

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING MINUTES

Tulalip, WA
July 24-25, 2026

Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting of the Board of Governors of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) was called to order by President Francis Adewale at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, July 24, 2026. Governors in attendance were:

Matthew Dresden

Kevin Fay

Kristina Larry

Todd Bloom

Nam Nguyen

Allison Widney

Kari Petrasek

Christopher Bhang

Mary Rathbone

Emily Arneson

Jordan Couch

Alain Villeneuve

Officers and Executive Staff in attendance were President Francis Adewale, Immediate Past President Sunitha Anjilvel, President-Elect Kari Petrasek, Executive Director Terra Nevitt, Chief Disciplinary Counsel & Parliamentarian Doug Ende, Chief Communications and Outreach Officer Sara Niegowski, Chief Regulatory Counsel Renata Garcia, Advancement Department Director Kevin Plachy, Chief Equity & Justice Officer Diana Singleton, Director of Finance Tiffany Lynch, Deputy Executive Director Dua Abudiab, IT Director Bijal Karia, and General Counsel Laurie Powers.

Also in attendance were Alex Reaganson, Ariel Cook, Mason Ji, Darryl Colman, Henry Phillips, Chris Swanson, Mark Fucile, Michele Carney, Janta Steele, Chelle Gegax, Andrew Yi, Nancy Hawkins, Min Kang, Steve Crossland, Evan Pham, Dean Tamara Lawson, Dean Martin Pritikin, Peter Arkison, Owen Vanderkolk, Russ Preichel, Kim Loges, Dean Anthony Varona, Joanne Boyd, Paris Eriksen, Julianne Unite, Darcel Labo, Suzi Segulja, Alena Wolotira, Alejandro Villacorta, Marie Higuera, Sarah Maginnis, Ramana Pandalaya, Sanjay

Walvekar, Szilvia Szilagyi, Sophie Ying, Norma Linda Ureña, Marie Trombley, Bobby Henry, Adelaine Shay, Margeaux Green, Agnieszka McPeak, Associate Dean Dallan Flake, Bart Parsley, Hannah Stone, Kellye Testy, Noah Baetge, Melissa Campos-Castaneda, and Carolyn MacGregor.

President Adewale opened the meeting on the ancestral lands of the Snohomish people and the Tulalip Tribes, offering a land acknowledgment recognizing their sovereignty and the enduring importance of their cultural heritage. Chairman of the Tulalip Tribes, Hazen Shopbell was invited to deliver an invocation and shared a personal reflection on the significance of tribal traditions and the shared commitment to justice that connects the Tulalip community and the legal profession. Tate London, a WSBA Member and Executive Director of Law and Justice for the Tulalip Tribes, welcomed the BOG and WSBA to Tulalip, sharing his longstanding connection to the WSBA and to the Tulalip resort, and expressed the Tribes' gratitude for the Board's presence.

Member and Public Comments

President Adewale opened the floor for member and public comments. Kesten Grohl and Aslan Malik advocated for an amendment to APR 11 to allow legal professionals to earn MCLE credit for judging and evaluating mock trial events, emphasizing the educational value of these programs in developing trial advocacy skills and civic engagement with the legal system. UW Law Dean Tamara Lawson and Seattle U Law Dean Anthony Verona, expressed concerns about the Board's May 2026 decision to expand the definition of "approved law school" to include state-approved but non-ABA-accredited institutions, which would allow students from those institutions to also take the WA bar exam. They urged the Board to allow additional time for deliberation and to consider the potential for predatory practices at some non-ABA-accredited institutions. Dean Martin Pritikin of Purdue Global Law School expressed support for the expanded policy, citing his school's track record in other jurisdictions and the access to justice benefits for students from diverse and underserved backgrounds. Janta Steele and Marie Trombley also spoke in favor of the expanded definition, emphasizing the importance of non-traditional pathways to the legal profession. Kelly Testy, CEO of the Association of American Law Schools and former dean at Seattle University and the University of Washington, urged the Board to step back and engage more broadly before proceeding with the proposed change to the definition of an approved law school. Ms. Testy acknowledged the Board's authority to act but encouraged a more inclusive process that incorporates the perspectives of Washington law school deans and other stakeholders, expressing confidence that a deliberate, evidence-based approach would lead to a sound outcome. Associate Dean Dallan Flake of Gonzaga University School of Law and others urged the Board to exercise careful discernment and gather additional data before proceeding with implementation. Denise Diskin of Columbia Legal Services addressed the Board regarding the conduct of the Lozano Immigration Law Firm and requested a transparent audit and immediate action to support affected former clients of Lozano.

