



### Introduction

The work of the Section Executive Committees of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) is critical to the ongoing vitality of the organization and profession. In order to help facilitate this work, outlined below are duties and best practices for Officers and Trustees of Section Executive Committees.

### Section Executive Committee Roles

Each section has its own set of bylaws and is governed by an Executive Committee. While WSBA bylaws and policies provide some direction and parameters to sections, the individual bylaws typically outline such topics as Executive Committee structure, election cycle, terms, voting rights, and membership criteria. While each Executive Committee has some discretion in how it operates, the following officer roles are promoted per best practices across all sections:

**Chair:** The function of the Chair is to guide the committee in its work consistent with WSBA policies and the section's bylaws. Responsibilities include:

- Scheduling & facilitating regular meetings of Executive Committee.
- Preparing meeting agendas and submitting required annual report.
- Providing leadership & focus re: annual workplan for section Executive Committee
- Developing a strong legislative process, including review of all advocacy work under General Rule 12 restrictions.
- Cultivating leadership and participation among Executive Committee members.
- Preparing for succession by Chair-Elect at end of term.

**Chair-Elect:** The Chair Elect should be prepared to take on the responsibilities of the Chair as needed and/or as outlined by section bylaws.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer should be familiar with all WSBA fiscal policies as they relate to sections. Responsibilities include:

- Understanding section's monthly financial statements, including *summary*, *detailed*, and *fees* statements.
- Providing financial status report at each Executive Committee meeting.
- Preparing annual budget and budget narrative, based on historical spending patterns and future goals of the Executive Committee.

**Secretary:** The function of the Secretary is to take meeting minutes and prepare them for review and approval by full Executive Committee. The ascension of Secretary to Treasurer, *or* Treasurer to Secretary, is based on each section's individual bylaws.

**Immediate Past-Chair:** Each section maintains an Immediate Past-Chair position in order to maintain institutional knowledge and strong leadership succession. Some section bylaws also designate the Immediate Past-Chair to run the nominations committee as part of the annual election cycle.

**Sections Team/Staff Liaisons:** The WSBA Sections Team is made up of staff who are responsible for supporting activities across all WSBA sections. Each section will have a designated “staff liaison” who will attend as many Executive Committee meetings as possible and act as a resource for conducting section business. In general, the Sections Team is responsible for:

- Connecting Executive Committee to WSBA resources to help meet annual workplan goals.
- Staying apprised of section activities and decisions and maintaining master files.
- Acting as the “hub” between sections and other WSBA departments such as Finance, Communications, General Counsel, and/or Legislative.
- Reviewing/routing all contracts and expense reports for proper signatures.
- Reviewing/routing all formal communications from Executive Committee to section members (e.g, mailings, e-blasts, or surveys).

**Board of Governors (BOG) Liaison:**

Each member of the Board of Governors is annually appointed to serve as liaison between the Board of Governors and one or more sections. The function of the Board of Governors liaison is to assist the operation of the section’s Executive Committee by acting as an information conduit between the Executive Committee and the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors liaison is responsible for communicating developments in the Board of Governors to the particular Executive Committee and vice versa. The Board of Governors liaison does not participate in the Executive Committee’s votes unless otherwise stated in WSBA policy.

**For More Information:**

**Online Toolbox |** <http://www.wsba.org/Legal-Community/Sections/Section-Leaders-Toolbox>

The Section Leaders Toolbox is designed to provide many of the tools needed to effectively lead a section. Tools and resources are added and updated on a regular basis and suggestions are welcome.

Topics include:

- WSBA Policies & Procedures (including expense form and fiscal policies)
- Marketing & Outreach resources (list serves, e-blasts, newsletters, etc)
- Legislative process information
- CLE seminar timelines and guidelines
- Executive Committee best practices

**Questions?**

Contact your section’s staff liaison directly or the Sections Team at [sections@wsba.org](mailto:sections@wsba.org) | 206.733.5934