



Washington New Members Committee

Washington New Members Committee Meeting | Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Monday, October 19 2026 | 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

[Via Teams](#) | Meeting ID: 289 382 929 176 080 | Passcode: bW6bT6yH

AGENDA:

1. Welcome - Janta
2. Introductions (1-minute self-introduction)
3. Approval of September Minutes – Janta
4. WSBA Updates –Jordan, Chelle
5. Committee Structure – Janta, Chelle
 - a. Leadership team: Alex, Janta, Ariel
 - b. Committee Charter
 - c. Committee Member Participation
 - d. Current Project Teams: CLE (Chawisa, Hanna), Social Media (Ariel), Mentorship (Janta), Awards (Alex)
 - e. Communications & Material Management - Chelle
 - f. Recruiting for vacant WNMC positions
6. Immediate volunteer opportunities:
 - a. MentorLink Mixer Oct 21 re networking and community building
 - b. Choosing swag
7. American Bar Association delegation & Scholarship
8. FY27 Meeting / Events Schedule – Janta
 - a. Monthly virtual meetings – which day and time
 - b. November 18, 2026, Lunch & Learn: Work/Life Balance 101
 - c. February and July Bar Exam Socials
 - d. Spring 2027 in Yakima with local bar
 - e. July 2027 Board of Governors Meeting in Ferndale
 - f. September 2027 Board of Governors meeting in Vancouver
9. Idea board for Nov 14, 2026, meeting – Janta, Ariel
10. Adjournment – Janta

CHARTER

WASHINGTON NEW MEMBERS COMMITTEE

Adopted: September 24, 2026.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the WNMC shall be to support the professional development of new members of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) by providing mentorship, leadership opportunities, and resources that address pressing challenges such as student debt and practical skills gaps. The committee aims to serve as a trusted resource for stakeholders and foster meaningful new member engagement within the legal community.

Goals and Objectives:

Goal 1. Be Data-Driven.

- *Objective A:* Collect and analyze data on new members' needs through post-licensure surveys and other evaluative forms.
- *Objective B:* Produce reports and provide recommendations to the Board of Governors based on data-driven insights.
- *Objective C:* Regularly explore and develop independent committee projects and participate in projects across WSBA in line with appropriate data.

Goal 2: Advocate.

- *Objective A:* Represent, advise and advocate for new members within the WSBA Board of Governors and other decision-makers to ensure new member issues and voices are included in decision-making.
- *Objective B:* Address regular and emerging challenges unique to new members, such as transition to practice and opportunities for practical skills development.

Goal 3. Grow and Connect.

- *Objective A:* Establish robust pathways and partnerships to ensure new members feel supported in the profession.
- *Objective B:* Strengthen connections with law schools, affinity bars, along with WSBA entities and programs.
- *Objective C:* Foster a positive culture and meaningful networks of support.

Goal 4: Pro Bono Empowerment.

- *Objective A:* Build and promote partnerships that enable and encourage new members to engage in pro bono work.
- *Objective B:* Provide a positive example of volunteerism within the Washington State Bar Association.

Goal 5: Professional Development.

- *Objective A:* Promote CLEs, experiential learning, and leadership opportunities tailored to new members.
- *Objective B:* Increase engagement through section liaison roles and other leadership opportunities.
- *Objective C:* Develop and/or promote formal and informal mentorship programs to facilitate development of legal practice skills.

Meetings

- Time and Place: The WNMCM shall aspire to meet monthly, unless otherwise noted by this Charter or at the discretion of the Chair;
 - Additionally, the WNMCM shall aspire that one meeting per quarter is held in-person or a hybrid fashion.
 - If such meetings are held, at least one should be set for a time and place that aligns with a regular Board of Governors meeting.
- Meeting Expectations:
 - The Chair shall establish an agenda for each meeting and ensure such agendas are distributed approximately one week prior to each meeting, in coordination with the WNMCM Staff Liaison(s).
 - If the Chair is unable to attend any scheduled meeting, the Chair-Elect shall assume the role and its responsibilities for that meeting; if the Chair-Elect is also unavailable, then the Immediate Past Chair shall assume the same.
 - It is expected that all members of the WNMCM shall have no more than two unexcused absences from regular meetings.
 - It is expected that all members of the WNMCM shall actively participate in at least one project team.

