

IV. GOVERNANCE

A. BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors (BOG) is the governing body of the Bar. It determines the policies of the Bar and approves its budget each year. Subject to the plenary authority and supervision of the Washington Supreme Court and limitations imposed by Statute, Court Rule, Court Order, or case law, the Board possesses all power and discretion on all matters concerning the WSBA. The Board may delegate the exercise of its authority but that does not constitute a transfer of it. The Board's authority is retained and may be exercised at any time upon a majority vote of the Board.

1. Composition of the Board of Governors

The BOG will consist of (a) the President; (b) one Governor elected from each Congressional District, except in the Seventh Congressional District where members will be elected from separate geographic regions designated as North and South, and identified by postal zip codes as established by the Bar in accordance with these Bylaws and BOG policy; and (c) three Governors elected at-large pursuant to these Bylaws.

2. Duties

- a. The BOG elects the President-elect of the Bar.
- b. The BOG selects the Bar's Executive Director and annually reviews the Executive Director's performance.
- c. Regardless of the method by which any person is selected to serve on the BOG, each Governor will act in the best interest of all members of the Bar and the public. Each Governor is primarily obligated to ensure that the Bar fulfills the mandate set forth in General Rule 12.1, carries out the mission of the Bar, and operates in accordance with the Bar's Guiding Principles.
- d. Each Governor is expected to engage with members about BOG actions and issues, and to convey member viewpoints to the Board. In representing a Congressional District, a Governor will at a minimum: (1) bring to the BOG the perspective, values and circumstances of her or his district to be applied in the best interests of all members, the public and the Bar; and (2) bring information to the members in the district that promotes appreciation of actions and issues affecting the membership as a whole, the public and the organization.
- e. Each Governor appointed to serve as a BOG liaison to a committee, task force, council, section, board, or other entity has the responsibility to fulfill those liaison duties on behalf of the BOG. Governors appointed to serve as BOG liaisons are not voting members of those entities. BOG liaisons must not be excluded but will not participate in those entities' executive sessions or confidential deliberations except when requested to do so as a resource.

- f. Meetings of the BOG will be held as provided in these Bylaws. Each Governor must attend all board meetings except in cases of emergency or compelling circumstance that prevents participation.

3. Term

Governors will assume their duties at the close of the final regularly scheduled BOG meeting of the fiscal year in which they were elected. Governors serve a term of three years, except as may be otherwise provided by these Bylaws.

4. Vacancy

- a. A vacancy may arise due to resignation, death, removal by BOG, or recall by members.
 - 1) Removal by the Board of Governors. Any Governor may be removed from office for good cause by a 75% vote of the entire BOG exclusive of the Governor subject to removal, who will not vote. The vote will be by secret written ballot. Good cause for removal includes, without limitation, incapacity to serve, serious or repeated failures to meet the duties outlined in these Bylaws, or conduct or activities that bring discredit to the Bar.
 - 2) Recall by Members. Any Governor may be removed from the BOG by a recall by members, in accordance with the procedures set forth in these Bylaws.
- b. Response to a Vacancy
 - 1) If a vacancy occurs for any reason and 12 months or less remain in that Governor's term, in the BOG's sole discretion the position may remain vacant until the next regularly scheduled election for that Governor position. In that event, no interim governor will be elected or appointed to the position.
 - 2) If a vacancy occurs due to resignation, death, or the removal of a Governor by the BOG, and more than 12 months remain in that Governor's term, the BOG must elect a candidate eligible for that position to serve as Governor until the next regularly scheduled election for that Governor position.
 - 3) If a Governor is removed due to recall and more than 12 months remain in that Governor's term, a special election will be conducted using the general procedures set forth in the "Election of Governors from Congressional Districts" provisions of these Bylaws. The application period for any special election held pursuant to this paragraph must be no less than 30 days and must, at a minimum, be prominently posted on the Bar's website and e-mailed to all members eligible to vote in the election.
 - 4) Regardless of whether a special election will be held to fill a Governor position that is vacant due to recall by the members, such position will not be filled by any interim governors selected by the BOG or appointed by the President.

B. OFFICERS OF THE BAR

The officers of the Bar consist of a President, President-elect, Immediate Past-President, and Treasurer. The Executive Director of the Bar serves as secretary in an ex officio capacity. Except for the Executive Director, all officers must be Active lawyer members of the Bar.

