

WSBA Section Profiles 2023

Sections are established to provide a forum for those members of the WSBA who wish to pursue shared specialized interests. Section membership is voluntary. The current membership year is Jan. 1, 2023 – Dec. 31, 2023. Dues are the same for both WSBA “active members” and “subscribers” (individuals who are not active members of the WSBA, including inactive members and the general public). New admittees may join one section for free in their first year of admittance to WSBA. Law students may join any section at a discounted rate as a “subscriber.” For additional information about the WSBA sections, please visit www.wsba.org.

The **Administrative Law Section** is designed to serve the interests of public and private sector attorneys who work with state and local regulatory agencies to improve and facilitate the administration of justice in administrative law. Members include assistant attorney generals, city attorneys (on private contract as well as public employees), county prosecutors who work on regulatory matters and private practitioners who either contract to represent government entities or who represent clients subject to government regulation.

The **Animal Law Section** seeks the participation of WSBA members and other parties interested in increasing connection to issues relevant to animals and the human-animal interrelationship, which includes landlord/tenant, criminal, wills and trusts, personal injury and tort claims, nonprofit corporations, agricultural, local government, and administrative law.

The **Antitrust, Consumer Protection, and Unfair Business Practices Section** is primarily devoted to keeping its members informed about significant developments in the field of trade regulation law. The Section serves as a forum for members of the Washington State Bar Association to exchange information and ideas and to develop and conduct educational programs regarding public and private aspects of trade regulation law, including antitrust, consumer protection, and unfair business practices.

The **Business Law Section** is committed to providing services that its members value, operating in a fiscally responsible manner, and enhancing professional collegiality among all Washington business legal practitioners. Much of the substantive activity and the informal interaction with other business law practitioners occurs through the Section’s broad variety subcommittees.

The **Civil Rights Law Section** is concerned with all aspects of law and policy related to the improvement of the legal practice in the substantive area of civil rights law, which includes, but is not limited to, violations of rights provided under the constitutions of the United States and Washington state, federal and state statutes, local laws, and regulations; criminal harassment; hate crimes; and immigration matters.

The **Construction Law Section** members share common interests on a wide variety of issues related to the construction industry and all aspects of government procurement. The Section promotes the education of members in laws, regulations, and administrative and court decisions and the sound development of relevant laws and regulations, cooperating in that endeavor with the American Bar Association and its sections, while also promoting the objectives of the Washington State Bar Association. Section members engage in a broad spectrum of business activities relating to contract drafting and negotiation and bidding processes, as well as all varieties of dispute resolution including arbitration, mediation, litigation, and bid protest.

The **Corporate Counsel Section** provides educational and professional development, career enhancement, and networking opportunities for all members of the Washington State Bar

Association who work in in-house legal environments, who aspire to work in-house, or who wish to better understand the issues, challenges, and opportunities faced by in-house legal professionals. Section members include in-house legal counsel, attorneys in private practice who spend a substantial portion of their time working with in-house counsel, and other legal professionals who counsel businesses or nonprofit enterprises.

The **Creditor Debtor Rights Section** encourages the research, study, and initiation of proposals for changes and reforms. The Section aids and educates members and the public by reviewing pending legislation and development of proposed statutory enactments to improve and to facilitate the administration of justice. Section members represent a diverse array of individuals and businesses who are debtors, debtors-in-possession, secured and unsecured creditors, creditors’ committees, receivers, trustees, asset purchasers, and examiners in all facets of creditor-debtor law.

The **Criminal Law Section** provides the opportunity and forum for the interchange of ideas in the areas of criminal law and procedure by initiating and implementing common projects and by review of pending legislation and development of proposed statutory enactments to improve and to facilitate the administration of justice. Section members include prosecutors, defense counsel, law professors, and law enforcement professionals. With an equal number of defense and prosecuting attorney positions, the executive board champions the rights of both the accused and victims in the criminal justice system.

The **Dispute Resolution Section** promotes the informed use and best practices of dispute resolution processes by providing resources, educating members of the Washington State Bar Association and the public, and addressing issues relating to the growth and development of dispute resolution services in the State of Washington. All WSBA members and other dispute resolution professionals may become a member of the Section.

The **Elder Law Section** seeks to improve understanding by members of the Washington State Bar Association of matters related to the representation of elderly citizens, recognizing that these individuals have unique legal needs and may be isolated, ill, or vulnerable to undue influence or exploitation. Issues commonly discussed relate to retirement and estate planning, powers of attorney, guardianship and other forms of substitute decision making, private and public long-term care and other healthcare financing, and abuse of vulnerable individuals.

The **Environmental and Land Use Law Section** helps members keep up with this rapidly developing area of law. The Section represents a diverse membership with individuals who are often on different sides of an issue, but who are all committed to civil and professional cooperation for the protection and enhancement of shared communities. Accordingly, the Section endeavors to continually and regularly provide opportunities and forums for the interchange of ideas surrounding environmental and land use law.

The **Family Law Section** is devoted to improving the profession and practice of family law to benefit its members and other family law professionals, the judiciary, and the general public. The Family Law Section is a statewide organization of family law attorneys that represents the interests of legal professionals practicing family law.

The **Health Law Section** furthers the knowledge of the members of the Section and the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) in the areas of law involving both federal and local health care. The Section focuses on the business of health care, state and federal reform, fraud and abuse, antitrust, new modes of health care delivery, insurance issues, and many other concerns. The Section works to contribute to valuable relationships among

health law practitioners and opportunities to develop health law practices.