Consent Calendar

President Adewale presented the consent calendar. The May 1–2, 2026, Board of Governors Meeting Minutes were removed from the consent calendar at the request of a governor. Gov. Couch moved to approve the remaining consent calendar items. The motion passed unanimously.

May 1-2, 2026 Board of Governor Meeting Minutes

Gov. Villeneuve requested that the May meeting minutes reflect the roll call vote conducted on the admissions policy change at that meeting and Gov. Fay requested that the minutes reflect that the proposal was presented for a first read. Approval of the minutes was postponed to the next meeting to allow for the necessary corrections.

President's Report

President Adewale encouraged continued collaboration and open dialogue among governors as the Board engaged with complex and consequential agenda items and emphasized the importance of ensuring that diverse voices within the membership are heard and considered in policy deliberations.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Nevitt referred to her written report available in the meeting materials.

Approve Proposed Amendment to the Admissions Policies Re Definition of Approved Law School

Chief Regulatory Counsel Garcia presented technical amendments to the admissions policy change adopted by the Board in May 2026, which expanded the definition of "approved law school" to include institutions recognized by other jurisdictions for bar exam eligibility in addition to ABA-accredited schools. The proposed technical amendments sought to clarify the policy language, including replacing the term "recognized" with "approved or accredited" to reduce ambiguity, specifying that the law school must be approved at the time the applicant's J.D. degree was conferred, and clarifying that the degree must satisfy the requirements for bar exam eligibility in another U.S. jurisdiction. The Board took additional public comment and discussed the technical amendments, as well as the standards and implementation implications of the underlying policy change. Gov. Couch moved to approve the technical amendments. The motion passed with seven votes in favor and four against. Gov. Rathbone was not present for the vote.

Gov. Arneson moved to amend the effective date of the policy from September 1, 2026, to January 1, 2027, to allow additional time for review and implementation planning. The motion failed with five votes in favor and six against. Gov. Rathbone was not present for the vote.

The Board entered executive session at 12:50 p.m. to receive and discuss legal advice regarding the admissions policy matter, as permitted by WSBA Bylaw Article 7.7(A). The executive session concluded at 1:00 p.m. and the Board returned to public session.

Gov. Bhang moved to amend the effective date of the policy to September 28, 2026. The motion failed with five votes in favor and seven against.

Gov. Fay announced his intention to bring a motion to rescind the May 2026 action expanding the definition of approved law school at the September 2026 meeting in Spokane, citing the need for more comprehensive analysis, broader stakeholder engagement, and fuller consideration of the implications for bar passage rates and educational standards.

Comments to the Rules of Professional Conduct Re AI Usage Proposed by the Committee on Professional Ethics

Committee on Professional Ethics Chair Mark Fucile and Committee Member Michele Carney presented the Committee's recommendation regarding a package of amendments to the Rules of Professional Conduct (RPCs) concerning the use of artificial intelligence in legal practice. The amendments were initiated by the Washington Supreme Court, which invited the WSBA to serve as a co-proponent. The review was conducted on an expedited basis, with the expectation that the Court would publish the amendments for public comment. The proposed amendments do not create new duties but apply existing professional obligations to AI tools and technology, emphasizing that AI serves as an instrument to assist lawyers and does not replace professional judgment, verification obligations, or accountability. The amendments address RPC 1.1 (competence), RPC 1.4 (communication), RPC 1.6 (confidentiality), RPC 3.1 (meritorious claims), RPC 3.3 (candor to the tribunal), RPCs 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 (supervisory responsibilities), RPC 7.1 (communications regarding services), and RPC 8.4 (prohibition on discriminatory conduct). Gov. Fay moved to accept the comments. The motion passed unanimously.

Facilities Reserve Recommendation

Treas. Nguyen and Director of Finance Lynch presented the Budget and Audit Committee's recommendation to allocate \$150,000 from the unrestricted general fund reserve to the facilities reserve. This allocation is part of a multi-year strategy initiated following the renegotiation of a 10-year lease in 2024, under which the WSBA has committed to building the facilities reserve by \$150,000 annually in anticipation of potential future needs related to office space at the end of the lease term. The Budget and Audit Committee, in consultation with brokers at Jones Lang LaSalle IP, Inc. (JLL), reviewed current market conditions and maintained the same recommendation as the prior year. Governors inquired about the investment strategy for the reserve funds, which are conservatively invested in money market accounts, certificates of deposit, and Treasury securities. Gov. Fay moved to approve the allocation of \$150,000 from the unrestricted general fund reserve to the facilities reserve. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed License Fee Policy Revisions

Treas. Nguyen and Director of Finance Lynch presented proposed revisions to the WSBA license fee policy for a first read. The revisions would expand the existing policy—previously limited to attorney license fees—to encompass all WSBA license types, establishing minimum and maximum fee percentages relative to the full active attorney license fee to create a more holistic and consistent approach to fee-setting. Gov. Villeneuve moved to approve the policy revisions. Following discussion regarding the importance of allowing a second read to ensure broader input, Gov. Villeneuve withdrew the motion. The matter will be placed on the agenda for final action at the September 2026 meeting.

