

**OATH REVIEW AND DRAFTING TASK FORCE**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**December 15, 2025**

The meeting was held in person and remotely via Zoom.

Members present were Rajeev Majumdar (Chair), Kyle Sciuchetti, Hunter Abell, Hon. Rebecca Glasgow, Roger Wynne, Prof. Monte Mills, Hon. James Smith, Angela Balconi. Also present were David Ward (Principal Legal Analyst, AOC), Doug Ende (Chief Disciplinary Counsel), Sara Niegowski (Chief Communications and Outreach Officer), Rachel Agent (Disciplinary Program and Systems Manager), Matthew Dresden (Board of Governors liaison), Sergio Flores (Access to Justice Board Member), and Steve Crossland (Chair of the Limited License Legal Technician Board).

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

**1. Agenda Overview and Reading and Approval of Minutes of October 31, 2025 Meeting[ Chair]**

The Chair presented the meeting agenda, and the minutes of the October 31, 2025 meeting were approved.

**2. Overview of recent activity**

The Chair updated the Task Force about notification of various stakeholders about the Task Force and its objectives. This included WSBA staff mailing letters and the Chair sending emails to community-group representatives. The Task Force has a new email address [oathtaskforce@wsba.org](mailto:oathtaskforce@wsba.org) for communications.

**3. Report on Meeting Materials: 2025 Report of the ABA Task Force for American Democracy**

Chief Disciplinary Counsel Ende provided an overview of the meeting materials, including the 2025 Report of the ABA Task Force for American Democracy, which features a recommendation that state-level oaths of admission be amended to include a commitment to upholding democracy and the rule of law.

**4. Report on Draft Surveys**

Chief Communications Officer Niegowski presented three draft surveys (Lawyer, Limited License Legal Technician, and Limited Practice Officer) designed to gather data from stakeholder groups and members about the idea of amending the three oaths. Chief Niegowski engaged the Task Force members in a dialogue about the content of the survey and received suggestions for revision. A revised version of the survey will be shared with the Task Force at its next meeting, with an objective of distributing the survey to stakeholders in February.

Angela Balconi, noted that Limited License Officer Board will be discussing the work of the Task Force at its next meeting in January.

## **5. Guided Discussion Concerning the Current Oaths and Potential Improvements**

The Chair led a dialogue with the Task Force members and others present about the form, content, and tone of the current oaths, sought preliminary opinions about merging the three oaths or keeping them separate, and inquired about what aspects ought to be retained, removed, or revised, as well as whether there are ideas not included in the oaths that ought to be.

Comments regarding the current oaths and potential improvements included the following:

- The length of Oregon’s oath was referenced as praiseworthy example. Most would prefer a shorter oath. The brevity of the federal oath form was noted.
- Many cited with approval provisions stating support for the state and federal constitutions, the rule of law, and democracy.
- The value of honesty and integrity clauses was discussed.
- Several mentioned the importance of retaining a duty to the defenseless and indigent, as well as highlighting the importance of access to justice.
- Several referenced the desirability of retaining the clause pledging adherence to the Rules of Professional Conduct; others posited that this was inherent in licensure.
- As to the format of administering the oath, there was a suggestion to alter it so that applicants would respond “I do” at intervals instead of reciting it in its entirety.

Discussion was held around the intended meaning of “offensive personalities” and whether this clause should be retained. Drawing on principles of parliamentary procedure, Counsel Ende provided a historical context for the term “personality,” explaining that the provision was historically understood to mean that a lawyer should not engage in personal attacks during debate. For reasons that are not entirely clear, the singular “personality” was amended to the plural “personalities,” and Washington State is the only jurisdiction to use the plural. It was suggested that the offensive personalities clause is at least adjacent to notions of civility and professionalism, which would be concepts worth retaining in the oath.

In response to a question from a Task Force Member, Counsel Ende noted that Washington Rule of Professional Conduct 8.4 (k) provides that professional misconduct includes violating the oath of attorney, and that there are counterpart provisions in the LLLT RPC and the LPORPC.

Hunter Abell highlighted the importance of including honor and truthfulness in the oath and noted military and legislative oaths capturing these elements. Abell will provide these oaths to the Task Force.

The Chair requested preparation of a survey of Task Force members to determine opinions about the importance of each of the existing clauses in the Oath of Attorney.

## **6. Administrative Matters**

The attention of the Task Force was directed to the Future Meeting Schedule included in the meeting materials.

## **7. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:17 p.m.