The **Indian Law Section** provides a forum for practitioners representing clients with diverse interests affected by Indian law to learn more about Indian law. Federal, Tribal and state laws, executive and administrative actions, and court decisions provide a complex and rapidly evolving array of law which affect legal services provided by practitioners to clients.

The **Intellectual Property Section** strives to promote the practice of intellectual property law and focuses on patents, trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets, and related matters. The Section promotes the development of industry and the useful arts by encouraging the establishment, maintenance, respect for, and utilization of intellectual property rights that fairly balance the limited monopoly enjoyed by the owner of intellectual property rights with the benefit to society derived from the creation of useful subject matter protectable by those rights.

The **International Practice Section** has a broad focus that includes not only the study of current developments in the field of international law but also immigration law, international transactional work, aerospace, taxation, intellectual property, financing, services, trade regulation, exports and imports, transnational contracts, travel, and international dispute resolution. Members represent a wide variety of backgrounds and practices, including full-time and part-time practitioners, government, business, foreign lawyers, academia, internationally-focused law students, and those simply intellectually interested.

The **Juvenile Law Section** provides an opportunity for legal professionals who work with juveniles and their families in child welfare and juvenile justice to meet together and work collaboratively on issues facing their clients. Areas of legal practice the section addresses include child welfare, juvenile justice, status offenses, immigration as it relates to children and families, truancy, at-risk-youth and children in need of services proceedings, as well as a variety of civil legal needs of youth. The Section welcomes advocates from all interested disciplines and a variety of fields of law, including juvenile justice, child welfare, and those who represent youth in civil legal practice.

The **Labor and Employment Law Section** of the Washington State Bar Association is one of the larger and fastest growing sections of the WSBA, mirroring the growth of the practice area. The Section includes members who practice many different aspects of labor and employment law, including lawyers representing private and public sector employers, unions, management, and individual employees, as well as law professors, arbitrators, and other neutrals.

The **Legal Assistance to Military Personnel Section** promotes the objectives of the Washington State Bar Association with respect to military affairs. The Section establishes and maintains a liaison between the WSBA, the Armed Forces of the United States, and federal, state, and local government agencies to better serve the legal needs of the members and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States and their dependents.

The **Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Law Section** improves understanding by members of the Washington State Bar Association of the legal needs of LGBT individuals in the state of Washington. The Section supports the efforts of members to achieve the highest standards of competence, professionalism, and ethics in their practices, and assists LGBT residents of Washington state and those who represent them to better understand how their legal needs can be met. The Section promotes the study of LGBT and gender identification law, and reports on laws, decisions, and governmental regulations as they may affect the rights, responsibilities, and needs of LGBT people.

The **Liquor, Cannabis, and Psychedelics Law** provides networking and education opportunities to attorneys who practice in, or are interested in, these areas of law. The Section serves as a repository of information to guide practitioners through these highly technical areas of law and is comprised of a network of highly skilled practitioners working together to interpret the rules, regulations, and industry developments in order to further best practice guidelines for these developing and established industries.

The **Litigation Section** strives to be the voice of civil litigators practicing in Washington state. The section is involved in a wide range of activities that interest those who handle civil matters in superior or federal courts. Activities include review and formal input concerning legislation and rule-making, annual midyear trial skills seminar, and support for litigation skills training.

The **Low Bono Section** is a community for legal professionals, law students, and others who are committed to providing, promoting, and learning about low bono services. The underlying purpose of “low bono” is to increase the availability of legal representation and legal services to clients of moderate means. Clients of moderate means are individuals who have a need or a want for legal representation or legal services, but who cannot qualify for pro bono legal assistance and who typically cannot afford the cost of traditional law firm representation or legal services.

The **Real Property, Probate and Trust Section** assists members in achieving the highest standards of competence, professionalism, and ethics in their practices. The Section is composed of legal professionals whose practices span the areas of real property, trusts, and estates. The Section’s governance structure includes two separate councils: the Real Property Council and the Probate and Trust Council.

The **Senior Lawyers Section** is geared toward lawyers aged 55 years and counting or who have been in practice in any jurisdiction for 25 years, although anyone may join the section. As one of the few Washington State Bar Association sections that does not focus on a particular area of the law, the Section engages in robust discussions about their members’ identity, navigating legal practice and life transitions, and keeping up to date on developments in the law.

The **Solo and Small Practice Section** serves as a clearinghouse for qualified law practice management and technology information for solo and small practice attorneys to support them in ethically conducting a profitable and satisfying business. The Section provides education for its members in areas of common interest and provides opportunities for members to become better acquainted with other members.

The **Taxation Section** furthers the knowledge in areas of the law involving federal, state, and local taxation. The Section forms an available working unit to assist in the activities of the WSBA and further the interests of the WSBA and of the legal profession as a whole, and also provides legal professionals with an interest in tax law an opportunity to meet and discuss mutual areas of concern with established practitioners.

The **World Peace Through Law Section** focuses on international affairs and issues of war, peace, and law. The Section seeks to promote the rule of law and peaceful resolution of disputes among states and to foster education on public international law and human rights.

For more information about the 29 sections of the Washington State Bar Association, please visit www.wsba.org. For questions, please contact sections@wsba.org.