

Oath Review and Drafting Task Force

Meeting Agenda

July 20, 2026 – 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Virtual only meeting via Zoom:

<https://wsba.zoom.us/j/83942719106?pwd=0aBoLoRdq5wzZfmQzHw6v6RVcxxH4X.1>

Meeting ID: 839 4271 9106

Passcode: 612013

1. Call to Order & Opening Ceremonies
2. Reading and Approval of Minutes of June 15, 2026 Meeting (attached)
3. Report and Discussion: Memo and Second Working Draft of Revised Oath (attached)
4. Discussion of Next Steps: Stakeholder Outreach Proposal (attached)
5. Open Forum
6. Announcements
7. Adjourn

OATH REVIEW AND DRAFTING TASK FORCE

MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2026

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

Members present were Rajeev Majumdar (Chair), Courtney Hudak, Monte Mills, Kyle Sciuchetti, Hon. James Smith, and Hon. Rebecca Glasgow. Also present were Matthew Dresden (WSBA Board of Governors liaison), Doug Ende (WSBA Chief Disciplinary Counsel), Sara Niegowski (WSBA Chief Communications and Outreach Officer), and Rachel Agent (WSBA Disciplinary Program and Systems Manager).

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. Agenda Overview and Reading and Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2026 Meeting

Following achievement of a quorum at 2:08 p.m., the meeting was called to order. The minutes of the May 18, 2026 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

2. Report and Discussion: Memo and first Working Draft of Revised Oath

Prior to this meeting, Chair Majumdar and Chief Disciplinary Counsel Ende reviewed the comments provided by the drafting subcommittees and drafted a proposed combined oath potentially usable by all three license types.

Chair Majumdar discussed the drafting principles and read the draft revised oath [pages 4-5 in meeting materials].

Discussion followed including prior written input from a Task Force member and input from those in attendance. Feedback and recommendations for modifications were discussed and noted.

3. Discussion on Next Steps

The Chair, along with the WSBA staff liaisons, will prepare a revised draft of the oath reflecting the recommendations.

4. Open Forum

Chief Disciplinary Counsel Ende will submit a request to the Board of Governors at its July 2026 meeting for an extension of the Task Force Charter until May 2027. This extension will allow time for stakeholder review and feedback.

5. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

SECOND WORKING DRAFT OF A REVISED WASHINGTON OATH

WSBA Oath Review and Drafting Task Force

June 23, 2026

A. Overview

At its June 15, 2026 meeting, the Oath Review and Drafting Task Force reviewed the first working draft of a revised Washington oath. Considering the comments of Task Force members (including the written comments of Roger Wynne), the Chair and Staff Liaison revised the working draft as reflected in Section C below.

B. Feedback Considered

The Task Force reached consensus to remove references to “State” and use “Washington” exclusively. For the options presented for paragraph 2, there was consensus to select option 2b as more broadly inclusive. Members also recommended reorganizing the sections to improve the alignment of related concepts. There was a sense that including the term “pledge” would be desirable. A number of other word-choice and copyediting suggestions were offered.

C. The Second Working Draft

1. I take this oath as I become a member of the legal profession in Washington with a special responsibility for the quality of justice, the education of the public, and the ethical representation of clients.
2. I recognize that legal professionals, as guardians of the law, play a vital role in the preservation of society.
3. I recognize the unique history of the legal profession in Washington and the role of sovereign tribal nations and their legal systems.
4. I will uphold and defend the laws and constitutions of each jurisdiction where I practice law.
5. I will abide by our Rules of Professional Conduct.
6. I will maintain the respect due to legal tribunals, obey their orders and rules, and accept their appointments.
7. I will be honest and conduct myself with dignity, courtesy, and integrity.
8. I will support and defend our constitutional democracy, the rule of law, and our justice system.
9. I now accept these obligations and pledge to ensure meaningful access to justice for all.

REVISED OATH – SECOND WORKING DRAFT

June 23, 2026

1. I take this oath as I become a member of the legal profession in Washington with a special responsibility for the quality of justice, the education of the public, and the ethical representation of clients.
2. I recognize that legal professionals, as guardians of the law, play a vital role in the preservation of society.
3. I recognize the unique history of the legal profession in Washington and the role of sovereign tribal nations and their legal systems.
4. I will uphold and defend the laws and constitutions of each jurisdiction where I practice law.
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Oath Review and Drafting Task Force

Draft Oath Engagement Plan

7.2026

Goal

Gather feedback and secure support for the task force's draft oath from the stakeholder groups named in the charter. Ideally, we will secure affirmative approvals from each stakeholder group to be included in our recommendation to the Washington Supreme Court.

