

## **WSBA New Admittee Process Instructions**

Under Admission to Practice Rule 5 (b), applicants who took and passed the bar examination must complete the admissions process within 40 months from the date of the bar exam in which the score was earned. Applicants who apply by Admission by Motion or UBE transfer score must complete the admissions process within one year from the date of filing the application.

**You are not admitted to practice law until all the steps below are complete AND the Supreme Court of Washington has entered an order admitting you to the practice of law.** After completion of all the steps and our receipt of the oath of attorney, it generally takes two to three weeks to be admitted. Complete everything below online except the oath of attorney which must be delivered to the WSBA.

### **I. Verify and Update Contact Information**

You must provide a Public/Mailing Address and a Home Address. If these are the same, please enter the same address for both Public/Mailing and Home Addresses. The home address is needed to determine your congressional district for eligibility to vote in the elections for the WSBA Board of Governors. The home address will not be made public unless it is the same as your Public/Mailing Address. You must also provide us with a public/business phone number and a primary email address. You may choose to have your email address published in the WSBA Online Lawyer Directory.

### **II. Resident Agent Certification**

If you live or work outside the state of Washington, you will be required to designate a resident agent for service of process.

APR 5(f) “Resident Agent: There shall be no requirement that an applicant or a member of the Bar Association be a resident in the state of Washington. Every member, except a judicial member, of the Bar Association who does not live or maintain an office in the state of Washington shall file with the Bar Association the name and address of an agent within this state for the purpose of receiving service of process or any other document required or permitted by statute or court rule to be served or delivered to a resident lawyer. Service or delivery to such agent shall be deemed service upon or delivery to the lawyer.”

Your agent for service is not required to be a Washington lawyer; you may designate a friend or family member, or your firm’s branch office, as long as the agent is within the state of Washington. If you do not know any individuals or have a branch office in this state, you may designate a service organization. Neither the Secretary of State nor the WSBA may be designated as an agent for service. Also, you must provide your agent’s street address, not a post office box.

### **III. Swearing In Selection & Oath of Attorney**

The Oath of Attorney must be taken before an elected or appointed judge, excluding judges pro tempore, sitting in open court, in the State of Washington. You may be able to take the Oath of Attorney out of state if it is impossible or impractical for you to take it in Washington. You must indicate if you will take the Oath of Attorney in state or out of state.

There are two options for taking the Oath of Attorney IN STATE:

1) Formal Arranged Ceremony: If you would like to attend a formal ceremony, or if you seek information regarding a formal ceremony, please contact your [local county bar association](#). If your local county Bar association is not listed but you want to participate in a formal ceremony, you may want to consider contacting a neighboring county Bar Association to see if you can attend their swearing in ceremony. The Oath of Attorney form will be provided for you and signed by both you and the judge administering the oath; your signed form will then be sent directly to the WSBA Admissions Office by the organization sponsoring the ceremony. For information regarding details (time, locations, etc.) on formal ceremonies please contact the specific county who is hosting the event.

2) Independent Ceremony: Individual ceremonies are the responsibility of the applicant. It is the applicant's responsibility to arrange directly with a judge to administer the oath. The Oath of Attorney must be taken before an elected or appointed judge, sitting in open court, excluding judges pro tempore, in the State of Washington. Use the online link to print a copy of the oath and take it to the judge. When you complete your swearing in, return the original Oath of Attorney form, signed by you and the judge, to the WSBA Admissions Office.

OUT OF STATE independent ceremony option:

An order from the Supreme Court of the State of Washington conferring jurisdiction on an out-of-state judge to perform the ceremony is required for an out-of-state ceremony for admission to practice law in Washington. If you choose to do an Out of State ceremony please provide the required information online. We will forward your request to the Supreme Court, who will issue an order conferring jurisdiction on the judge you have chosen. Upon receipt of the order, the WSBA Admissions Office will send you a copy of the order to be used at the swearing in ceremony. Use the online link to print a copy of the oath and take it to the judge. Return the original Oath of Attorney, signed by you and the judge, to the WSBA Admissions Office.

Send the signed original Oath of Attorney form to: WSBA, Attn: Admissions Department, 1325 4<sup>th</sup> Ave Ste. 600, Seattle, WA 98101.

#### **IV. Preadmission Education Program (PREP)**

Washington Bar applicants who are qualified for admission must complete a *free* four-hour course of approved preadmission education. PREP courses are available in a live seminar or online format. Some county Bar associations offer the live seminar preceding a formal swearing in ceremony. See the [formal ceremony table](#) for contact information for specific counties. If you are unable to attend a live course, WSBA-CLE has the course available in an online format. If you experience technical issues with the online course please contact the WSBA CLE Office at 206-945-9722.

