

# FAQ: Joint Administration Policy Between the Washington State Bar Association and the Supreme Court Boards

## Q. What is the purpose of this policy?

The Joint Administration Policy aims to streamline and clarify the administrative functions and responsibilities between the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) and the Supreme Court Boards.

## Q. How are the Supreme Court Boards defined?

The Supreme Court Boards refer to various boards and committees established by the Washington State Supreme Court and administered by the Washington State Bar Association under General Rule 12.3.

## Q. Why was this policy introduced?

This policy was introduced to address challenges in WSBA's administration of Supreme Court Boards, such as inconsistencies in the rules applied such Boards and unclear allocations of responsibility. The policy provides a structured framework to enhance the working relationship between the WSBA and the Supreme Court Boards, ensuring that both entities can operate effectively and in furtherance of their respective missions.

## Q. When was the policy approved?

The policy was approved by the Board of Governors (BOG) on July 19, 2024, and adopted by the Washington State Supreme Court on April 4, 2025.

## Q. What areas does the policy cover?

The policy covers roles and responsibilities of WSBA and the Supreme Court Boards, communication protocols, administrative processes, and provides a mechanism for conflict resolution.

## Q. Who is affected by this policy?

The policy affects WSBA staff, volunteers, and members of the Supreme Court Boards. It is designed to ensure that all parties involved have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and can work together effectively.

## Q. What are the main themes of the policy?

The main themes of the policy include:

- Collaboration: Emphasizing the importance of collaboration and cooperation between the WSBA and the Supreme Court Boards.
- Transparency: Ensuring that all actions and decisions are transparent and well-communicated.
- Accountability: Holding all parties accountable for their roles and responsibilities.

- Efficiency: Streamlining processes to enhance efficiency and reduce redundancies.

### Q. How does the policy address conflicts?

The policy provides a process for resolving conflicts that might arise with respect to whether a Board is in compliance with the court rules and orders that authorize it. This includes guidelines for escalating issues to higher authorities if necessary, with ultimate resolution by the Washington Supreme Court.

### Q. What changes can WSBA staff and volunteers expect?

The proposed policy for the administration of Supreme Court boards principally aims to formalize and document *existing* practices to reduce conflicts and clarify procedures. Key changes include defining the boards' independence from WSBA, allowing public communication by Boards with certain restrictions, and establishing a collaborative process for budget creation. The policy also outlines the responsibilities of the Executive Director in staffing and resource allocation, and sets a process for conflict resolution, ultimately involving the Supreme Court.

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