

WASHINGTON STATE B A R A S S O C I A T I O N

PRACTICE OF LAW BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2025: October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025

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

Name of Entity:	Practice of Law Board
Chair:	Lesli Ashley
Vice Chair:	Melissa Kover
Staff Liaison: <i>(include name, job title, and department if known)</i>	Bobby Henry, Associate Director for Regulatory Services Department
Board of Governors Liaison:	Kevin Fay
Purpose of Entity: <i>May be stated in Bylaws, Charter, Court Rule, etc.</i>	
The Practice of Law Board (POLB) derives its authority from rule 25 of the General Rules. As a Washington Supreme Court board, members are appointed by the Court. A roster of members is attached. The functions of the POLB are to: educate the public about how to receive competent legal assistance, recommend to the Court new avenues for persons not currently authorized to practice law to provide legal and law-related services, and review and refer complaints alleging the unauthorized practice of law. GR 25(b).	
Strategy to Fulfill Purpose:	
The POLB meets once a month to carry out its functions. Agendas and minutes are posted on the POLB page of the WSBA website. In addition, the POLB has several subcommittees which meet as needed to gather information, develop programs, or review materials and applications in order to make recommendations to the Board as decision-maker. A list of subcommittees is attached.	
How does the entity's purpose help further the mission of the WSBA "to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice"?	
The POLB's functions directly relate to the WSBA mission. The POLB educates the public about legal services. The POLB refers complaints alleging unauthorized practice of law to appropriate law enforcement agencies to ensure the integrity of the legal profession. The POLB recommends new avenues for delivering legal services to increase the public's access to justice.	
2024-2025 Accomplishments:	

The majority of the POLB’s efforts for fiscal year 2025 related to the development, recommendation, and ultimate approval by the Court of the Entity Regulation Pilot Project. In addition, POLB members worked with WSBA staff to implement and successfully launch the Pilot Project at the start of fiscal year 2026 (on October 21, 2025).	
The POLB will take an active role in the regulation of the Pilot Project. Because of the new regulatory role, staffing for the POLB moved from the Office of General Counsel to the Regulatory Services Department.	
The POLB delegated review and referral of complaints alleging the unauthorized practice of law to WSBA staff. The POLB reviews all actions taken by staff at each board meeting. A brief summary of UPL complaints disposed of for fiscal year 2025 is attached.	
Next Fiscal Year: 2025-2026 Top SMART Goals & Priorities: <i>SMART Goals can be an effective framework for the creation of goal; they detail the work you and your team hope to accomplish and help to foster and communicate clear expectations.</i> <i>SMART Goals are: Specific, Measurable, Relevant and Time-Bound</i> <i>Use the WSBA SMART Goals Worksheet to detail the groups 2024-2025 goals. After using the worksheet to describe your goals, summarize the top three SMART Goals in 2-3 sentences below.</i>	
1	The POLB has formed an Education Committee to look at various projects to educate the public about access to legal services. One project is to create a website or webpage for the public for centralized and enhanced access to educational materials. Another goal is to improve the usability of the legal directory, making it easier for the public to navigate and find relevant legal resources. The focus is not only on locating a lawyer but also on helping individuals evaluate legal professionals and understand what to expect when working with one.
2	The POLB has formed a UPL Committee. The goal for this committee, which has not yet started its work, is to gather data from a variety of sources about complaints relating to the unauthorized practice of law and, based on an analysis of that data, develop an understanding of the status of the unauthorized practice of law (UPL), develop a plan for addressing UPL, and educate the public about authorized and regulated legal services.
3	The POLB formed a Entity Regulation Application Committee. The goal for this committee is to develop a rubric for assessing applications for the Pilot Project. The committee will develop a process for reviewing and assessing applications in order to make a recommendation to the full Board. The committee will also assist the POLB in any potential future updates to the application and the application process.
Looking Ahead: <i>Please share any long-term goals and/or priorities your entity seeks to address, beyond the next fiscal year.</i>	

1	The work of the education and UPL committees is likely to extend beyond fiscal year 2026.
2	The POLB will continue to work with WSBA staff on gathering and analyzing data from the Entity Regulation Pilot Project to further the goals of making an informed decision about future regulatory reform.
3	Click or tap here to enter text.
Please describe how this entity is addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion: <i>How have you elicited input from a variety of perspectives in decision-making? What techniques do you use to promote a culture of inclusion within the board or committee? How do you seek to elicit inclusive decision-making amongst your group? What more would you like to see done in this area to better support the needs of your entity?</i>	
The POLB recruits members of diverse backgrounds both demographic and professional experience. The POLB actively seeks the input from all its members during board and committee meetings.	
Please share feedback regarding the support and engagement provided by WSBA. <i>For example:</i> • <i>Quality of WSBA staff support/services, including technology solutions</i> • <i>Involvement with Board of Governors, including assigned BOG liaison</i> • <i>Ideas you have on ways WSBA can continue to strengthen/support your entity.</i>	
The POLB has a positive, collaborative relationship with WSBA Staff, the BOG liaison, and the ATJ Board liaison. BOX, Teams, and Zoom have all been helpful to board members for access to materials and conducting meetings.	



