively participate in at least one project team.

Committee Membership

- Leadership Team:
    - The Chairs:
        - Chair
        - Chair-Elect, as Vice Chair
        - Immediate Past Chair

- WSBA Board of Governors Liaison, *ex-officio* (non-voting, generally)[1]
- WNMC Staff Liaison(s), *ex officio* (non-voting, generally)[2]

- Congressional District Representatives (Eligibility based on either home or work address):
  - District 1
  - District 2
  - District 3
  - District 4
  - District 5
  - District 6
  - District 7 (North)[3]
  - District 7 (South)[4]
  - District 8
  - District 9
  - District 10
- Six Statewide At-Large Representatives:
  - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Representative:
    - The DEI Representative shall act as the lead in promoting diversity and inclusion within the WSBA New Member community, as well as serve as a liaison, when necessary, between the WNMC and other DEI-related entities within WSBA. The representative shall also work with WNMC leadership and project teams to ensure that WNMC initiatives are considered and operated with a sense of equity and justice for all new members.
  - Pro Bono & Public Service Representative:
    - The Pro Bono & Public Service Representative shall act as the lead in promoting Goal 4 of this Charter. In so doing, the representative shall act as a liaison between the WNMC, the New Member community at-large, related WSBA entities, and other relevant external stakeholders when appropriate.
  - Solo & Small Practice Representative:

[1] *See infra* "Recommendations Subcommittee"
[2] *See infra* "Recommendations Subcommittee"
[3] As defined by zip code boundaries established for the District 7 (North) position on the WSBA Board of Governors.
[4] As defined by zip code boundaries established for the District 7 (South) position on the WSBA Board of Governors.

    - The Solo & Small Practice Representative shall be a voice on behalf of new members within the solo & small practice community. In so doing, when appropriate, the representative shall act as a liaison to the Solo & Small Practice Section and the Small Town and Rural (STAR) Council.
  - Three General At-Large Representatives
- Terms:
  - The voting members of the WNMC shall be appointed for a term of three years.
  - The terms of At-Large and District Representatives shall be staggered so no more than one-third of these positions' terms end each year, categorized accordingly:
    - Class A (with terms beginning October 1, 2026):
      - At-Large: General Representative (Class A)
      - At-Large: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Representative
      - District 2
      - District 5
      - District 7 (North)
      - District 10
    - Class B (with terms beginning October 1, 2027):
      - At-Large: General Representative (Class B)
      - At-Large: Public Service Representative
      - District 3
      - District 4
      - District 7 (South)
    - Class C (with terms beginning October 1, 2028)
      - At-Large: General Representative (Class C)
      - At-Large: Solo & Small Practice Representative
      - District 1
      - District 6
      - District 8
      - District 9

Nominations and Appointment

- The WSBA Executive Director will designate WSBA staff liaison(s) to support the WNMC, as the WNMC Staff Liaison(s).
- WNMC Committee members will be appointed by the Board of Governors in accordance with WSBA Bylaws, upon recommendation by the WNMC's Recommendations Subcommittee.
- **Recommendations Subcommittee:**
    - The purpose of the Recommendations Subcommittee shall be to review and consider all applicants to voting positions on the WNMC, as well as recommend qualifying candidates to the Board of Governors for appointment.
    - The Recommendations Subcommittee shall include all members of the WNMC Leadership Team.
        - Recommendation decisions shall be decided by a majority vote of the Subcommittee, with five total votes allocated accordingly:
            - One vote for the Chair;
            - One vote for the Chair-Elect;
            - One vote for the Immediate Past Chair;
            - One collective vote for the WSBA Staff Liaison(s), and;
            - One vote for the WSBA Board of Governors Liaison.
        - It is understood that decisions by the Recommendations Subcommittee are preferred to be unanimous. However, should there be a significant split as to a recommendation that cannot be resolved:
            - The Recommendations Subcommittee shall put forth two potential recommendations to the full committee for advice and consent on a single recommendation, to be decided by majority vote of the full committee.
    - *Chair-Elect Recommendations:* The Recommendations Subcommittee shall recommend a Chair-Elect, from amongst qualifying applicants for the position, no later than the last day of February, each year, for service beginning October 1, following appointment by the WSBA-BOG President-Elect in accordance with WSBA Bylaws.
        - Should a current district or at-large representative be appointed as Chair- Elect, the position of said representative shall become vacant and any remaining term shall be open for applications during the regular committee recruitment process (beginning in April of each year), unless the position is filled by a mid-term appointment in accordance with the WSBA Bylaws and this Charter.
        - Those selected as Chair-Elect shall serve a three-year term, split accordingly: one year as Chair-Elect; one year as Chair, and; one year as Immediate Past-Chair.