FY27 Budget Retreat and Review of First Draft Budget

Treas. Nguyen and Director of Finance Lynch presented the first draft of the Fiscal Year 2027 budget. The session was designed to educate board members about WSBA's fund accounting structure, including the general fund, CLE fund, client protection fund, and sections fund, along with their respective reserves and cost centers. The primary driver of year-over-year expense growth is a 4.8% increase in salaries and benefits, reflecting compensation grid adjustments, position reclassifications, and the addition of 2.4 full-time equivalent positions. The Board also discussed the potential addition of a proposed public trust liaison position to handle regulatory inquiries and improve public engagement with the WSBA. A number of board members

commented in favor of incorporating the proposal into the final budget draft. No action was taken at this meeting; the final draft budget will be on the agenda for approval at the September 2026 meeting.

Proposed Admissions Application Fees

Chief Regulatory Counsel Garcia and Director of Finance Lynch presented proposed changes to admissions application fees for a first reading, as recommended by the Budget and Audit Committee. The proposal includes four components: establishing an application fee for the new portfolio evaluation pathway to the bar, aligning attorney application fees across admission pathways to correct existing inconsistencies, increasing the Rule 9 limited practice officer application fee from \$50—unchanged since 2004—to \$100 with a gradual increase to \$200 to better cover the cost of processing applications, and discontinuing the waiver of application fees for law students in clinics providing free legal services, to address inconsistencies with students providing similar services outside clinical settings. Board policy requires the admissions cost center to be self-funded. No action was required at this meeting; the proposal will be refined based on Board feedback and presented for final approval at the September 2026 meeting, with an anticipated effective date of January 1, 2027.

Treasurer Interviews and Election

The Board conducted the election for the 2026–2027 WSBA Treasurer. Two candidates were nominated: Gov. Alain Villeneuve and Gov. Allison Widney. Each candidate was allotted 15 minutes for an opening statement and to respond to questions from the Board. Ballots were administered and counted by Executive Director Nevitt, Nancy Hawkins, and Steve Crossland via secret electronic ballot. Gov. Alain Villeneuve was elected as WSBA Treasurer for 2026–2027.

Amendments to APR 11 Proposed by the MCLE Board

MCLE Board Chair Darryl Colman, Board Member Henry Phillips, and YMCA Washington Mock Trial Program Director Chris Swanson presented two proposed amendments to APR 11. The first proposed amendment would allow lawyers to earn MCLE credit for judging, evaluating, or scoring participants in high school and college-level mock trial and moot court programs approved by the MCLE Board. The proposal addresses a recognized need for qualified volunteer attorneys and highlights the educational value of mock trial participation in developing trial advocacy skills, analytical reasoning, and civic understanding of the legal system. The proposal as presented does not include credit for coaching activities; the MCLE Board indicated it remains open to exploring that question based on additional input from members engaged in coaching. Gov. Couch moved to approve Credit for Approved Mock Trial Programs as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Gov. Couch moved to approve the second proposed amendment to APR 11, which would add Colorado to the states with which Washington has a comity agreement for MCLE credit, joining Oregon, Idaho, and Utah. The motion passed unanimously.

Washington New Members Committee Proposed Charter

Washington New Members Committee (WNMC) Chair Alexander Reaganson, Chair-Elect Janta Steele, and Greater Olympia Region Representative Ariel Cook presented a proposed charter for the WNMC. The charter is intended to codify recent organizational changes and establish a clearer governance structure to address recurring vacancies, declining participation, and outdated governance materials. The charter establishes five

organizational goals: advancing a data-driven approach, advocacy for new members, fostering growth and connection, pro bono empowerment, and professional development. A significant structural change in the charter shifts the committee from a regional representative model to a congressional district representative system, intended to enhance equity and collaboration with the Board of Governors. The charter also introduces six at-large representative positions, including focused roles in diversity, equity, and inclusion; public service; and solo and small firm practice. The new governance structure would take effect on October 1, 2026, with the start of the new fiscal year. Gov. Petrasek moved to approve the proposed charter for the Washington New Members Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Changes to RAP 3.2 Re Substitution of Parties in the Event of Death or Change of Status Recommended by the Court Rules and Procedures Committee