PRACTICE *of* LAW BOARD

Established by Washington Supreme Court
Administered by the WSBA

Lesli Ashley, Chair

2025-2026 Roster

Member/Position	Term
Lesli Ashley, Chair (10/1/25 – 9/30/26) (3 rd Term) LLLT Member lesli@empowerfamilylawllt.com	10/01/2024 – 09/30/2027 <i>2nd Term</i>
Melissa Kover, Vice-Chair (10/1/25 – 9/30/26) (1 st Term) Public Member melissamkover@gmail.com	10/01/2024 – 09/30/2027 <i>1st Term</i>
John Dirgo Deweese Public Member johndirgodeweese@gmail.com	01/30/2025 – 09/30/2027 <i>1st Term</i>
Rory Hardy LLLT Member hardylegal@gmail.com	10/01/2023 – 09/30/2026 <i>1st Term</i>
Cindy Kim Public Member cindykim100@gmail.com	10/01/2025 – 9/30/2028 <i>1st Term</i>
Ellen Reed Public Member ellenclairereed@gmail.com	10/01/2025 – 09/30/2028 <i>2nd Term</i>
Ronald Satterthwaite Lawyer Member rsattert@sargenthayes.com	10/01/2023 – 09/30/2026 <i>1st Term</i>
Craig Shank Lawyer Member craigshank@ces.world	10/01/2025 – 09/30/2028 <i>2nd Term</i>
Leah Snyder Lawyer Member leah@emberlaw.com	10/01/2025 – 09/30/2028 <i>1st Term</i>
Murugeshwari Subramanian Public Member murugeshwariravi15@gmail.com	10/01/2024 – 09/30/2027 <i>1st Term</i>
Michael Terasaki Lawyer Member michael@probonocouncil.org	10/01/2023 – 09/30/2026 <i>1st Term</i>
Aaron Vanderpol Lawyer Member aj@greenriverlaw.com	10/01/2024 – 09/30/2027 <i>1st Term</i>

Shainna Xi Public Member xixie2018@gmail.com	10/01/2025 – 09/30/2028 <i>1st Term</i>
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Liaisons

Name	Entity
Bobby Henry, Associate Director for Regulatory Services roberth@wsba.org	Washington State Bar Association, Staff Liaison
Anne Trent, RSD Paralegal annet@wsba.org	Washington State Bar Association, Staff Liaison
Governor Kevin Fay kevinfaybog@yahoo.com	WSBA Board of Governors, BOG Liaison



Committees of the Practice of Law Board - FY 2026

Standing Committees

Education Committee: Research, develop, and implement effective methods to educate the public about how to receive competent legal assistance, including how to avoid bad actors or people who might be engaged in the unauthorized practice of law.

1. Michael Terasaki, Chair
2. Lesli Ashley
3. Cindy Kim
4. Melissa Kover
5. Aaron Vanderpol

Entity Regulation Application Review Committee: Review applications from entities for authorization to practice and make recommendations regarding authorization to participate in the pilot project to the full Board.

1. Craig Shank, Chair
2. Cindy Kim
3. Melissa Kover
4. Leah Snyder
5. Michael Terasaki

Recruitment Committee: Review applications for board membership and make nomination recommendations to the full Board.

1. Michael Terasaki, Chair
2. Melissa Kover
3. Ellen Reed

UPL Committee: Liaise with WSBA staff, the Attorney General's office, prosecutors, and law enforcement to collect, analyze, and share data regarding the unauthorized practice of law in Washington.

