

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF GOVERNORS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting

August 7, 2026

Call to Order

A special meeting of the Board of Governors of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) was called to order by President Francis Adewale at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 7, 2026. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Governors in attendance were:

Emily Arneson

Kevin Fay

Mary Rathbone

Parvin Price

Todd Bloom

Tom Ahearne

Jordan Couch

Kari Petrasek

Allison Widney

Matthew Dresden

Christopher Bhang

Officers and Executive Staff in attendance were President Francis Adewale, Immediate Past President Sunitha Anjilvel, Executive Director Terra Nevitt, Chief Communications and Outreach Officer Sara Niegowski, Chief Disciplinary Counsel & Parliamentarian Doug Ende, Advancement Department Director Kevin Plachy, General Counsel Laurie Powers, Director of Finance Tiffany Lynch, Deputy Executive Director Dua Abudiab, and HR Director & Chief Culture Officer Glynnis Klinefelter Sio.

Also in attendance were Abraham A Cruz, Adam Johnson, Adam Zacharia, Alan Clay, Alec Stephens, Alena Wolotira, Alex Harris, Alex L, Alex Okun, Alex Reaganson, Alina Syed, Amber Sunset, Amrit Kaur, Andrew Sterneke, Anita Ramasastry, Anne Fitzpatrick, Anthony Hogan, Aoife Madden, Ariel Cook, Ashley Enos, Ashley Lipford, Aziza Ozgoren, Beth Helm, Beyza Pinar, Bobby Henry, Brandi-Leigh Miller, Carla Wale, Carolyn Jones, Carrie Sanford, Cassidy Proudfoot, Cate Schur, Catherine Biestek, Celeste Reyes, Celine Paez, Chelle Gegax, Cheryl Takabayashi, Chloe Dowe, Christene A James, Christine Malone, Cinthia, Cynthia Huynh, Dan Clark, Dan Tonkin, Dana Raigrodski, Daniel Szymanski, Danielle Giffin, Danijela Krecar, David, David Gary, David Vascones, Decker O'Donnell, Deniz Tüfek, Diana Vascones, Dory Goldberg, Egor Redin, Elizabeth Pendo, Ella

Van Troba, Emily Willard, Emmy Robertson, Enrique Fuller-Avalos, Erla Alcime, Esha Jain, Evan Pham, Fabianny Dierksen, Fatimah Taha, Gloria Hao, Gregory Bordelon, Holly Haines, Inaara Ali, Ireida, Isabel Freitas Peres, Isabell Murray, Jack Dorsey, Jack N. Despain Zhou, Jason Lawton, Jenah Smith, Jennifer Ortega, Jeremiah Noonan, Jess Olson, Jessica Sadiq, Jocema Bittencourt, Joel Johnson, John, John Gray, Jora S., Joseph Alejandro Valcazar, Joy, Joyce Avery, Julia Mitsch, Juliana Pedroso, Julianne Unite, Karina Montero, Kassama Dibba, Kate Sargeant, Katie Quirk, Keeley Farrell, Kelly Ruhlig, Kendall, Kent Anderson, Ki'Ev Cochran, Kim, Kimberly Loges, Lauren Block, Lauren Sparks, Laurel Hwu, Laurel Olden, Laya Madhavan, Levi J. Cramer, Lillian Lee, Lily Given, Linda Jellum, Lisa Amatangel, Lisa Lu, Lucy Youngdahl, Luis, Luisa Doberman, Lyd Haindfield, Maddy Green, Maecy Arthur, Magdalene Bernier, MaKenzie Moody, Mariella Dewars, Mariola Lisewska, Marisol Garcia, Marley Forest, Marta Font, Marwa Almasri, Matthew Anthony Bellavia, Melissa Shaw, Michael S., Min Kang, Mingyue Zhou, Mitchell Black, Morgan Williams, Morphy Andraws, Natasha Anis, Nettie Dionne, Nikhita Singam, Nikole Blue, Nina Crosby, Ninah-Binah, Nohely Diaz, Norma Linda Ureña, Oscar Mejia, Paris Eriksen, Pontus Niklasson, Rebecca Gil, Rex Nolte, Richard McMonagle, Robert Yu, Ron McNite, Ruby Harlin, Rylan Dunn, Sabrina Velarde, Samiullah Malang, Sandra L., Sanjay Walvekar, Sarah Elizabeth Maginnis, Sarah Matheny, Sarah Pendleton, Sarah Sorensen, Scott Gary, Dean Antony Varona, Serecia Brown, Seth Anunda, Shamarra Hardeman, Sheana Kleist, Shelby Carpenter, Shiva Malay, Simrin Brar, Sophie Ying, Sophie Martin, Spencer Enos, Sue Han, Sukhdeep Chot, Susan Schreiber, Sylvia Sanchez, Dean Tamara F Lawson, Terry J. Price, Theodore Woods, Tom Wampold, Triston Felts, Valerie Kampe, Vicky J. Daniels, Vivian Nicole Hernandez, Wambui Ngige, Will Steinbeisser, Yoseph Ghazal, Yurika Enoumi, Zachary Blinkinsop and Zubair Siddiqi.

