

## **309 Process and Criteria to Add or Retire APEX Award Categories**

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**Adoption Date: July 26, 2019.**

The Washington State Bar Association annually recognizes luminaries of the Washington legal profession through its APEX (Acknowledging Professional Excellence) Awards. The awards are meant to illustrate and inspire legal professionals to advance WSBA's mission. WSBA's goal is to maintain as few award categories as necessary to meaningfully showcase different aspects of the WSBA's mission in action; each additional award has the potential to dilute the significance of the awards as a whole, thin out nominees across categories, and extend the ceremony length.

The APEX Awards Committee is responsible for receiving and responding to requests to add or retire award categories, screening the request using the criteria below, and making a recommendation to the Board of Governors, which will make the final decision.

Criteria for screening the viability of APEX Awards categories:

Any APEX Award category should:

- Meaningfully and uniquely showcase an aspect of the legal profession that advances the WSBA's mission and values.
- Not substantively duplicate any existing award category (i.e., could nominees for a prospective award category readily fit into an existing award category for their achievements).
- Be expansive enough to reliably draw annual nominations from across the state and from many sectors of the legal community.

Procedures for naming an APEX Award:

- An APEX Award category will not be added or retired until the following fiscal year if the Board of Governor's action is less than 9 months before the APEX Award ceremony, although the Board of Governors may act on less notice when it deems appropriate and if it is practical to do so.
- Any WSBA member or group of members may make a recommendation to add or retire an APEX Award. The recommendation should be made in writing to the WSBA with accompanying information.
- The Awards Committee will determine whether the recommendation meets all of the above criteria. It may be necessary for Committee members to consult with legal leaders in the area of the award category to make an informed decision.
- A quorum of the Committee must be present to vote on the recommendation, and 75 percent of Committee members present must vote in favor of the recommendation for it to pass to the Board of Governors.