

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

WSBA ENTITY ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2021: October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021

The mission of the Washington State Bar Association is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice.

Instructions: In accordance with the WSBA Bylaws, Committees, Other Bar Entities (excluding Regulatory Boards¹), Councils, and Sections must submit an annual report to the Executive Director. The information below should reflect the activities and outcomes from the fiscal year October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021. Information in the annual report will be provided to the Executive Director and Board of Governors, and may be published for other purposes, such as *Bar News*, volunteer recruitment messaging, and other WSBA activity-based reporting.

It is recommended that completion of the annual report be a collaborative effort with members of your entity, the BOG liaison, and staff liaison.

Submission Deadline is Friday, December 3: please submit by emailing to Sections Program Specialist Carolyn MacGregor carolynm@wsba.org.

Name of Entity:	WSBA FAMILY LAW SECTION
Chair or Co-Chairs:	Jacqueline Jeske
Staff Liaison: <i>(include name, job title, and department if known)</i>	Carolyn MacGregor
Board of Governors Liaison:	Sunitha Anjilvel
Purpose of Entity: <i>May be stated in Bylaws, Charter, Court Rule, etc.</i>	
The purpose of the Family Law Section is to involve all interested members of the WSBA in order to benefit its members, their clients, and the general public by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing the opportunity and forum for the interchange of ideas in all areas of law affecting families and juveniles;• Initiating and implementing common projects, including but not limited to an annual meeting;• Reviewing pending legislation, providing input and timely responses to pending and proposed legislation and development of proposed statutory enactments to improve and to facilitate the administration of justice within the Section's area of interest and expertise.	

host CLE's to improve the quality of family law practice; and undertaking such other service and participation of our members as may be of benefit to the members, the legal profession, and the public.

Strategy to Fulfill Purpose:

Legislative Efforts: FLEC has been working assiduously to rebuild our relationship with legislators despite the current WSBA/BOG legislative policy which we have repeatedly stressed poses challenges for FLEC in our ability to perform the section's legislative duties. FLEC's BOG liaison reports monthly to our committee members and this contributes, we believe, to ongoing communication with current BOG members and keeping our membership informed. FLEC strategy is to work collaboratively with a variety of legislative, judicial, other section and bar association or community groups on a variety of legislative and educational issues of interest to our membership.

Education Programming and CLEs: Despite the ongoing pandemic, we continued to present the annual Family Law Midyear program (virtually this year) with the capable assistance of WSBA technical staff. We did not present a Basic Skills seminar this year as we are updating the curriculum to include guidance as to best practice for both in-person and video litigation practices and to include a component that addresses equity/diversity programming concerns.

Workgroups and Collaboration: Two committee members are serving on three committees or workgroups for FLEC (Pattern Forms and a workgroup with Judge Forbes on the proposed revision on CJC Comments Canon 2.2 and 2.6). Also one member has served on the Child Support Guidelines Committee.

Member Engagement: We implemented a member survey in August to canvass our memberships' concerns, priorities and see how to best approach member engagement. We are in the process of evaluating the survey information and planning next steps which include considering whether to partner with other WSBA committees or sections, exploring changing the face of our webpage, partnering with local legal aid organizations and/or the new Small Town and Rural Committee to implement new programming virtually to reach a broader audience throughout the state and to consider scholarships to new practitioners to promote practice in rural deserts of the state. We are also considering whether to implement either a lunchtime CLE series or a quarterly newsletter to our membership.

How does the entity's purpose help further the mission of the WSBA "to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice"?

FLEC keeps our bylaws at the forefront of all that we do. We seek to recruit new members to emphasize diversity, including age and length of time in practice, geographic representation