Whether you attend a live seminar **or** take the online course, be sure to certify that you completed the course on your online account.

#### **V. APR 26 Insurance Disclosure**

Washington lawyers are not required to have professional liability insurance coverage. However, they are required to report to the Washington State Bar Association, on a yearly basis, whether they have coverage. See Professional Liability Insurance Disclosure [FAQ](#) page for more detailed information

## **VI. Trust Account Information**

Pursuant to [ELC 15.5](#), this section must be completed by **ALL Active members** regardless of whether you have a trust account.

- Mark Yes or No.
- If you answered Yes, fill out the Institution, Branch/City and IOLTA Account number(s).

Visit the Trust Account Information [page](#) for more detailed information about IOLTA accounts and trust account declaration.

## **VII. Annual License Fee and Lawyer's Fund for Client Protection (LFCP) Assessment**

You will not be able to pay the fees until you have completed all other admission requirements and the WSBA receives, and processes, your Oath of Attorney. You will then be able to see the amount due on your online admissions account. You may pay online by credit card or you may pay by check by printing the payment form and mailing it with your check to the WSBA.

WSBA license fees are based on a calendar year and must be paid annually. If you are admitted at the end of one year, you will need to pay the license for the current calendar year and also the next calendar year by the license fee deadline of February 1<sup>st</sup>. The license fee for the first year of admission for general (non-attorney) applicants is reduced depending on when you are admitted. Attorney applicants have a reduced license fee if you were admitted elsewhere less than two years ago. You can view the [fee schedule](#) on our website.

The last opportunity for admission in the current year is December 19<sup>th</sup>. All materials and the new admittee license fee must be paid by December 19<sup>th</sup> or the first business day before December 19<sup>th</sup>. After December 19<sup>th</sup>, the fee will be calculated for the next calendar year. If you want to wait to be admitted until the next calendar year, please wait to pay your new admittee fee until December 20<sup>th</sup>. **Note:** This option to defer your licensing fee is not available if it means that you are unable to complete your application before it expires. See APR 5(b).

Optional Keller Deduction: Members may elect to reduce their license fee payment by the pro rata amount used for political activities not related to regulating the practice of law or improving the quality of legal services. The amount to deduct will show up online if you choose this option.

Every active member of the WSBA is required by order of the Supreme Court to pay an assessment of \$30 to finance the Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection (LFCP). The LFCP was established by court rule (APR 15) as a trust for the purposes of relieving or mitigating a pecuniary loss sustained by any person by reason of the dishonesty of, or failure to account for money or property entrusted to, any member of the WSBA in connection with the member's practice of law.

**Note:** To obtain a specific membership status, other than Active, you must first be admitted to practice and then request a status change. Please view the [licensing page](#) on our website for more information.

## **VIII. Optional Demographics Form**

It is helpful to the WSBA for you to complete the demographics form. It allows the WSBA to study and assess several factors and trends, including diversity of the membership. We appreciate your time.

**Admission by the Court:**

Once the WSBA Admissions Office has verified completion of all items and received payment and the oath of attorney, we will send a recommendation for admission to the Supreme Court of the State of Washington. The Supreme Court will then issue an order admitting you to membership in the WSBA. **The date the order is signed is the date of your admission to practice law in Washington.** It generally takes about two to three weeks to be admitted.

Admission is usually posted on the WSBA online lawyer directory the first business day after the date of admission. You can expect to receive your WSBA active membership card and the certificate signed by the Supreme Court about one week from the WSBA Admission Office's receipt of the signed order from the Court.

**Certificate:** After admission, you may purchase a 13" X 19" (approximate size) wall certificate suitable for framing, by writing to the Supreme Court of Washington, Temple of Justice, P.O. Box 40929, Olympia, WA 98504-0929. The cost is \$25.00. Please enclose a copy of your WSBA Bar card with your request.

**Copies of Applications for Admission:** If you require a copy of your application after being admitted as a member, you will need to contact the Supreme Court clerk's office as the files are maintained with the Court after admission. The contact information is: Supreme Court of Washington, Temple of Justice, P.O. Box 40929, Olympia, WA 98504-0929, Tel. 360-357-2077, Email [supreme@courts.wa.gov](mailto:supreme@courts.wa.gov).

Again, congratulations on your achievement, and please contact anyone in the Admissions Office if we can help you with the admission process. You can reach us at WSBA, Attention Admissions, 1325 Fourth Avenue, Suite 600, Seattle, WA 98101-2539; (206) 727-8209; or [admissions@wsba.org](mailto:admissions@wsba.org).