1. President

The President is the chief spokesperson of the Bar, and presides at all meetings of the BOG. The President has the authority to: set the agenda however that authority is secondary to the authority of the Board of Governors at any Board meeting to take action on any issue raised by a duly seconded motion; take action to execute the policies established by the BOG; assign Governors as liaisons to Bar sections, committees, or task forces, specialty bar associations, and other law related organizations; and to appoint task forces, BOG committees, or other ad hoc entities to carry out policies established by the BOG. The President also performs any other duties typically performed by an organization's President. The President may vote only if the President's vote will affect the result. The President must present a report to the membership covering the principal activities of the Bar during the President's tenure.

2. President-elect

The President-elect performs the duties of the President at the request of the President, or in the absence, inability, recusal, or refusal of the President to perform those duties. The President-elect also performs such other duties as may be assigned by the President or the BOG. The President-elect is not a voting member of the BOG except when acting in the President's place at a meeting of the BOG and then only if the vote will affect the result.

3. Immediate Past President

The Immediate Past President performs such duties as may be assigned by the President or the BOG. The Immediate Past President will perform the duties of the President in the absence, inability, recusal, or refusal of the President, President-elect, and Treasurer to perform those duties. Among the duties specifically assigned to the Immediate Past President is to work on behalf of the BOG and the officers to ensure appropriate training and education of new BOG members and officers during their term.

The Immediate Past President is not a voting member of the BOG except when acting in the President's place at a meeting of the BOG and then only if the vote will affect the result.

4. Treasurer

The Treasurer chairs the Budget and Audit Committee and is responsible for ensuring that the BOG and officers are informed about the finances of the Bar. The Treasurer will perform the duties of the President in the absence, inability, recusal, or refusal of the President and the President-elect to perform those duties. The Treasurer also performs such other duties as are assigned by the President or the BOG.

5. Executive Director

The Executive Director is the principal administrative officer of the Bar. The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Bar including, without limitation: (1) hiring, managing and terminating Bar personnel, (2) negotiating and executing contracts, (3) communicating with Bar members, the judiciary, elected officials, and the community at large regarding Bar matters, (4) preparing an annual budget for the Budget and Audit Committee, (5) ensuring that the Bar's books are kept in proper order and are audited annually, (6) ensuring that the annual audited financial report is made available to all Active members, (7) collecting debts owed to the bar and assigning debts for collection as deemed appropriate, (8) acquiring, managing, and disposing of personal property related to the Bar's operations within the budget approved by the BOG, (9) attending all BOG meetings, (10) reporting to the BOG regarding Bar operations, (11) ensuring that minutes are made and kept of all BOG meetings, and (12) performing such other duties as the BOG may assign. The Executive Director serves in an ex officio capacity and is not a voting member of the BOG.

6. Terms of Office

- a. The President-elect is elected by the BOG, as set forth in these Bylaws. The President-elect succeeds the President unless removed from office pursuant to these Bylaws.
- b. The President-elect and Treasurer take office at the close of the final regularly scheduled BOG meeting of the fiscal year in which they were elected to those positions. The President takes office at the close of the final regularly scheduled BOG meeting of the fiscal year in which he or she served as President-elect. The Immediate Past President takes office at the close of the final regularly scheduled BOG meeting of the fiscal year in which he or she served as President.
- c. The term of office of each officer position is one year; however, the Executive Director serves at the direction of the BOG and has an annual performance review. No individual shall serve as Executive Director for more than ten years, except that the Board of Governors may extend the contract for the Executive Director past that period, in its discretion, by a 66% super-majority vote for terms of two year increments.

7. Vacancy

- a. The President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, and Treasurer may resign or be removed from office for good cause by an affirmative vote of 75% of the entire BOG. Good cause for removal includes, without limitation, incapacity to serve, serious or repeated failures to meet the duties outlined in these Bylaws, or conduct or activities that bring discredit to the Bar.
 - 1) Upon removal or resignation of the President, the President-elect will fill the unexpired term of the President and then serve the term for which he or she was elected President. If there is no President-elect, then the BOG will elect such other person as it may determine, with the Treasurer performing the duties of the President until the BOG elects a new President.
 - 2) Upon removal or resignation of the President-elect, or ascendancy of the President-elect to the Presidency pursuant to paragraph (1) above, the BOG will elect a new President-elect (from Eastern Washington if the President-elect is mandated to be from Eastern Washington per these Bylaws).