and encourage lawyers of all ages and backgrounds, ethnicities, and gender identities to participate, to assure that in our service, we can hear and perceive different and diverse perspectives. We work to provide education and scholarship to new members or those who are disadvantaged in our community so that attendance can be broad-based. We are currently in the process of revamping our Basic Skills Seminar to assist new lawyers or those new to family law and to be more comprehensive providing training for both virtual practice/in-person practice and around equity concerns. We provide scholarship grants for this seminar as well as our annual mid-year. We maintain two list serves for section members to discuss legal issues and to build community. This gives practitioners, particularly in a pandemic, a safe way to seek advice and information from other lawyers. Our main list serve is for the discussion of legal issues and procedures. Our second list serve is for discussion of issues in the business side of a legal practice. We have implemented surveys to our membership to gather a wide range of viewpoints and to guide the section's future activity. We provide a civil means of membership engagement at seminars; list serves and at informal settings (pandemic permitting). We believe these efforts contribute to professionalism and collegiality. We also encourage collaboration, have circulated the civil legal needs report and the legal deserts report to read among our activities to be mindful of ways in which we can work in partnership with others in our legal community to assist the public and our members. We worked this past year with the legislature, in virtual workgroups, on the UFLAA, Trial Court Congestion and met with the Family and Juvenile Law Committee of the Superior Court Judge's Association to discuss Judge Janet Helson's exploration of the Section's input on changing the law as to judges retaining jurisdiction in subsequently filed modifications. We also worked with Judge Jennifer Forbes to provide pre-filing feedback as to changes in the comments to the judicial canons. These collaborative activities demonstrate FLEC's efforts to foster professionalism and collegiality. We have conferred with both the ADR Section and the Small Town and Rural Committee of WSBA to collaborate on projects and/or regarding legislative matters. Our committee members also actively participate and respond on the Section list serves and at the Section Leaders monthly meetings and this approach keeps membership educated, engaged in legal discussions in civil forums, up-to-date and interacting with our legislators and trial courts and is an integral collaborative part of contributing to justice.

2020-2021 Entity Accomplishments:

In 2020 and Fall of 2021 FLEC embarked on an exploration of ascertaining the membership's concerns and to improve engagement with Section Members. To that end we sent out a survey to our approximately one thousand members in the fall of 2021 to canvass their concerns, priorities and preferences. We have used this survey to gather information which the Committee is currently using to arrive at our goals to pursue for this year. We have also worked in several pre-legislative workgroups and legislative staff and Senators on new upcoming legislation (UFLAA and UCCTA) and trial court congestion related to Covid. We are currently in the process of revamping our materials and workshop agenda for our Basic Skills seminar to incorporate more diverse perspectives for new practitioners as well as consideration of a video court best practices approach in addition to the in person practicum. We have reached out to the newly created Small Town and Rural Committee Chair to consider whether we can collaborate on a scholarship or project for a rural desert area of the

State to enhance the practice of family law and public service in these areas and this is an ongoing conversation. We are currently planning our annual Family Law Mid-Year seminar with a hopeful return to in-person attendance and to see whether we can also, at the same time, offer virtual programming for those who cannot attend due to Covid – 19 concerns. We successfully presented our annual Midyear CLE and have participated on several legislative workgroups with both the judiciary and legislators to improve the practice of law. We met with the Superior Court Judges Association - FLJC to exchange concerns regarding legislation and practice within the courts and pandemic. We have continued to focus our recruitment efforts to broaden the diversity of our committee membership. We were invited to participate in several legislative or judicial workgroups (House Civil Rights & Judiciary) on HB 1320, Trial Court Congestion and the Superior Courts and currently on GR 39 (Video Trials) along with Informal Trials to provide meaningful guidance and the feedback of our membership. We also reviewed the expected prebill filing version of the Uniform Family Law Arbitration Act (UFLAA) and (UCCTA). We have several members who have participated on various workgroups involving the child support guidelines review and pattern mandatory forms.

Looking Ahead: 2021-2022 Top Goals & Priorities:

1	Improve Member Engagement and Communication
2	Improve legislative relations impacted by WSBA policy. Continue to review, comment and testify regarding family-law related legislation.
3	Collaborative Participation with Judicial and Legislative Workgroups. Work to improve FLEC's relationship with BOG. FLEC's liaison to BOG has worked hard to improve the existing relationship and those efforts will continue.
4	Partnership with organizations (internal and external) to Improve practice opportunities and public service in legal deserts and disadvantaged communities.
5	Revamp current curriculum for Basic Skills to address diversity and equity concerns and consider additional scholarship opportunities to enhance more diverse and broad-based attendance. Continue to present high quality education and seminars to our membership and the legal community. Continue to emphasize equity, diversity and inclusion not only as to FLEC itself but also with respect to all FLEC activities.

