

## **CHARTER**

### **Licensure Pathways Implementation Steering Committee**

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On March 15, 2024, the Washington Supreme Court entered an order adopting in concept the recommendations of the Washington Bar Licensure Task Force regarding the creation of additional pathways to licensure as a lawyer, including graduate apprenticeship, law school experiential pathways, APR 6 law clerk apprenticeship, alternative assessments and interventions for established lawyers, and reciprocity. The Supreme Court directed the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) to convene and support an implementation committee to propose rule changes and identify the next steps necessary to implement the recommendations. To that end, the Supreme Court approved establishment of the Licensure Pathways Implementation Steering Committee to carry out the implementation of the Court's order. This Steering Committee is a joint effort of the Washington Supreme Court and the WSBA.

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The role of the Steering Committee is to ensure fidelity to the recommendations of the Washington Bar Licensure Task Force and to provide policy level direction and decision-making for the implementation of those recommendations. The Steering Committee will create subcommittees to conduct research and draft specific policies, select subcommittee members, and monitor subcommittee activities as liaisons. The Steering Committee will have the final authority to approve or reject subcommittee proposals prior to them being sent to the final decisionmaker for approval and implementation.

This Charter constituting the Steering Committee shall continue in effect until implementation of the Task Force recommendations has been finalized.

#### **Composition**

The Steering Committee is composed of 18 individuals drawn from entities and communities that will be impacted by changes to the licensure pathways and who are necessary to help carry out the implementation of the Court's March 15, 2024 order. The Steering Committee is made up of the following individuals:

- A representative of the Washington Supreme Court;
- The Deans of each of Washington's three law schools—Gonzaga University School of Law, Seattle University School of Law, and University of Washington School of Law;
- The WSBA Executive Director;
- A representative of the Washington Board of Bar Examiners;
- Two representatives of the WSBA Board of Governors;
- A representative of the WSBA Law Clerk Board who was admitted to practice law through the APR 6 Law Clerk Program;
- A representative of the WSBA Character and Fitness Board;
- Two law students currently attending a Washington law school;
- A current participant in the WSBA Law Clerk Program;
- Two individuals with significant consumer protection experience;
- One individual with access to justice experience; and
- Two at-large members licensed to practice law in Washington.

The positions for the law school Deans and WSBA Executive Director will be filled by the individuals employed in those capacities during the time the Steering Committee is performing its work. Where Steering Committee positions are reserved for representatives of existing entities—namely, the Washington Supreme Court, Board of Bar Examiners, Law Clerk Board, Character and Fitness Board, and WSBA Board of Governors—those entities will designate an individual to serve on the Steering Committee. The law student, law clerk, consumer protection, and at-large member positions will be appointed by the Supreme Court following an application process and review of candidates by the WSBA. The access to justice position will also be appointed by the Supreme Court following an application process and review of candidates by the Access to Justice (ATJ) Board.

#### *Steering Committee Chair*

The Chair of the Steering Committee will be a nonvoting member and will be designated by the Supreme Court from among the at-large committee members. In the event the Chair is unable to be present at a meeting, they may designate another committee member to act on their behalf at a committee meeting. The designee will be a nonvoting member of the Committee when acting in place of the Chair.

#### **Vacancies and Removal**

The individuals designated by the Board of Bar Examiners, Law Clerk Board, Character and Fitness Board, and WSBA Board of Governors will continue to serve on the Steering Committee even if their membership on their respective entities ends. In such an event, Steering Committee members will be expected to keep their former entities informed of Steering Committee business and convey the perspectives of the entity to the Steering Committee. Similarly, the law student and law clerk members' appointment to the Committee will not end by virtue of their graduation from their respective programs.

In the event of a vacancy in the law student, law clerk, consumer protection, access to justice, or at-large member positions, the Washington Supreme Court will appoint a replacement following an application process and review of candidates by the WSBA or, in the case of the access to justice position, by the ATJ Board.

With respect to the positions for the law school Deans and WSBA Executive Director, vacancies created by the Committee member leaving employment as dean or WSBA Executive Director will be filled by the subsequent individual employed in that capacity.

The Washington Supreme Court will designate a replacement representative to fill any vacancies in the Court position.

Committee members may be removed by the Supreme Court. Grounds for removal include, but are not limited to, frequent unexcused absences from Committee meetings and events, failure to perform duties, unprofessional or discourteous conduct or whenever, in the Supreme Court's judgment, the Committee member is not acting in the best interest of bar members and the public.

#### **Meetings**

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**Licensure Pathways Implementation**  
**Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee will meet as necessary to conduct committee business.<sup>1</sup> The Steering Committee will abide by the open meetings policy contained in Article VII, Section B of the WSBA Bylaws. All Steering Committee members are expected to attend each meeting. In the event not all Committee members are present at a meeting, the presence of nine voting Committee members constitutes a quorum. The Committee may conduct business in the Committee's name and make binding decisions at meetings where a quorum is present.

Whenever possible, it will be the practice of the Steering Committee to conduct business by consensus. However, decisions of the Steering Committee may be made by a majority vote of Committee members in attendance at the time the vote takes place. Proxy voting is not permitted.

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<sup>1</sup> Although not required, it is anticipated that the Steering Committee will meet at least quarterly.