Communication

Letter from Rajeev to distribution groups and contacts (below) to include:

- Reminder of the task force's purpose;
- Summary of survey results;
- Explanation of how the draft survey incorporates the survey results (both to change and not change the oath);
- Draft oath (and link to current oath for comparison);
- Request to answer two questions:
 - Feedback on the draft oath;
 - Does your organization support the recommendation to update the oath inline with the draft oath?
-

Distribution contacts and channels

New Member: Listserv available

- Washington New Members Committee:
 - Chair Alexander Raymond Reaganson
 - Northwest Justice Project- Vancouver, 1104 Main St Ste 500, Vancouver, WA 98660-2972
 - alexander.reaganson@nwjustice.org
 - Immediate Past Chair Mason Ji
 - Perkins Coie, 1301 2nd Ave., Ste 4200, Seattle, WA 98101-3804
 - mji@perkinscoie.com
 - Staff liaison: Chelle Gegax Michelleg@wsba.org
 - Board liaison: Jordan Couch Jordan@palacelaw.com

Senior Lawyers: Listserv available

- Senior Lawyers Section
 - Chair David Sprinkle
 - Fidelity National Financial, 701 5th Ave., Ste 2700, Seattle, WA 98104-7054
 - david.sprinkle@fnf.com

- Immediate Past Chair Carole Grayson
 - 4100 50th Ave S., Seattle, WA 98118-1235
 - cag8@hotmail.com
- Staff liaison: Carolyn MacGregor Carolynm@wsba.org
- Board liaison: Parvin Price lparvinpricebog@gmail.com

Access to Justice Communities: Listserv available

- ATJ Board
 - Chair Mike Chin
 - Seattle Office for Civil Rights, 810 3rd Ave Ste 750, Seattle, WA 98104-1627
 - mike.chin@seattle.gov
 - ATJ Board staff liaison: Diana Singleton (dianas@wsba.org) and Bonnie Sterken (bonnies@wsba.org)
 - ATJ Board liaison: Chris Bhang chrisbhangbog@gmail.com

Judiciary

- AOC Administrator
 - Dawn Marie Rubio
 - Administrative Office of the Courts, PO Box 41170, Olympia, WA 98504-1170
 - dawnmarie.rubio@courts.wa.gov
- Superior Court Judges Association
 - President Hon. Cindy Larsen
 - Snohomish County Superior Court, 3000 Rockefeller Ave M/S 502, Everett, WA 98201-4046
 - cindy.larsen@snoco.org
 - Superior Court Judges Association
 - PO Box 41170, Olympia, WA 98504-1170
- District and Municipal Court Judges Association
 - President Anita Crawford-Willis
 - Seattle Justice Center, PO Box 34987, Seattle, WA 98124-4987
 - anita.crawford-willis@seattle.gov
 - DMCJA
 - DMCJA, Administrative Office of the Courts, PO Box 41170, Olympia, WA 98504
- Office of Administrative Hearings
 - Chief Administrative Law Judge RaShelle Davis
 - Office of Administrative Hearings, PO Box 42488, Olympia, WA 98504-2488
 - rashelle.davis@oah.wa.gov
- Washington Department of Licensing
 - Chief Law Judge Marguerite Friedlander
 - 1514 Brighton Way SE, Olympia, WA 98501-8618
 - mfriedland@dol.wa.gov
- Federal Judges
 - Eastern Washington: Chief Judge Stanley A. Bastian
 - PO Box 2706, Yakima, WA 98907

- Stan_Bastian@waed.uscourts.gov
- Western Washington: Chief Judge David G. Estudillo
 - U.S. District Court Clerk's Office, 700 Stewart Street, Suite 2310, Seattle, WA 98101
 - david_estudillo@wawd.uscourts.gov

Law Schools and Students

- Gonzaga University
 - Dean Jacob Rooksby
 - Gonzaga University School of Law, 721 N. Cincinnati Street, PO Box 3528, Spokane, WA 99220-3528
 - lawdean@gonzaga.edu, rooksby@gonzaga.edu
- Seattle University
 - Dean Tony Varona
 - Seattle University School of Law, 901 12th Avenue P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98122-1090
 - avarona@seattleu.edu, gharrington@seattleu.edu
- University of Washington
 - Dean Tamara Lawson
 - University of Washington School of Law, William H. Gates Hall, Box 353020, Seattle, WA 98195-3020
 - Tamara Lawson lawsont@uw.edu, Nikole Blue nblue@uw.edu
- Law Clerk Board
 - Chair Christell Casey
 - The Law Offices of Julie C. Watts PLLC, 505 W Riverside Ave Ste 210, Spokane, WA 99201-0518
 - christell@watts-at-law.com
 - Staff liaison: Kat Skinner katherines@wsba.org
 - Board liaison: Mary Rathbone mmrbog4d@gmail.com