- *At-Large, District Representative Recommendations:* The Recommendations Subcommittee shall recommend individuals to the at-large and district representative positions based on factors which will achieve the broadest range of diversity, practice area, and experience possible.
- *Prolonged Vacancies:* If any at-large or district representative positions have not been filled after six consecutive months of vacancy, the Recommendations Subcommittee may recommend to such position(s) any qualified new member(s) that agree to represent the perspective of that position in good faith, regardless of the individual's practice area or district of residence/employment.

Success Criteria

- Data showing net-positive new member satisfaction and integration across current and relevant priorities.
- Increased evidence of new members regularly attending, engaging with, and providing evaluative feedback on WNMC events and initiatives.
- Regular communication with new members, with corresponding positive social media engagement analytics.
- A fully staffed and engaged committee both in terms of attendance and project team participation.
- Proactive engagement and consultation with the WNMC by the WSBA Board of Governors and other bar entities.

Reporting & Evaluation

- *Annual Report*. The committee will produce an annual report pursuant to the WSBA Bylaws.
- *Charter and Entity Evaluation*. The work of the committee and its charter should be reviewed and renewed by the Board of Governors every five years after approval of the original charter.

Supremacy and Clean-Up

- This document shall be considered superior to and replace all previous WNMC governing documents and policies related to the topics above. This includes the 2014 Washington Young Lawyers Committee Appointment Policy, previous bylaws for the former WYLC and WYLD, and any other such documents not named here.
- Upon the approval of any relevant WSBA Bylaws amendment, this Charter shall be updated accordingly to reflect that change and ensure continued compliance with the WSBA Bylaws.

WASHINGTON STATE
BAR ASSOCIATION

Washington New Members Committee

Washington New Members Committee Meeting
Microsoft Teams
Monday, October 19, 2026, | 12:01 – 1:33 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

WNMC Members Present: Olena Bedenko, Ayushi Bharti, Steven Brown, Ariel Cook (departed 12:25 p.m.), Ashley Cummins (arrived 12:58 p.m.), Hanna Harrison, Nora Hendricks, Ashok Kumar, Mackenzie Lloyd, Tyler O'Brien, Alexander Reaganson, Meaghan Schess, Janta Steele
WNMC Members Absent: Fatima Al-Rikabi (unexcused), Chawisa Laicharoenwat (unexcused), Samantha Stanfill (unexcused)
Board of Governors Liaison: Jordan Couch (absent)
Public Attendees: Nick Valade, Piper Tolbert
WSBA Staff: Chelle Gegax – WSBA Member Services and Engagement Staff Liaison, Vanessa Sweeney – WSBA Member Services and Engagement Program Coordinator

Welcome & Introductions; Approval of September Meetings Minutes – Janta

WNMC Chair Janta Steele opened the meeting at 12:01 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Introductions were made by all in attendance.

On motion by WNMC Member Alexander Reaganson, seconded by WNMC Member Mackenzie Lloyd, and abstentions by WNMC Members Tyler O'Brien, Olena Bedenko, and Ayushi Bharti, the WNMC approved the WNMC September Meeting minutes (8-0-3).

Alex clarified that a misunderstanding occurred at the September Board of Governors (BOG) meeting: Rule 9 licensing fees were not expected to be addressed, and all licensing fees were expected to be considered together rather than separately, as in previous discussions. Rule 9 provides a limited license that generally allows eligible law students or APR 6 participants to appear in court. As a result of the misunderstanding, the committee missed the opportunity to contest the proposed significant increase in the Rule 9 licensing fee.

WSBA Updates – Jordan, Chelle

WSBA Member Services and Engagement Staff Liaison Chelle Gegax provided WSBA updates, including a reminder that licensing season is approaching, and payment plans are available. The Lawyers in the Classroom program are seeking additional volunteers. Anyone interested may reach out to Chelle for more information.