Please report how this entity is addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion:

How have you elicited input from a variety of perspectives in your decision-making? What have you done to promote a culture of inclusion within the board or committee? What has your committee/board done to promote equitable conditions for members from historically underrepresented backgrounds to enter, stay, thrive, and eventually lead the profession? Other?

We have implemented surveys to our membership to broaden input from a variety of perspectives and circulated both the civil legal needs reports (2003 and 2015 updates) and small town and rural deserts report to members for consideration in our future work. We are currently revamping our CLE curriculum (Basic Skills) for new practitioners to family law to

promote and incorporate consideration of equity concerns. We are exploring the use of scholarship funds to enhance attendance to CLE programming for those from disadvantaged backgrounds to implement in the 2021 year. We have engaged in a concerted effort to engage and recruit committee members of diverse background to our committee and help us to hear a wider range of viewpoints.

Please describe the relationship with WSBA staff and the Board of Governors.

For example:

- *Quality of WSBA staff support/services*
- *Involvement with Board of Governors, including assigned BOG liaison*
- *Ideas you have on ways WSBA can continue to strengthen/support your entity.*

For the most part since the inception of the Family Law Section, FLEC has maintained a regular presence at the Board of Governors meetings. Our current Liaison – Nancy Hawkins – has continued a strong Family Law Section presence at the meetings. We are pleased with the improvements we have seen in our relationship with the BOG; we are dedicated to moving in a positive direction. FLEC works well with WSBA staff and makes payments to WSBA to cover the cost of any staff support we receive. They are routinely helpful in identifying CLE locations, obtaining budget and contract information, and handling administrative issues we otherwise would struggle to navigate. We have had two staff liaisons this past year and both have been professional, knowledgeable and provided consistent and courteous assistance. They are timely in responding to any questions we ask and also help us to understand WSBA policy and navigate our obligations. WSBA staff played a critical role in the success of the Midyear CLE which was managed remotely again this year. They have also been responsive to feedback from our Section regarding WSBA policies and how they impact the Section, membership recruitment and participation. We continue to hold the same concerns regarding BOG support of our Section and how BOG implemented policy may negatively impact our ability to serve our membership. Staff have helped us this year in sending out several surveys to improve member engagement and feedback and guided us in our ability to hear and distill the voice of our thousand members’ concerns. FLEC works with WSBA staff and makes payments to WSBA to cover the cost of any staff support we receive.

SECTIONS ONLY: Please quantify your section’s 2020-2021 member benefits:

For example:

- *\$3000 Scholarships, donations, grants awarded;*
- *4 mini-CLEs produced*

0		Newsletters/publications produced
0		Mini-CLEs produced
1		Co-sponsored half-day, full-day and/or multi-day CLE seminars with WSBA
1		Co-sponsored half-day, full-day and/or multi-day CLE seminars with <i>non</i> -WSBA entity
0		Receptions/forums hosted or co-hosted
0		Recognitions/Awards given

	0	New Lawyer Outreach events/benefits
	2	Outreach to Outside Legal Aid organizations to partner on Revamped Basic Skills Seminar for upcoming year and to Small Town and Rural Deserts Committee to consider joint project and scholarship endeavor(please describe):

**Entity Detail & Demographics Report:
To Be Completed by WSBA Staff**

Size of Entity:	19
Membership Size: (for Sections Only) <i>(As of September 30, 2021)</i>	990
Number of Applicants for FY22 <i>(October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022)</i>	5
How many current volunteer position vacancies for this entity?	0
FY21 Revenue (\$): For Sections Only: <i>As of September 30, 2021</i>	\$62, 880
Direct Expenses: <i>As of September 30, 2021. For Sections, this does not include the Per-Member-Charge.</i>	\$4, 420

ⁱThe Access to Justice Board (not regulatory, but applicable to the distinction herein) and Regulatory Boards (Disciplinary Board, LLLT Board, Limited Practice Board, MCLE Board and Practice of Law Board) are not required by Bylaws or Court Rule submit an annual report to WSBA. However, as part of the administration of monitoring of Regulatory Boards, the Boards listed herein typically provide an annual report to the Court and WSBA should be provided this same report an annual basis.