

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Member Status Workgroup Charter

Effective: Upon Approval by the WSBA Board of Governors

Purpose

The purpose of the Member Status Workgroup is to evaluate the license status options currently available to WSBA members who are leaving the legal profession and to propose revisions to current license status options or alternative license status options as determined by its evaluation. The WSBA's mission is to serve the public and the members of the Bar, to ensure the integrity of the legal profession, and to champion justice. The Member Status Workgroup furthers the WSBA mission by determining whether the current license status options available to members leaving the legal profession meet the needs of WSBA members while adequately informing the public of the member's license status and eligibility to practice law.

Composition

Members of the workgroup should have demonstrated experience and/or interest in the issues raised by senior members of the bar as it relates to choosing alternatives to maintaining an active license to practice law. The workgroup will consist of six members and are outlined as follows:

- Chair
- WSBA Treasurer
- 1 Active Member from the Senior Lawyers Section
- 1 Inactive/Judicial/Honorary Member
- 1 Pro Bono Member
- 1 at-large member (someone who advocates for creation of a retired status)

WSBA Staff Liaison: Renata de Carvalho Garcia, Chief Regulatory Counsel, non-voting

Term

The workgroup is expected to complete its work by no later than the end of FY 2024.

Scope of Work

The workgroup will assess the concerns primarily raised by members who are leaving the practice of law including:

- Members who are leaving the practice of law and wish to maintain their WSBA membership (currently inactive status);
- Members who are leaving the practice of law and do not wish to maintain their WSBA membership (currently voluntary resignation);
- Members who are retiring from the practice of law but wish to be eligible to practice law in limited situations such as for family members or as a volunteer;
- Members who are retiring from the practice of law and wish to maintain their WSBA membership but do not want to pay a license fee (currently honorary status which is available only after 50 years of active or judicial status);
- Members who are leaving the practice of law permanently but do not like the term voluntary resignation; and
- Members who are leaving the practice of law permanently prior to the traditional retirement age and do not want to be considered “retired.”

The workgroup will evaluate the current license status options available to such members, collaborate with all relevant and interested stakeholders, identify and seek input from people most impacted by proposed changes, examine the financial impact to the WSBA budget of any proposed revisions or alternatives to license status options, and, if determined to be warranted, propose amendments to the WSBA Bylaws necessary to adopt revisions or alternatives to current license status options.

Measures of Success

A successful workgroup will:

- present a recommendation for license status options that addresses the concerns raised by members,
- demonstrate how the recommendation meets the needs of the members,
- demonstrate how the recommendation will protect the public and adequately inform the public of a member’s eligibility to practice law,
- demonstrate how the recommendation will have an acceptable impact on the WSBA’s budget, and
- promoting belonging and advancing equity for members who are contemplating changing their status.