Regarding the FY27 BOG schedule, Chelle shared that WSBA President Kari Petrasek has invited the WNMC to join the BOG for dinner during the July BOG meeting in Ferndale, WA. Dinner will take place on Friday, July 9, and the WNMC meeting will take place on July 10. Additionally, the WNMC is invited to

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join at the September BOG meeting in Vancouver, and dinner on January 15 in Seattle. Janta reminded the Committee that expenses are covered. Chelle summarized the September BOG meeting, including approval of the FY27 budget and the swearing-in of new BOG leadership. Alex noted continued discussion about requiring graduation from an ABA-accredited law school to sit for the Washington bar exam.

Janta mentioned a full orientation with the WNMC will be hybrid and in-person in Seattle on November 14, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. The agenda will include a brainstorm session to identify a plan for what people would like to pursue this year as a committee.

Committee Structure – Janta, Chelle

Leadership team: Alex, Janta, Ariel

Janta explained that the leadership team consists of Alex as immediate past chair, Janta as Chair, and WNMC Member Ariel Cook as Chair-elect. There are certain decisions, as outlined in the WNMC Charter, which are delegated to the leadership team, but the majority of decisions are made by the whole committee

Committee Charter

The Committee developed the charter over the past year, and it was recently approved by the BOG. Its mission is to advance new members' professional development through mentorship, leadership opportunities, and resources addressing key challenges, including student debt and gaps in practical skills. The committee also aims to be a trusted resource for stakeholders and encourage meaningful engagement among new members of the legal community. To fulfill this mission, the committee will use data to guide its work, advocate for new members, create opportunities to connect and grow, empower people for pro bono service, and promote professional development.

Committee Member Participation

The committee aims to serve as a trusted resource for stakeholders and foster meaningful new member engagement within the legal community. It uses data-driven advocacy to represent new members' interests statewide, ensure their perspectives are heard by the Board of Governors, and create opportunities for members to connect and grow. Although it has a strong social component, its broader purpose is to help new members build networks, learn from one another, and benefit from being part of a supportive professional community.

Current Project Teams: CLE (Chawisa, Hanna), Social Media (Ariel), Mentorship (Janta), Awards (Alex)

Janta noted that there are currently four existing project teams, one of them is the CLE team, led by WNMC Member Chawisa Laischorowat, and WNMC Member Hanna Harrison. The social media project team is led by WNMC Member Ariel Coook. The Public Service and Leadership Award project team is led by Alex. And the mentorship project team is led by Janta. Janta noted that the next Lunch and Learn event is coming up on November 18, with the topic of work/life balance. Janta added that the committee should plan to look at the current project teams and develop an agenda for project teams going forward based on what the committee is excited about.

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Communications & Material Management – Chelle

The WNMC primarily communicates through the WSBA list serve, including a dedicated list serve for new members. Members should add the list serve email addresses to their approved-sender lists and regularly check spam or junk folders to avoid missing messages and meeting information. Because communications may be subject to public disclosure and workplace security policies can block list serve messages, members may wish to use a separate personal email address for bar-related communications; staff can update contact information upon request. The WNMC Microsoft Teams channel will serve as the central location for project materials, past meeting resources, and collaborative work, and members who have not received access should contact staff. Going forward, meeting materials will no longer be attached to list serve emails but will instead be linked through the WNMC website on the WSBA page, which is currently being updated to replace outdated information and add new resources.

Recruiting for vacant WNMC positions

Chelle shared the list of names of the incoming WNMC representatives, and added that districts 7N, 9, 10, and 3 remain vacant at this time and targeted recruiting will take place soon.

Immediate volunteer opportunities

Chelle mentioned the upcoming MentorLink Mixer, which is scheduled for this Wednesday, October 21, in partnership with the WNMC, on the topic of networking and community building. Chelle asked if WNMC members are interested in participating as a mentor to feel free to join. Tyler and Alex confirmed their attendance as mentors.

Choosing Swag

Janta noted there is an opportunity to help select swag items to represent the WNMC. WNMC Member Hanna Harrison volunteered to help with swag efforts.