Affinity Bar and Specialty Bar Associations

- Access through the WSBA's affinity-bar leader listserv (Sara will distribute)

County Bar Associations

- Access through WSBA's county-bar leaders listserv (Sara will distribute)

Inns of Court

- Hon. Robert J. Bryan American Inn of Court
 - President Indu Thomas
 - Thurston County Superior Court, 2000 Lakeridge Dr SW, Olympia, WA 98502-6045
 - indu.thomas@co.thurston.wa.us
- William L. Dwyer American Inn of Court
 - President Nyjat Rose-Akins

- Seattle City Attorney's Office, 4310 SW Cambridge St. Seattle, WA 98136-2649
- nyjat45@yahoo.com
- The George & Donald Simpson American Inn of Court
 - President Chad Sleight
 - Clark County District Court, 1200 Franklin St., Vancouver, WA 98660-2812
 - chad.sleight@clark.wa.gov
- Seattle Intellectual Property American Inn of Court
 - President Caroline Bercier
 - Amazon Web Services, 2121 8th Ave., Seattle, WA 98121
 - bercier@amazon.com

Limited Practice Board (can email entire universe of license holders)

- Chair Angie Balconi
 - Chicago Title Insurance Company, 3002 Colby Ave., Ste 200, Everett, WA 98201-4080
 - angie.balconi@ctt.com
- Staff liaison: Cathy Biestek catherineb@wsba.org
- Board liaison: Tom Ahearne ahearne@foster.com

Limited License Legal Technicians (can email entire universe of license holders)

- Chair Stephen Crossland
 - Crossland & Evans PLLC, PO Box 566, Cashmere, WA 98815-0566
 - steve@crosslandlaw.net
- Staff liaison: Cathy Biestek catherineb@wsba.org
- Board liaison: Kristina Larry kristina@sassylitigations.com

OATH REVIEW AND DRAFTING TASK FORCE

WORKING DRAFT OF OATH TALKING POINTS

- In the wake of the May 1, 2025, Law Day ceremonies around the state where hundreds of lawyers gathered to retake their professional oath, many noticed the pronounced length of the oath, as well as the dissonance of some of its archaic phraseology.
- At the July 2025 Board of Governors meeting, the Board formed a Task Force known as the Oath Review and Drafting Task Force, and at the August 2025 meeting, approved appointment of nine members consisting of Rajeev D. Majumdar (Chair), Hunter M. Abell (former BOG member), Angela J. Balconi (LPO member), the Hon. Rebecca R. Glasgow (judicial member), Courtney Hudak (member at-large), Professor Monte Mills (member at-large), Kyle D. Sciuchetti (former BOG member), the Hon. James Smith (judicial member), and Roger D. Wynne (member at-large).
- Key elements of the Task Force Charter are as follows:
 - The Task Force shall communicate about its process with members and the public and seek input.
 - The Task Force shall, in particular, obtain advisory perspectives from stakeholder groups with an interest in the content of the oath, including new and young lawyers; senior lawyers; the access-to-justice community; the judiciary; law schools and law students; Inns of Court; WSBA Sections; and county, affinity, and specialty bar associations.
 - The Task Force shall gather and review historical materials about the development of Washington State's oaths, as well as perform a comparative analysis of the oaths in use by other jurisdictions.
 - The Task Force shall consider whether it is advisable to consolidate the three existing oaths into one oath.
- The Board directed the Task Force to complete work and submit a final report within one year of its initial meeting. The initial meeting of the Task Force took place on October 31, 2025. The Task Force has held seven meetings-of-the whole.
- In November 2025, the Task Force Chair directly sought advisory perspectives from a broad range of members and stakeholder groups, including from representatives of all groups spelled out as priority stakeholders in the Charter.
- The Task Force compiled, reviewed, and discussed information about the history of the Washington state oaths. During this phase of its work, the Task Force learned, among other things that:

- Washington’s Oath of Attorney has roots going back to Washington’s territorial period and influenced the creation of the ABA Model Oath;
- the Oath of Attorney was first codified by statute in 1909 (repealed 2023);
- the Washington Supreme Court adopted the Oath as a court rule in 1954; since its inception, the oath has been amended a number of times;
- since the turn of the second millennium, the WSBA twice proposed amendments to the Oath (in 2001 and 2016), but neither proposal was adopted by the Supreme Court;
- the Oath for Limited Practice Officers was adopted in 1987, and the Oath for Limited License Legal Technicians was adopted in 2012.
- The Task Force prepared a compilation of oaths of attorney from jurisdictions throughout the United States and evaluated information based on a comparative analysis of U.S. oaths. During this phase of its work, the Task Force learned, for example, that:
 - By word count, Washington state’s oath of attorney is the fourth longest oath in the United States, exceeding the median word count by 115 words;
 - Washington state is one of nine U.S. jurisdictions that includes an “offensive personality/personalities” clause.
- The Task Force assembled and reviewed academic and professional literature on the history of oaths of attorney, which often includes suggestions for oath modification and improvement.
- Between January and March 2026, the Task Force conducted a broadly distributed membership survey seeking opinions about the current oath and potential change to the oath from each license type: lawyer, LPO, and LLLT. Launch of the survey was supported by publication of a Guest Column in the Bar News. See Rajeev D. Majumdar, To Bind Our Profession: The Nature of Our Oath, Washington State Bar News Vol. 80, No. 2, at 12 (Feb. 2026), among other outreach efforts.
- Survey data showed that:
 - a majority of lawyers and LLLTs responding to the survey favored revising the oath;
 - a significant majority of LPOs favored revision;
 - there was a notable difference in opinion about revising the oath based on years in practice, with lawyers in practice for 31 years or more tending to oppose revision and lawyers with fewer than 31 years in practice tending to favor it.
- The Task Force approved formation of two subcommittees: a Subcommittee on Revision of Existing Oath Provisions and a Subcommittee on Potential New Oath Provisions.

- Considering the recommendations of both subcommittees, the Task Force prepared and approved a Working Draft of an amended oath for consideration by members and stakeholders.
- The starting point for the Working Draft was the current Oath of Attorney, which consists of eight paragraphs and 272 words.
- The draft took into consideration data yielded by the Task Force survey, commentary shared in the survey and via direct stakeholder input, suggestions received during the Chair's April 2026 interim report to the Board of Governors, provisions in use by other U.S. jurisdictions, academic and professional literature on oaths of admission, a careful reading of the Preamble to the Rules of Professional Conduct, as well as its prologue, the Fundamental Principles of Professional Conduct, and the principle that the oath should use contemporary, accessible language comprehensible by all.
- The Working draft Consists of nine paragraphs and 171 words.
- The Working Draft is suited to being administered to all Washington license types, lawyers, Limited Practice Officers, and Limited License Legal Technicians.
- More information about the work of the Task Force can be found on its [web page](#), along with a dedicated email address to receive input from stakeholders: oathtaskforce@wsba.org.

WORKING DRAFT OF REVISED OATH OF ADMISSION

July 20, 2026

1. I take this oath as I become a member of the legal profession in Washington with a special responsibility for the quality of justice, the education of the public, and the ethical representation of clients.
2. I recognize that legal professionals, as guardians of the law, play a vital role in the preservation of society.
3. I recognize the unique history of the legal profession in Washington and the role of sovereign tribal nations and their legal systems.
4. I will uphold and defend the laws and constitutions of each jurisdiction where I practice law.
5. I will abide by our Rules of Professional Conduct.
6. I will maintain the respect due to legal tribunals, obey their orders and rules, and accept their appointments.
7. I will be honest and conduct myself with dignity, courtesy, and integrity.
8. I will support and defend our constitutional democracy, the rule of law, and our justice system.
9. I now accept these obligations and pledge to ensure meaningful access to justice for all.

1. After the May 1, 2025 Law Day oath retaking events, many lawyers noted the length and outdated language of Washington’s attorney oath.
2. The WSBA Board of Governors created the **Oath Review and Drafting Task Force** in July 2025 and appointed nine diverse members in August 2025.
3. The Task Force’s charter requires broad communication, stakeholder input, historical research, and comparison with oaths used in other jurisdictions.
4. The Board directed the Task Force to complete its work within one year; the group began meeting on October 31, 2025, and has met seven times. (There is a pending request to extend the completion deadline to May 1, 2026.)
5. In November 2025, the Chair sought advisory perspectives from all priority stakeholder groups identified in the charter.
6. Historical research revealed Washington’s oath dates to the territorial era, was initially adopted legislatively, has been repeatedly amended, and includes separate oaths for attorneys (adopted by court rule in 1954), LPOs (1987), and LLLTs (2012).
7. Comparative analysis showed Washington’s oath is one of the longest in the U.S. and one of nine including an “offensive personality” clause.
8. The Task Force conducted a statewide survey (Jan–Mar 2026) that showed most lawyers, LPOs, and LLLTs support revising the oath, with newer lawyers more likely to favor change.
9. Two subcommittees drafted recommendations that led to a Working Draft consisting of nine paragraphs and 171 words—shorter, modernized, and suitable for all license types.
10. The Working Draft reflects survey data, stakeholder feedback, comparative research, and core principles from the Rules of Professional Conduct; additional information and feedback channels are available on the [Task Force webpage](#).