WASHINGTON STATE
BAR ASSOCIATION

WSBA.org Section Internal Webpages: Posting Guidance

The WSBA provides webpages for each section on the WSBA webpage: wsba.org. These webpages provide a space for sections to inform current and potential members about upcoming section events, CLEs, section governance, and other section membership benefits. WSBA staff administer the webpages, and rely on section executive committee members to identify relevant content to post.

This handout is intended to help section executive committee members understand the process for maintaining section webpages on wsba.org and working with staff to share relevant and permissible content in a timely manner. Below you will find the posting process, important considerations when selecting content to post, the information that each section must include on their webpage, and suggestions for other ways to share information with section members that may at times be more appropriate.

Considerations for WSBA and Sections When Posting

As with any WSBA webpage, there are several practical and legal considerations that are applied to all content before it is posted to a section webpage. These considerations include:

1) Washington Supreme Court General Rule 12.2 and legal requirements for mandatory bar associations

All content posted to section webpages must comply with Washington Supreme Court General Rule (GR) 12.2 and caselaw requiring that all WSBA activities be germane to regulating the legal profession and improving the quality of legal services. WSBA staff review all material posted to wsba.org to ensure the materials meet these standards.

2) Copyright Requirements, including for documents, photos, videos, and links to outside websites

Sharing materials created by someone other than WSBA implicates copyright law because the original creator has a right to control how their work is distributed and replicated. Therefore, WSBA may need to obtain permission to share the material. The WSBA Sections Team will work with you to determine if permission is needed to post specific content and, if so, to obtain that permission. If you already have documentation of permission to share the material you'd like posted, please share it with your WSBA staff liaison.

3) Relevance, timeliness and updating, and conciseness

Information on section webpages should be up to date, relevant to section members, and easy to navigate.

Try to avoid posting generic or very broad resources, such as links to homepages of federal or state government agencies or courts or to an entire federal, state, or local code. Legal practitioners likely already know how to locate these resources. In addition, posting a large amount of information and resources on the section webpage makes it harder for section members to find key information. Information that is brief and formatted to be easy to use will more effectively engage current and prospective section members. Consider whether something is important and relevant enough to add to the section webpage.

You should also consider the method that will most effectively communicate information to section members. Section webpages are not intended to serve as message boards, but rather to provide information about section membership. Section webpages may not be the most effective place to share

information that requires timely action. Sections have access to other methods of communication, such as email list serves and the section's social media platforms, which are better suited to sharing information that has a short lifespan.

Stale information and events left on the section webpage also can give the appearance that the section is not very active. When considering whether to add something to the section webpage, think about whether the section webpage really is the best place to share the information or whether there is a faster, more direct way to get the word out.

The WSBA Sections Team can help you determine the most effective communication method for specific information you'd like to share with your section members.

4) Compliance with Applicable WSBA Policies

Some types of content are subject to specific WSBA policies. This includes policies applicable to AI use, software use, and approval processes for section newsletters and section-sponsored scholarships, fellowships, and stipends. The WSBA Sections Team will work with you to make sure your content satisfies these policies.

5) Accessibility

All WSBA webpages must comply with state and federal accessibility laws. WSBA staff will work with you to address any accessibility concerns.

Process for Posting

To add content to a section webpage, contact your WSBA staff liaison and provide your liaison with the proposed content for the webpage. You can also work with staff to create the content.

Next, the WSBA Sections Team reviews all proposed content before it is posted to the section webpage. The Sections Team looks at whether the content meets legal and other standards applicable to content posted on WSBA's webpage, including legal requirements for mandatory bar associations and copyright requirements. The Sections Team will work with section leaders to address any concerns.

The WSBA Sections Team also helps sections maintain existing content on section webpages. The Sections Team will routinely review, and if needed, update or remove the following information:

- Section bylaws, budgets, annual reports, and annual reviews;
- Notices of section executive committee meetings and agendas;
- Section meeting minutes;
- Information on section elections;
- Section executive committee and subcommittee member information;
- Information on joining a section, such as posting links to the webpage to pay section dues or updating the section webpage to reflect a change in the cost of section membership;
- Information about outdated events, such as past volunteering or social events;
- Information about outdated CLEs;
- Upcoming section-sponsored WSBA CLEs and events; and
- Section newsletters.

Sections may also ask the WSBA Sections Team to include any other information on the section webpage during staff-led periodic updates.

Information That Must Be Included on Section Webpages

Section webpages serve an important role in informing prospective section members about the section's purpose and scope and keeping current section members informed about section governance. Therefore, the following information is included on all section webpages:

- Section mission/description
- Section bylaws
- Section budget
- Annual report
- Year in Review infographic
- Section election information
- Executive committee member names, positions, and links to member directory profiles or email addresses
- Executive Committee meeting notices and agendas

The WSBA Sections Team will help sections maintain up-to-date versions of this information on the section webpages.

Sections may include other content on their webpages, such as notices of upcoming section-sponsored events, section newsletters, relevant CLE recordings and descriptions, information about section-funded scholarships and stipends, section membership information, and how to contact section leadership. This content will be reviewed by the WSBA Sections Team and will need to satisfy the legal and other posting considerations described above. Please contact your WSBA staff liaison to let them know if you have content you'd like to be reviewed for posting on the section webpage.

Information Better Suited to Other Platforms

As noted above, keeping information current and relevant to section members is an important consideration when posting content to section webpages. Section webpages may not be the best place to share information that changes frequently or is only relevant for a short period of time, such as legislative bill tracking, job postings, or one-time volunteer opportunities. Section members are often unaware that time-sensitive information has been posted on the section webpage and such information quickly becomes outdated, requiring time and resources from section leadership and WSBA staff to maintain. Work with your WSBA staff liaison to identify the best place to share such information, such as a section list serve or message board.

Section webpages are also generally not the most effective method for sharing statements issued by section leadership that do not directly address section membership matters, such as open letters addressing pressing topics of the day. Webpage traffic data has shown that these types of statements are rarely viewed on the section webpages and they can pose challenges for keeping information on section webpages up to date. Ask your staff liaison for help identifying more appropriate means for sharing such statements. These statements will be reviewed for germaneness and compliance with GR 12.2 and applicable WSBA policies prior to dissemination and may require advance approval from the WSBA Board of Governors.

Lastly, no legal advice may be shared on section webpages or other platforms. Providing legal advice on a webpage poses ethical problems because such advice must be kept current with any changes in the law and may reveal confidential client information that is based on actual client experiences. See ABA Formal Opinion 10-457 for more information on potential issues created by posting legal advice on websites.