

WSBA Section Profiles 2021

Sections are established to provide a forum for those members of the WSBA who wish to pursue shared specialized interests. Section membership is voluntary. The current membership year is Jan. 1, 2021 – Dec. 31, 2021. Dues are the same for both WSBA “active members” and “subscribers” (individuals who are not active members of the WSBA, including inactive members and the general public). New admittees may join one section for free in their first year of admittance to WSBA. Law students may join any section at a discounted rate as a “subscriber.” For additional information about the WSBA sections, please visit www.wsba.org.

Administrative Law is designed to serve the interests of public- and private-sector legal professionals who work with state and local regulatory agencies. Members include assistant attorneys general, city attorneys, county prosecutors working on regulatory matters, and private practitioners who either contract to represent government entities or represent clients subject to government regulation. The section sponsors Mini-CLEs and receptions and publishes deskbooks, supplements, and newsletters.

Alternative Dispute Resolution members include lawyers and other professionals who share an interest in the availability and use of alternative dispute resolution to resolve all types of disputes. The section maintains a website which offers an online alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provider directory, sponsors educational programs about ADR (including co-sponsorship of the annual Northwest DR Conference), participates in legislative activities that relate to ADR, and undertakes projects aimed at increasing the availability and quality of ADR services throughout the state.

Animal Law provides a forum for members to exchange ideas, study, and understand laws, regulations, and case law pertaining to all areas of animal law. Animal law has useful applications for practitioners in many areas, including landlord/tenant, criminal, wills and trusts, personal injury and tort claims, nonprofit corporations, agricultural, local government, and administrative law.

Antitrust, Consumer Protection, and Unfair Business Practices is primarily devoted to informing its members about significant developments in the field of antitrust and consumer-protection law. The section also sponsors Mini-CLEs on current topics of interest. Meetings provide an opportunity to network with experienced trade regulation practitioners from around the state, including private practice, in-house, and government attorneys.

Business Law offers members the opportunity to stay current and influence legislation through participation in numerous committees. The section also sponsors CLEs and social gatherings such as the Northwest Securities Institute. Member benefits include newsletters and other section publications.

Cannabis Law works to connect, inform, guide, and support practitioners in this fast-growing and highly technical area of law. The benefits of section membership include a list serve, CLE programs, and professional networking opportunities.

Civil Rights Law forwards a mission to educate and advocate for civil liberties and equal rights in the context of civil rights law and the legal issues of Washington state residents, with particular focus on those who have traditionally been denied such rights and equal treatment under the law including, but not limited to, those who are racial, ethnic, or religious minorities, elderly, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered, immigrants, mentally or physically disabled, impoverished, and homeless. The section sponsors at least one CLE, annual meeting, and reception each year.

Construction Law members share common interests on a wide variety of issues related to the construction industry and government procurement. Section members are a mix of private practice, public sector, in-house, and assistant attorneys general. Member benefits include an annual all-day CLE, special topic forums several times a year, and newsletters.

Corporate Counsel includes in-house legal counsel, attorneys in private practice who spend a substantial portion of their time working with in-house counsel, and other legal professionals who provide legal counsel to businesses or nonprofit enterprises. Quarterly dinner meeting seminars feature speakers on various topics of interest. The section sponsors a number of CLE programs, including the popular Corporate Counsel Institute.

Creditor Debtor Rights provides numerous opportunities for its members to remain current on relevant legal issues, influence legislation, and participate in pro bono activities. Resources include a newsletter and a bankruptcy case law digest. The section sponsors several CLEs each year. Since 2004, the section has maintained an annual grants program to financially assist community-service programs statewide that provide legal services in the area of creditor/debtor law.

Criminal Law provides a forum for prosecutors and defense counsel to exchange ideas and information in the areas of criminal law, correction, procedure, and evidence. Pending legislation is regularly addressed, including the development of statutory enactments to improve and facilitate the administration of justice within the criminal arena. CLE offerings include the annual Criminal Justice Institute and a number of Mini-CLEs throughout the state.

Elder Law focuses on matters related to the representation of the elderly, recognizing that these individuals have unique legal needs and may be isolated, ill, or vulnerable to undue influence or exploitation. CLEs address the ways in which senior needs manifest in such practice areas as estate planning, real property and probate, and guardianship. The section has an annual grants program, which benefits outreach programs across the state designed to provide legal services to elderly constituents. The section is highly active on legislative issues.

Environmental and Land Use Law helps members keep up with this rapidly developing area of law. The section provides various opportunities through which members can meet, exchange ideas, and learn from others who practice in the field. Forums include a midyear CLE conference, Mini-CLEs, and networking receptions. The CLEs explore hot topics and allow members to socialize and swap ideas.

Family Law represents the interests of legal professionals practicing family law. The section is highly active on proposed legislation affecting the practice of Washington family law and family law lawyers. The section provides a members-only list serve to share insights, ask questions, and develop skills. The section hosts an annual midyear meeting and seminar, including ethics and detailed family law topics. The section also sponsors an annual skills training institute for those new to family law.

