

APEX Award Eligibility Criteria

Adopted: March 7, 2024. Amended Jan. 16, 2026.

The APEX Awards are an opportunity for WSBA leaders to honor legal practitioners who embody the highest ideals of service in each respective award category. When soliciting and considering nominations, a top priority is to reflect the full diversity of the legal community across Washington state in terms of geography, practice area and type, and other demographics such as gender, race, age, etc.

Unless otherwise stated, each APEX Award is given to a single WSBA member (any license type). Awards that allow for group (including corporate entities) and/or non-WSBA member nominations as well as awards with specific eligibility requirements are listed below. Honorees may receive one award per lifetime in any single APEX Awards category; the Committee should carefully consider other candidates before awarding another APEX Award, in a different category, to an honoree who has received an APEX Award in the past five years. To avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest and uphold the integrity of the awards process, current/seated WSBA staff, Board of Governors members, and Officers are not eligible for APEX Awards.

Specific eligibility:

- Angelo Petruss Award for Lawyers in Government Service: Open to a WSBA member who works in government service, defined as employment with a local, city, county, state, tribal, or federal government entity or agency, including the Attorney General's Office and military branch. Elected officials are not eligible.
- Justice Charles Z. Smith Excellence in Diversity Award: Open to individuals, groups, and non-WSBA members.
- Legal Innovation Award: Open to individuals, groups, and non-WSBA members.
- Lifetime Service Award: Open to non-WSBA members.
- Outstanding Judge Award: Open to current or retired judges, including administrative law judges, hearings officers, and other judicial or quasi-judicial officers.
- Outstanding New Member Award: Open to active WSBA members who meet the definition of "new member" in the WSBA Bylaws.
- Pro Bono Public Service Awards: One award given to an individual and one award to a group; open to non-WSBA members.
- Norm Maleng Leadership Award: Open to individuals, groups, and non-WSBA members.
- Sally P. Savage Leadership in Philanthropy Award: Open to individuals, groups, and non-WSBA members.