

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

WSBA Services & Support for Sections

Through its 29 sections, the Washington State Bar Association is fortunate to be able to provide a diverse and active structure for members and others to become involved in professional and educational development. Many sections are practice-focused, such as the Business Law, Criminal Law and Intellectual Property Sections. Other sections, such as Alternative Dispute Resolution and Solo and Small Practice, address aspects of the legal profession that intersect with a variety of practice areas. Cannabis Law is our newest section.

SECTION SUPPORT

The primary purpose of each section is to serve the needs and interests of its members, and the activity of each section is largely dependent on its current leadership. In order to ensure the viable and active operation of the sections, WSBA staff provide a broad spectrum of support and services. Current staffing for the sections includes a fulltime a Sections Program Manager and two fulltime Section Program Specialists who are part of the Advancement Department.

The Sections Team provides strategic guidance, tools, and resources for the day-to-day work and strategic development of each section. Each fall, the Sections Team holds a meeting for section leaders to provide an overview of WSBA operations and services. During the spring, the team holds a second meeting focusing on leadership support and goals fulfillment. The Sections Team works closely with other WSBA staff to comprehensively address section needs.

On an on-going basis, the Sections Team works with sections to coordinate a variety of service and support needs, including:

Web Content. Each section is represented on the WSBA website; some sections have elected to independently host 'off-site' websites. These websites are not administered or maintained by WSBA, so the section is responsible for administration and maintenance. An invaluable tool for communicating with members and the public, a section's webpage contains information about current leadership, CLEs, special events and a variety of other resources. Each section is responsible for the content of its site, with updates and postings managed by the Sections Team.

List Serves. The majority of section members-only list serves are set up on the WSBA's Lyris program with content managed by the section. These list serves are administered by the Sections Team and section members are included in the list serve unless they opt out of it.

Newsletters. Several sections publish a newsletter with production coordination provided by the Sections Team. Aspects of support include coordinating the desktop publishing as well as the printing/ mailing, which are done with outside vendors. The first draft of each newsletter is reviewed by the WSBA's General Counsel and Communications Department.

Continuing Legal Education programs. This overview does not include services and support provided by WSBA CLE staff. For information about WSBA CLE, please visit [here](#).

Print and Mail Jobs. Section mailings typically include announcements about special events, elections, legislative updates, member outreach, or section operations such as proposed bylaws amendments.

Broadcast E-mails (e-blasts). This communication tool provides a way to reach the majority of section members via email. A broadcast email is typically used to announce CLEs, special events, and official notices of section business such

as bylaw changes or elections.

Budget and Fiscal Resources. Each section's chair, chair-elect, and treasurer are emailed a monthly financial report. The Sections Program Specialists are responsible for reviewing and coding all non-CLE expenses and ensuring that expenses and revenue are charged to the correct budget account. Each spring, WSBA's finance team coordinates the process for each section to develop a budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Sections receive technical assistance with developing an accurate and meaningful budget based on their proposed plan of work for the coming year.

Event Planning. Non-CLE events such as a law student reception or an executive committee retreat receive support for various details including site procurement, contractual agreements, and processing of registrations. All contracts must be reviewed and signed by WSBA.

Section Special Projects. Support is provided for a variety of projects specific to a section. Examples include annual community-based grant programs funded by the Creditor Debtor Rights and Elder Law Sections; an annual foreign lawyers reception and law student reception sponsored by the International Practice Section; the Labor and Employment Law Section's summer internship program for law students, and the Taxation Section's annual member luncheon.

Bylaws. Each section operates through its own bylaws which are developed in accordance with the WSBA Bylaws. Any amendments to Section bylaws involve technical assistance provided by the General Counsel and the Section Program Specialist prior to being forwarded to the Board of Governors for review and approval. Each section's current bylaws are posted on their respective website.

Annual Section Membership Marketing Campaign. The section membership year is January 1 through December 31 while WSBA's fiscal year is October 1 through September 30. Each October or November, all active members of the WSBA receive via mail or online a section membership notice along with the annual licensing fees packet. Individuals may join a section online via myWSBA, the main website, or by contacting the Service Center.

Elections. Sections conduct an election of officers and executive committee members between March and May each year by electronic ballot. Staff support includes developing the ballot, collecting candidate statements, arranging notice of election, tabulating votes, and providing election results.

Membership Records. Sections frequently request current membership data, which is maintained and provided by the membership systems division of the Regulatory Services Department. Please contact your Sections Program Specialist to request this information.

Section Master Records. Section master records are maintained by the Sections Team. In accordance with WSBA's retention schedule, master files contain archival information, including bylaws, executive committee meeting agendas and minutes, elections, and executive committee rosters.

WSBA INTERDEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

To ensure the healthy and viable operation of 29 sections, staff support is provided by almost every WSBA department, including:

- **Administration.** Annual budgets, monthly financials, processing of section expenses and revenue, and processing of section memberships.
- **Advancement.** Continuing Legal Education (CLE); fundraising efforts with the Washington State Bar Foundation; connection to WSBA's diversity and inclusion efforts; collaborative opportunities with New Member Services, New Member Education, Practice Management Assistance, and WSBA's pro bono and public service opportunities, such as the Moderate Means Program.

- **IT.** Technical assistance and support for staff to manage webpages, list serves, and other communications tools.
- **Communications and Outreach.** E-blasts, social media, and other publication opportunities including *NWLawyer* (magazine), *NWSidebar* (blog), and *TakeNote* (biweekly all-member email).
- **Office of the Executive Director.** Key policy direction and new initiatives provided by the Executive Director and the Board of Governors.
- **Office of General Counsel.** Technical and legal assistance for bylaws, including amendments, newsletter review, review of all contracts, and the provision of legal advice.
- **Regulatory Services.** Coordination of annual section membership dues and maintenance of section membership data, including monthly count and demographic reports.