Health Law focuses on the business of health-care, including state and federal reform, fraud and abuse, antitrust, new modes of healthcare delivery, insurance, and other issues. Section CLEs offer a forum for both formal and informal discussion.

Indian Law provides a forum for practitioners representing clients with diverse interests affected by Indian law. Federal, tribal, and state laws, executive and administrative actions, and court decisions provide a complex and rapidly evolving array of law which affect legal services provided by practitioners. The section schedules one or more CLEs each year, which provide a forum to learn more about Indian law.

Intellectual Property practice areas address patents, trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets, and related matters. The section sponsors CLEs, including the annual Intellectual Property Institute, and members meet with students attending the state’s three law schools throughout the year.

International Practice members have a wide variety of backgrounds, from those simply interested to part-time and full-time practitioners representing government, business, foreign lawyers, and academia. Member benefits include a website, annual receptions for foreign lawyers and law students, and several Mini-CLEs and forums throughout the year. The section also sponsors the Huneke Fellowship designed to provide real-world experience and financial assistance to a law student interested in the international practice of law. The section also published the popular *Doing Business in Washington State: A Guide for Foreign Business and Investment*.

Juvenile Law provides a forum to discuss issues of concern and act as an agent of change to improve the law and practice related to civil and criminal matters involving children and youth in Washington. The section welcomes advocates from all interested disciplines and a variety of fields of law, including juvenile justice, child welfare, and those who represent youth in civil legal practice. The section sponsors an annual CLE each fall focusing on current developments in the area of juvenile law.

Labor and Employment Law develops programs for labor and employment law legal professionals, which provide a forum to exchange ideas in areas of mutual interest. Member benefits include an annual CLE conference as well as a number of Mini-CLEs throughout the state. The section funds a labor and employment law summer work internship for a student at each of the three law schools. Members of the section also meet with law students throughout the year.

Legal Assistance to Military Personnel promotes the goals of the WSBA with respect to military affairs, including providing information on matters affecting military lawyers, both active duty and reserve. CLE offerings foster the ability of the membership to provide adequate legal representation for military personnel and their dependents. The section can play a significant role as a liaison between the WSBA and the Armed Forces of the United States in order to better serve the legal needs of military personnel.

Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Law seeks to enhance an understanding of the legal needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) residents of Washington and ways to best provide these services. The section supports research, education, and collaboration on issues of sexual orientation and gender identification as well as promotes the study of LGBT law, including reporting on changing law and regulations as they affect LGBT individuals and communities.

Litigation is involved in a wide range of activities to serve the interests of those who litigate matters in the superior or federal courts, including review and formal input regarding virtually all legislation, as well as consultation and comment on procedural rules, ethics issues, and policy matters. Member benefits include an annual CLE, as well as outreach to all three Washington law schools. The section’s leadership meets annually with the State Supreme Court. The section published the *Washington Trial Evidence Manual* and is instrumental in the production of the *Washington Civil Procedure Deskbook*.

Low Bono develops and provides resources for legal professionals, regardless of field area or practice, who are dedicated and committed to providing low bono legal services, defined as legal and law-related services provided with the intent to increase accessibility of legal services for people of moderate financial means. The section provides a forum and opportunity for education, training, and sharing of forms, practice tips, client counseling techniques, alternative forms of conflict resolution, and other resources to and among members of the section.

Real Property, Probate and Trust is composed of legal professionals whose practices span the areas of real property, trusts, and estates. The section annually sponsors several CLEs in each discipline, as well as an annual midyear meeting with both joint and concurrent presentations. The section produces a quarterly newsletter with in-depth articles on recent developments, pending legislation, and case law updates. A substantial website and list serve for each discipline provide numerous resources and current information. The section has an active history of significant legislative involvement.

Senior Lawyers is geared towards those who have practiced in any jurisdiction for 25 years or more or who are 55 years of age and older, although section membership is open to all. The section sponsors an annual meeting CLE and social activities geared toward special interests, such as ethics, technology, retirement strategies, travel, and tax information. The section produces a newsletter.

Solo and Small Practice benefits solo and small firm practitioners in areas such as effective firm management and provides “best practices” strategies in providing legal services. The section sponsors frequent Mini-CLEs and/or roundtables on a variety of current topics and is a co-sponsor of the WSBA’s annual Solo and Small Firm Conference. Member benefits include an active list serve and members-only online resources.

Taxation provides current information on federal and state tax issues that directly affect practitioners in Washington, and provides new attorneys with an interest in tax law an opportunity to meet and discuss mutual areas of concern with established practitioners. The section assists in proposing and commenting on legislation and administrative rules affecting federal and state tax practice. Through its website, the section provides practical, up-to-date information. Each year at their annual member luncheon, a scholarship is awarded to a graduate student in tax law.

World Peace Through Law focuses on global and domestic issues of human rights and peace. The section sponsors frequent Mini-CLEs, which address current issues.

For more information about the 29 sections of the Washington State Bar Association, please visit www.wsba.org. For questions, please contact sections@wsba.org.