- 3) Upon disqualification, removal, or resignation of the Immediate Past President, the office will remain vacant until the close of the term of the then-current President. If the office of Immediate Past President would otherwise become vacant because the President was removed or resigned during his or her term, the most recent Immediate Past President will remain in office for another term. If the most recent Immediate Past President is unable or unwilling to serve another term, the President may appoint, subject to approval of the BOG, a person eligible to serve as an officer to act as Immediate Past President for the otherwise vacant term. This appointment may be done prior to the start of the otherwise vacant term, but the appointed Immediate Past President will not assume office until the close of the term of the then-current Immediate Past President. If the appointment is done after the otherwise vacant term begins, the appointed Immediate Past President will assume office immediately upon BOG approval.
- 4) Upon removal or resignation of the Treasurer, the BOG will elect a new Treasurer pursuant to the procedures set forth in these Bylaws.
- b. The Executive Director is appointed by the BOG, serves at the direction of the BOG, and may be dismissed at any time by the BOG without cause by a majority vote of the entire BOG. If dismissed by the BOG, the Executive Director may, within 14 days of receipt of a notice terminating employment, file with the Supreme Court and serve on the President, a written request for review of the dismissal. If the Supreme Court finds that the dismissal of the Executive Director is based on the Executive Director's refusal to accede to a BOG directive to disregard or violate a Court order or rule, the Court may veto the dismissal and the Executive Director will be retained.

C. BOARD OF GOVERNORS COMMITTEES

1. The BOG may delegate work to BOG standing committees, special committees, work groups, or other subgroups however defined, the membership of which will be established by the President with due consideration given to Governors' membership requests. The BOG standing committees include, at a minimum, the following: Executive Committee; Awards Committee; Budget and Audit Committee; Legislative Committee; Personnel Committee; and Diversity Committee.
2. The purpose of BOG committees, regardless of what they are called, is to make recommendations and make the work of the BOG more efficient. Consensus should govern meetings of BOG committees whenever possible. If a BOG committee is unable to reach a consensus, the committee will vote. Only Governors may vote on standing Board committees. Voting members of ad hoc committees will be determined by the Board on a case-by-case basis.
3. Meetings of BOG committees are open to the public, unless provided otherwise in these Bylaws or by court rule. The ability to participate in and comment at BOG committee meetings is in the discretion of the Chair as provided in these Bylaws.
4. BOG Legislative Committee

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BOG LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE C.4.a, c.6) and E.2 - REDLINE

- a. Purpose: The BOG Legislative Committee is authorized to propose or adopt positions on behalf of the BOG with respect to legislation that has been introduced or is expected to be introduced in the Washington State Legislature, including the authority to propose amendments to legislation or to adopt positions on amendments to legislation. [The BOG Legislative Committee is authorized to review and approve proposed comments to Court Rules, so long as the deadline for submission is before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Governors.](#)
- b. Membership: The President appoints the Committee, which consists of the following voting members:
 - 1) Eight Governors, including the Treasurer;
 - 2) the President;
 - 3) the President-elect; and
 - 4) the Immediate Past President.

The President selects the Chair from among the Governors appointed to the Committee.

- c. Procedure: Consideration of legislation by the Committee proceeds in the following order:
 - 1) The Committee first determines, by a two-thirds majority vote of those voting, whether the legislation is within the scope of GR 12.1 and whether it is appropriate under the circumstances for the Committee to determine a position on the legislation on behalf of the BOG.
 - 2) If the determination in subsection (1) above is affirmative, then the Committee will determine by a two-thirds majority vote of those voting what position, if any, to adopt on the legislation on behalf of the BOG.
 - 3) The Committee may determine that major or novel legislative issues will be referred to the BOG for consideration.
 - 4) Any issues to be considered or actions taken by the Committee must be promptly communicated to the BOG by electronic delivery; and actions taken by the Committee must also be communicated at the next BOG meeting.
 - [5\) Due to the Committee's unique need to be able to act quickly to address issues that arise during a regular or special legislative session, between meetings the Committee may discuss and vote on issues by e-mail; however, if any Committee member objects to using an e-mail process for any particular issue, the Committee will take up that issue at its next scheduled Committee meeting.](#)
 - [5\)6\) When reviewing a proposed comment for a Court Rule that has a submission deadline prior to the next regularly scheduled Board of Governors meeting, a simple majority of the BOG Legislative Committee present at a regular or special meeting of the Committee may approve the comment for submission with the same effect as if it has been approved by the Board of Governors.](#)
- d. Quorum: A quorum consists of a majority of the Committee's voting members.
- e. Committee Meetings: The Committee may meet in executive session, with no persons present except the members of the Committee, other members of the BOG, the Executive

Director, the Legislative Liaison, and such others as the Committee may authorize. Committee meetings may be held electronically.