Court Rules and Procedures Committee Chair Andrew Yi presented proposed amendments to RAP 3.2 regarding the substitution of parties in the event of death or change of legal status. The amendments align RAP 3.2 with Civil Rule 25 and Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 43, shifting the framework from requiring an adverse party to move for substitution to placing the duty on any party with knowledge of a death or legal disability to promptly note it on the record. Discussion addressed the use of the term “suggest” in the proposed language, which is consistent with existing terminology in both the Washington Civil Rules and the federal rules. Gov. Nguyen moved to approve the proposed changes to RAP 3.2 Re Substitution of Parties in the Event of Death or Change of Status. The motion passed unanimously.

RECESS

There being no further business for the day, the meeting recessed at 4:18 p.m. on July 24, 2026.

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 2026

The Board of Governors reconvened on Saturday, July 25, 2026, at the Tulalip Resort, with President Adewale presiding.

Executive Session

The Board entered executive session at 9:00 a.m. to receive and discuss legal advice regarding litigation involving mandatory bar associations and the Keller deduction, as permitted by WSBA Bylaw Article 7.7(A). The executive session concluded at 9:50 a.m. and the Board returned to public session.

Discussion of Policy Recommendations from the Legal Technology Task Force Final Report

Advancement Department Director Kevin Plachy and Practice Management Advisor Margeaux Green presented policy recommendations from the Legal Technology Task Force’s final report. The Task Force, established as a Board strategic priority in November 2023 and chaired by Jenny Durkan, conducted its work from May 2024 through August 2025. The final report’s recommendations are organized into operational and policy categories; the Executive Director is overseeing implementation of operational recommendations, while policy recommendations were presented for Board consideration.

The Board discussed several key policy areas addressed in the report, including the potential establishment of a technology-related MCLE requirement, incorporation of technology content into the Washington bar exam and the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE), integration of technology competency

into law school curricula and the APR 6 law clerk program, establishment of ethical boundaries for AI legal tools, and advocacy for updates to consumer protection and privacy laws to address risks arising from consumer use of AI for legal matters. Board discussion reflected a range of views on a mandatory technology MCLE requirement, with some governors expressing support given the increasing centrality of technology to legal practice and others raising concerns about additional burdens on practitioners. The Board expressed support for further exploration of technology competence within the legal education context. The Board directed staff to transmit the Task Force's final report to relevant agencies—including the ACLU, Responsible AI Washington, the Washington State Office of Privacy and Data Protection, and the Attorney General's Office—to highlight privacy and consumer protection considerations in AI legislation. Additional discussion on court capacity and the potential establishment of a Supreme Court advisory body on legal technology is expected at the September 2026 meeting.

Regulatory Proposals

Proposed Changes to APR 8 and APR 3(c) Re Servicemember & Spouse Temporary License

Chief Regulatory Counsel Garcia presented proposed changes to APR 8 and APR 3(c) to establish a new temporary license for qualifying U.S. service members and their spouses under the federal Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. The proposal would repeal the existing military spouse rule and replace it with an updated framework aligned with recent federal law changes and designed to facilitate license portability for service members and their families. Gov. Couch moved to approve the proposed changes to APR 8 and APR 3(c) Re Servicemember & Spouse Temporary License. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed Amendment Re Deadline for Testing-Accommodation Requests

Associate Director Henry presented proposed amendments to the WSBA admissions policies to align the filing deadline for bar exam testing accommodation requests with the late filing deadline for bar exam applications. The change addresses new requirements from the National Conference of Bar Examiners and an increase in the volume of accommodation requests. Gov. Dresden moved to approve the proposed amendment to the deadline for testing-accommodation requests. The motion passed unanimously.

Second Reading: Proposed Amendments to APR 3(d), APR 4(d), and WSBA Bylaws Re Score Expiration and Bar Exam Requirement

Associate Director Henry presented the second reading of proposed amendments to APR 3(d), APR 4(d), and the WSBA Bylaws, which would eliminate expiration dates for Uniform Bar Examination and Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination scores and remove the requirement that WSBA members who have been inactive for more than ten years retake the bar exam upon reactivation. The amendments reflect revisions made in response to Board feedback from the first read at the May 2026 meeting. Gov. Bloom moved to approve the proposed amendments to APR 3(d), APR 4(d), and WSBA Bylaws Re Score Expiration and Bar Exam Requirement. The motion passed unanimously.