1. Michael Terasaki, Chair
2. Lesli Ashley
3. Rory Hardy
4. Ron Satterthwaite

2025 UPL Complaints

Received: 26

Referred:19

UPL #	Date of Complaint	Complainant Occupation	Respondent Occupation	UPL Complaint	Brief Summary	Referred	Referred to
25-01	1/30/2025	Individual	Individual	Legal services	Grievant and Respondent are inmates. Grievant alleges that Respondent is providing legal assistance and misrepresenting himself as a lawyer by using his membership in the National Lawyers Guild (which is a public interest organization that does not require admission as a lawyer to be a member--like the ABA).	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-02	1/30/2025	Individual	Individual	Legal services	Respondent is an inmate who admits he assists other inmates with legal procedure and filling out documents.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-03	2/4/2025	Attorney	Individual	Legal documents	Grievant is an attorney and is alleging that Respondent is not an attorney but is acting as one for someone appearing in criminal court. Respondent's response indicate he was acting as an investigative journalist, not as an attorney. He claims that the person appearing in court hired brief writers to assist with the case. The metadata lists Respondent as the author of some of the briefs.	No	N/A
25-04	2/21/2025	Attorney	Voluntarily Resigned Attorn	Legal documents	Grievant is alleging that voluntarily resigned lawyer Respondent is practicing law by filing motions with the court. The case was still open and the filings were regarding fees still owed to Respondent.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-05	2/24/2025	Attorney	Individual	Legal advice	Respondent has a personal relationship with a former board member of Chelan Pride. Board member accused the Board of misappropriating funds and is trying to get those funds moved. Respondent is speaking on behalf of Board member and referring to him as a client.	No	N/A
25-06	3/7/2025	Attorney	Individual	Legal documents	Respondent was retained by the opposing party and is giving legal advice as well as filling out forms. Respondent accepted payment for services	Yes	Pierce County Prosecutor, Pierce County Sheriff, Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-07	3/12/2025	Individual	Paralegal	Legal advice, legal documents	Grievant hired Respondent's Law firm that employs Respondent. Respondent assisted Grievant in preparing legal documents and gave legal advice.	No	N/A
25-08	3/20/2025	Individual	individual	Legal documents	Respondent sent subpoenas to Grievant and his employer.	No	N/A
25-09	4/21/2025	Individual	Attorney Resigned in Lieu	Legal Documents, appeared in court, negotiated legal rights, offered to provide legal services	Respondent drafted and submitted interrogatories and appeared in court with a friend.	Yes	Spokane County Sheriff, Spokane County Prosecutor, Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-10	4/24/2025	Attorney	Paralegal	Legal advice, legal documents, appeared in court, negotiated legal rights, offered to provide legal services	Respondent filed a lawsuit and dismissed it the next day so he could use the case number to forge court documents. He claims to be an attorney with a fake ABA card	Yes	King County Prosecutor, King County Sheriff's Office, Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-11	5/8/2025	Individual	Out of State Attorney	gave legal advice, legal documents	Family law. Grievant's wife is Respondent's sister. After a domestic violence situation, Respondent came to Washington from Idaho to bring her sister to Idaho. After that, Respondent's sister filed for divorce. Grievant is claiming Respondent helped with the legal documents. Respondent stated that she did not help her sister with legal documents.	No	N/A
25-12	5/31/2025	Individual	Individual	Gave legal advice, legal documents, negotiated legal rights, offered to provide legal services	Respondent was drafting documents related to real property like promissory notes	Yes	King County Prosecutor, King County Sheriff's Office, Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-13	6/6/2025	Individual	Individual	gave legal advice, legal documents, negotiated legal rights	Respondent is assisting with a court proceeding and drafting documents. The proceeding is in Idaho.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-14	6/12/2025	Attorney	Paralegal	gave legal advice, legal documents, legal services	Practicing family law without a license. Claims to be an attorney on social media. Received money for legal services.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-15	6/9/2025	Individual	law office?	Gave legal advice, legal documents, negotiated legal rights, offered to provide legal services	Respondent accepted money to provide legal services but Complainant alleges no one at the office is an attorney.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division

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UPL #	Date of Complaint	Complainant Occupation	Respondent Occupation	UPL Complaint	Brief Summary	Referred	Referred to
25-16	6/22/2025	Attorney	Law office?	Other	Complainant's client received a collections notice from a fake company demanding money.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-17	6/25/2025	Individual	Individual	gave legal advice, legal documents, offered to provide legal services	Complainant alleges that Respondent offers to complete Declaration amendments for condo and homeowner associations	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-18	7/16/2025	Individual	Individual	gave legal advice, appeared in court	Respondent is a law student and Complainant feels Respondent is using legalese to bully people and drafts legal documents	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-19	7/17/2025	Individual	Individual	Negotiated legal rights for another person	Complainant alleges Respondent is posing as an attorney for the Northwest Justice Project. Respondent may be using an alias.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-20	7/21/2025	Individual	Individual	legal documents, negotiated legal rights	Complainant is receiving threatening communications from Respondent who is pretending to be a lawyer for Complainant's previous client.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-21	8/14/2025	Individual	Individual	legal advice, legal documents, negotiated legal rights	Respondent is a legal assistant working in the capacity of a legal assistant as opposition to Complainant. Complainant is alleging Respondent is acting as an attorney.	No	N/A
25-22	8/18/2025	Attorney	Individual	legal advice, legal documents, negotiated legal rights, provide legal services	Complainant is an attorney filing the complaint on behalf of their client. Respondent filed a fraudulent lien against Complainant's client's property. The work that was done could only be performed by an attorney.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-23	9/2/2025	Individual	Police Department	violated civil rights	Complainant alleges that his ex wife accused him of crimes and contacted the police. The police investigated and dropped the charges. Complainant wants the police held accountable.	No	N/A
25-24	9/2/2025	Attorney	Individual	legal advice	Complainant is defense counsel on a civil matter. Alleges opposing counsel is licensed to practice law Hawaii but not in Washington.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-25	9/5/2025	Attorney	Out-of-state attorney	legal advice, legal documents, negotiated legal rights, offered legal services	Complainant alleges that Respondent is working as general counsel for a bank but is not licensed to practice law in the state of Washington.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division
25-26	9/17/2025	Individual	Paralegal	legal advice	Respondent offers legal advice and charges \$50. Respondent records some of these conversations and posts them to social media. Respondent tries to claim "this is not legal advice" while giving legal advice.	Yes	Washington State Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division