D. POLITICAL ACTIVITY

1. Board of Governors

- a. The BOG acting as a board must not publicly support or oppose, in any election, any candidate for public office.
- b. The BOG acting as a board must not take a side or position publicly or authorize any officer or the Executive Director to take a side or position publicly on any issue being submitted to the voters or pending before the legislature, unless the matter is considered in public session at a meeting of the BOG with advance notice to the Bar's membership, and the following requirements are met:
 - 1) The BOG first votes to determine whether the issue is within the scope of GR 12.1; and
 - 2) If the BOG determines that the matter is within the scope of GR 12.1, then the BOG will vote to determine what position, if any, to adopt on the issue.
- c. The restriction applies fully to prohibit:
 - 1) the use of the name or logo of the Bar;
 - 2) the contribution of funds, facility use, or Bar staff time;
 - 3) participation or support to any degree in the candidate's campaign, or the campaign on either side of the issue.
- d. The restriction does not apply to matters that are exclusively related to the administration of the Bar's functions or to any issue put to a vote of the Bar's membership.

Notice of any BOG position or authorization to the President or Executive Director to take a position must be published on the Bar's website as soon as possible after the meeting at which the final action is taken.

2. President and President-elect

The President and President-elect must not publicly support or oppose, in an election, any candidate for public office. This restriction applies fully to prohibit:

- a. the use of the President's and President-elect's name,
- b. the contribution of funds, or
- c. participation or support to any degree in the candidate's campaign.

Further, the President and President-elect must not take a side publicly on any issue being submitted to the voters, pending before the legislature or otherwise in the public domain except when specifically authorized or instructed by the BOG to do so on a matter relating to the function or purposes of the Bar.

3. Governors, other Officers, and Executive Director

Governors, other officers, and the Executive Director must not publicly support or oppose, in an election, any candidate for public elective office in the State of Washington the prerequisites for which

include being an attorney, except where the candidate is a member of that person's immediate family. This restriction applies fully to prohibit:

- a. the use of the Governor's, officer's, or Executive Director's name,
- b. the contribution of funds, or
- c. participation or support to any degree in the candidate's campaign.

The term "immediate family" as used in this Article includes a sibling, parent, spouse, domestic partner, child and the child of a spouse or domestic partner.

4. Other

If any officer, Governor, or the Executive Director supports or opposes any candidate or issue as permitted in this Article, then that person must not state or imply that he or she is acting in his or her capacity as officer, Governor or Executive Director of the Bar unless specifically authorized to do so by the BOG.

5. Letterhead

Use of Bar letterhead is limited to official business of the Bar and specifically must not be used for personal or charitable purposes, or in connection with any political campaign or to support or oppose any political candidate. Bar letterhead must not be used to support or oppose any public issue unless the BOG has taken a position on the issue.

E. REPRESENTATION OF THE BAR

Except as specifically set forth in these Bylaws, no committee, section, task force, or other Bar entity, or member thereof, member of the BOG, or officer or employee of the Bar is permitted to speak for or represent the Bar, or any committee, section, task force, or entity thereof, before any legislative body, in any court, before any other tribunal or in any communication to the Governor or the Attorney General of the State, unless prior authorization to do so has been specifically granted by the BOG by policy adopted by the BOG or by specific BOG action.

1. As the chief spokesperson of the Bar, the President has the authority to take action to execute the policies established by the BOG, and to serve as the representative of the Bar in connection therewith.
2. The BOG Legislative Committee is specifically authorized, under the terms of these Bylaws, to propose or adopt positions on behalf of the BOG with respect to legislation that has been introduced or is expected to be introduced in the Washington State Legislature, including the authority to propose amendments to legislation or to adopt positions on amendments to legislation. [The BOG Legislative Committee is further authorized to approve proposed comments to Court Rules, so long as the deadline for the comment submission occurs before the next regularly scheduled Board of Governors meeting.](#)

3. The Executive Director may communicate with Bar members, the judiciary, elected officials, and the community at large regarding Bar matters and policies established by the BOG, and is not required to obtain prior approval from the BOG before doing so.
4. Bar employees whose job duties require them to do so, and independent counsel retained at the direction of the President or the BOG, are specifically authorized to represent the Bar, or any committee, section, or task force thereof, before any legislative body, in any court, before any other tribunal or in any communication to the Governor or the Attorney General of the State as may be necessary to perform their job duties.

PROPOSED