President Adewale opened the meeting by acknowledging the gravity of the circumstances prompting the special meeting—the cancellation of the July 2026 bar exam due to a technology failure. President Adewale called on members of the legal profession to support one another during this difficult period.

Executive Session

The Board entered executive session at 2:07 p.m. to receive and discuss legal advice regarding claims and risks arising from the cancellation of the July 2026 bar exam, as permitted by WSBA Bylaw Article 7.7(A). The executive session concluded at 2:45 p.m. and the Board returned to public session.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Nevitt addressed the Board and expressed the WSBA's deep regret to bar exam applicants for the failed examination experience and the disruption it has caused. Executive Director Nevitt reported that the Washington Supreme Court has issued a decision establishing pathways for affected July 2026 applicants, which the WSBA is prepared to implement. Options available to applicants include accepting a waiver of the bar exam requirement (for eligible applicants), transferring their application to a future examination, or withdrawing and requesting a refund. Executive Director Nevitt noted that eligibility for the waiver option varies based on prior exam history and accommodation status, and urged applicants to rely on official WSBA communications for accurate information. The WSBA is also committed to an independent review of the July examination failure and is working with the National Conference of Bar Examiners to strengthen technology reliability for future administrations.

Reimbursement of July 2026 Bar Exam Expenses

The Board considered options for reimbursing applicants for costs incurred in connection with the cancelled July 2026 bar exam. Gov. Couch moved to approve Option 2: to reimburse applicants for nonrefundable travel and lodging expenses, meals, and change fees incurred in connection with July 2026 bar exam attendance, as well as other reasonable expenses determined to be bar-exam-related, for those not opting for a waiver of the bar exam requirement; and to reimburse those opting for a waiver for exam-related costs connected to the theoretical third day of the July exam. The motion was subject to the WSBA's fiscal policies, with the intent that childcare and out-of-state travel be included as reimbursable expenses. The motion passed with one abstention. Gov. Ahearne abstained. Gov. Villeneuve, Gov. Nguyen, and Gov. Larry were not present for the vote.

Washington New Members Committee Public Statement

The Board considered a request from the Washington New Members Committee (WNMC) to issue a public statement addressing equity concerns arising from the Supreme Court's decision regarding the July 2026 bar exam. Gov. Couch moved to authorize the WNMC to release its statement publicly, with the express disclaimer that the statement is not made on behalf of the WSBA, the Board of Governors, or WSBA members. The motion passed unanimously.

Member and Public Comments

President Adewale opened the floor for member and public comments at 3:30 p.m., with each speaker allotted three minutes. Speakers addressed a range of concerns regarding the Supreme Court's decision on July exam pathways, with particular emphasis on the exclusion of retakers and applicants who received testing accommodations from the bar exam waiver option. Commenters raised equity and fairness concerns, highlighted the personal and professional impact of the cancellation, and called for expanded relief including diploma privilege for all affected applicants. The Board acknowledged the feedback received and affirmed its commitment to ongoing efforts to support impacted applicants.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Adewale adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m. on August 7, 2026.

Respectfully,

Terra Nevitt

Terra Nevitt

WSBA Executive Director & Secretary



Board of Governors Meeting – Motions List
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- **Approve Reimbursement of July 2026 Bar Exam Expenses (Option 2):** Passed with one abstention (Gov. Ahearne); Gov. Villeneuve, Gov. Nguyen, and Gov. Larry not present for the vote.
- **Authorize Washington New Members Committee to Release Public Statement with Disclaimer:** Passed unanimously.