Guest Piper Tolbert, Law Advocates of Whatcom County

WNMC meeting guest, Piper Tolbert, Programs Manager at Law Advocates of Whatcom County, explained that the organization is part of Washington's statewide network of volunteer lawyer programs and qualified legal service providers and encouraged attorneys to connect first with providers in their local counties. Law Advocates offers civil legal aid focused largely on family law, tenant services, family safety planning, and other matters affecting basic needs, supported by community partners, the Whatcom County Bar Association, continuing legal education programs, and volunteer attorneys. Piper highlighted a growing need for attorneys willing to provide remote initial consultations, limited-scope assistance, virtual court representation, and support through programs such as Street Law clinics, particularly for clients facing work, child-care, transportation, or geographic barriers. Piper also expressed interest in partnering with the committee on MentorLink Mixers, Lunch and Learn sessions, post-bar-exam events, mentorship opportunities, and other collaborative efforts during the coming fiscal year. Piper shared a link and contact info: Get Legal Help | Washington Law Help, programsmanager@lawadvocates.org / 360-588-6292.

WNMC Member Ashley Cummins shared a volunteer opportunity with the King County Bar Association Records Project and Lavendar Rights Project, open to attorneys for pro bono training for law students at Seattle University on November 4. Trained volunteer attorneys will receive cases prepared by students,

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including draft petitions, proposed orders, and supporting documents. Ashley noted that the opportunity supports broader efforts to identify additional pro bono work for WNMC members and new members.

American Bar Association delegation & Scholarship

Janta explained that the WNMC can send five people to the ABA conferences in Chicago, held in February and in late July/early August. Chelle clarified that the budget is $2,000 per person: four spots are reserved for committee members, and one is available to an external non-member. Referring to the ABA Scholarship application in the meeting materials, Chelle explained that before promoting the award, the WNMC must approve the application and set an application deadline. Because of the limited timeline, the leadership team should be authorized to select the recipient without convening the full committee for a quorum and vote. The opportunity will be open to everyone, and Vanessa and Chelle will identify internal and public applicants on the application.

On motion by Janta, seconded by WNMC Member Ashok Kumar, the WNMC approved the ABA Scholarship materials with a December 11, 2026, deadline (11-0-0).

FY27 Meeting / Events Schedule - Janta

Monthly virtual meetings – which day and time

The WNMC discussed schedule options for monthly meetings, and it seems the fourth Tuesday of every month, 12-1 p.m., works for most of the group. Chelle will distribute a poll to confirm.

February and July Bar Exam Socials

Both the February and July 2027 bar exams are scheduled to take place in Tacoma. Tyler and Janta mentioned they will plan to attend the after-bar exam socials, and Ashley added attending July's after bar exam social.

Spring 2027 in Yakima with local bar

Janta noted that the WNMC can consider holding a New Member social this year in Yakima, in partnership with the Yakima Bar Association.

Chelle brought up the consideration of holding a New Member Social following the WNMC meeting on November 14. On motion WNMC Member Steven Brown, seconded by Tyler, the WNMC approved holding a New Member Social following the WNMC Meeting on November 14 in Seattle (11-0-0).

Idea Board for November 14 Meeting – Janta, Ariel

Adjournment

Janta adjourned the meeting at 1:33 p.m.

Some material in this document was generated using Microsoft Copilot and was reviewed and modified by Vanessa Sweeney, WSBA Member Services and Engagement.

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RAPID Decision-Making	
TOPIC:	
QUESTION:	
KEY	
R	Recommend: Person(s)s making the recommendation.
A	Agree: Person(s) who must agree with the recommendation.
P	Perform: Person(s) who will implement the decision.
I	Input: Person(s) providing input to the recommendations.
D	Decide: The person making the decision.

RECOMMENDATION	
Name Title Department Date	
AGREE	
Name Title Department Date	
Name Title Department Date	
PERFORM	
Name Title Department Date	
Name Title Department Date	
INPUT	
Name Title Department Date	
Name Title Department Date	
Name	

Title Department Date	
DECISION	
Name Title Department Date	

WSBA SMART GOALS

SMART GOALS are an effective framework for the creation of goals for an individual or team. SMART Goals detail the work you and your team hope to accomplish and helps to foster and communicate clear expectations of shared success.

Goal: 1	What is something your entity wants to achieve next year?
Specific	How can you make the above goal more specific? What will be accomplished? What actions will you take?
Measurable	Is the goal something you can measure? If not, what changes could you to have something to measure? What data will measure the goal (How much? How well?)
Achievable	Is the goal doable and realistic? Do you have the necessary skills, capacity and resources?
Relevant	How does the goal align with broader goals (organizational mission & strategic goals as well as larger entity goals)? Why is the result of the goal important?
Time-Bound	What is the time frame for accomplishing the goal? Does this goal require BOG Action? If so, when would you like BOG to take action on this goal?