Second Reading: Proposed Amendments to APR 3(b)(3) Re Common Law Jurisdictions for Bar Exam

Chief Regulatory Counsel Garcia presented the second reading of proposed amendments to APR 3(b)(3) governing qualifications for lawyers from common law jurisdictions to sit for the Washington bar exam. The amendments modernize the existing language and reduce the active legal experience requirement for internationally trained lawyers from common law jurisdictions from three years to one year, aligning it with

the requirement applicable to U.S.-trained lawyers. In response to Board feedback from the first reading, the Office of General Counsel is researching and assessing whether the rule could be broadened beyond common law jurisdictions to include civil law countries, with a report anticipated in the coming months. Gov. Couch moved to approve the proposed amendments to APR 3(b)(3) Re Common Law Jurisdictions for Bar Exam. The motion passed unanimously.

Second Reading: Proposed Amendments to APR 1(e) Re Definition of Active Legal Experience

Chief Regulatory Counsel Garcia and Associate Director Henry presented the second reading of proposed amendments to clarify the definition of “active legal experience” for purposes of admission by motion and reactivation of inactive licenses. Gov. Arneson expressed concern that the proposed definition could inadvertently exclude legal professionals—particularly those in public sector and nonprofit roles—who perform substantive legal work without having a job that requires an active license, and noted the potential disparate impact on women, people of color, and lawyers from nontraditional career backgrounds. In response to these concerns, Chief Garcia agreed to meet with interested governors and other stakeholders to further refine the proposal before its return to the Board. The matter will return for a third reading at the September 2026 meeting.

Governor Roundtable

Gov. Bhang provided an update from the Access to Justice Board, noting that the Board is undertaking a revision of its foundational authorization order—last updated in 1994—with input from equity and justice communities and legal system partners, and encouraged governors to provide feedback on the draft changes.

Gov. Nguyen raised concerns about the lack of legal services available to immigrant communities in rural areas of Washington, particularly in the Tri-Cities and Vancouver regions, and expressed interest in exploring models such as Oregon’s universal civil legal aid program. Chief Singleton acknowledged these concerns and outlined ongoing efforts to collaborate with AILA Washington, legal aid organizations, and potential funders including the Department of Commerce and the Legal Foundation of Washington, to address access gaps for immigrant communities, including those affected by the Lozano Immigration Law Firm matter.

Gov. Villeneuve expressed interest in contributing a foreign lawyer’s perspective to ongoing discussions regarding common law and civil law distinctions in the context of proposed APR amendments.

Governor elect Norma Linda Ureña expressed appreciation for the Board’s attention to the concerns of immigrant communities, particularly for Latino residents across Washington State.

Meeting Feedback: Rose, Thorns, & Bud

Governors participated in a meeting feedback session using the Rose, Thorns, & Bud format. Positive feedback was extended to the Tulalip Resort and its staff for the quality of the venue and to President Adewale for his leadership throughout the two-day meeting. Chief Disciplinary Counsel Ende acknowledged Gov. Larry’s service as the ceremonial chair of the WSBA Seersucker Society as her term draws to a close.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President elect Kari Petrasek adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m. on July 25, 2026.

Respectfully,

Terra Nevitt

Terra Nevitt
WSBA Executive Director & Secretary



**Board of Governors Meeting – Motions List
Tulalip, WA
July 24-25, 2026**

- **Approve Consent Calendar (excluding May meeting minutes):** Adopted unanimously.
- **Approve Technical Amendment to Admissions Policies Re Definition of Approved Law School:** Passed 7 to 4; Gov. Rathbone not present for the vote.
- **Motion to Amend Effective Date of Approved Law School Policy to January 1, 2027:** Failed 5 to 6; Gov. Rathbone not present for the vote.
- **Motion to Amend Effective Date of Approved Law School Policy to September 28, 2026:** Failed 5 to 7.
- **Accept Comments to the Rules of Professional Conduct Re AI Usage and Co-Sponsor with the Washington Supreme Court:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Facilities Reserve Recommendation:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Amendments to APR 11 Re Credit for Approved Mock Trial Programs:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Amendments to APR 11 Re Comity with Colorado:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Washington New Members Committee Proposed Charter:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Proposed Changes to RAP 3.2 Re Substitution of Parties in the Event of Death or Change of Status:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Proposed Changes to APR 8 and APR 3(c) Re Servicemember & Spouse Temporary License:** Passed unanimously.

- **Approve Proposed Amendment Re Deadline for Testing-Accommodation Requests:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Proposed Amendments to APR 3(d), APR 4(d), and WSBA Bylaws Re Score Expiration and Bar Exam Requirement:** Passed unanimously.
- **Approve Proposed Amendments to APR 3(b)(3) Re Common Law Jurisdictions for Bar Exam:** Passed unanimously.