Committee Membership

- Leadership Team:
 - The Chairs:
 - Chair
 - Chair-Elect, as Vice Chair
 - Immediate Past Chair

- WSBA Board of Governors Liaison, *ex-officio* (non-voting, generally)¹
- WNMC Staff Liaison(s), *ex officio* (non-voting, generally)²
- Congressional District Representatives (Eligibility based on either home or work address):
 - District 1
 - District 2
 - District 3
 - District 4
 - District 5
 - District 6
 - District 7 (North)³
 - District 7 (South)⁴
 - District 8
 - District 9
 - District 10
- Six Statewide At-Large Representatives:
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Representative:
 - The DEI Representative shall act as the lead in promoting diversity and inclusion within the WSBA New Member community, as well as serve as a liaison, when necessary, between the WNMC and other DEI-related entities within WSBA. The representative shall also work with WNMC leadership and project teams to ensure that WNMC initiatives are considered and operated with a sense of equity and justice for all new members.
 - Pro Bono & Public Service Representative:
 - The Pro Bono & Public Service Representative shall act as the lead in promoting Goal 4 of this Charter. In so doing, the representative shall act as a liaison between the WNMC, the New Member community at-large, related WSBA entities, and other relevant external stakeholders when appropriate.
 - Solo & Small Practice Representative:

¹ See *infra* “Recommendations Subcommittee”

² See *infra* “Recommendations Subcommittee”

³ As defined by zip code boundaries established for the District 7 (North) position on the WSBA Board of Governors.

⁴ As defined by zip code boundaries established for the District 7 (South) position on the WSBA Board of Governors.

- The Solo & Small Practice Representative shall be a voice on behalf of new members within the solo & small practice community. In so doing, when appropriate, the representative shall act as a liaison to the Solo & Small Practice Section and the Small Town and Rural (STAR) Council.
 - Three General At-Large Representatives
- Terms:
 - The voting members of the WNMC shall be appointed for a term of three years.
 - The terms of At-Large and District Representatives shall be staggered so no more than one-third of these positions' terms end each year, categorized accordingly:
 - Class A (with terms beginning October 1, 2026):
 - At-Large: General Representative (Class A)
 - At-Large: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Representative
 - District 2
 - District 5
 - District 7 (North)
 - District 10
 - Class B (with terms beginning October 1, 2027):
 - At-Large: General Representative (Class B)
 - At-Large: Public Service Representative
 - District 3
 - District 4
 - District 7 (South)
 - Class C (with terms beginning October 1, 2028)
 - At-Large: General Representative (Class C)
 - At-Large: Solo & Small Practice Representative
 - District 1
 - District 6
 - District 8
 - District 9

Nominations and Appointment

- The WSBA Executive Director will designate WSBA staff liaison(s) to support the WNMC, as the WNMC Staff Liaison(s).
- WNMC Committee members will be appointed by the Board of Governors in accordance with WSBA Bylaws, upon recommendation by the WNMC's Recommendations Subcommittee.
- **Recommendations Subcommittee:**
 - The purpose of the Recommendations Subcommittee shall be to review and consider all applicants to voting positions on the WNMC, as well as recommend qualifying candidates to the Board of Governors for appointment.
 - The Recommendations Subcommittee shall include all members of the WNMC Leadership Team.
 - Recommendation decisions shall be decided by a majority vote of the Subcommittee, with five total votes allocated accordingly:
 - One vote for the Chair;
 - One vote for the Chair-Elect;
 - One vote for the Immediate Past Chair;
 - One collective vote for the WSBA Staff Liaison(s), and;
 - One vote for the WSBA Board of Governors Liaison.
 - It is understood that decisions by the Recommendations Subcommittee are preferred to be unanimous. However, should there be a significant split as to a recommendation that cannot be resolved:
 - The Recommendations Subcommittee shall put forth two potential recommendations to the full committee for advice and consent on a single recommendation, to be decided by majority vote of the full committee.
 - *Chair-Elect Recommendations:* The Recommendations Subcommittee shall recommend a Chair-Elect, from amongst qualifying applicants for the position, no later than the last day of February, each year, for service beginning October 1, following appointment by the WSBA-BOG President-Elect in accordance with WSBA Bylaws.
 - Should a current district or at-large representative be appointed as Chair-Elect, the position of said representative shall become vacant and any remaining term shall be open for applications during the regular committee recruitment process (beginning in April of each year), unless the position is filled by a mid-term appointment in accordance with the WSBA Bylaws and this Charter.
 - Those selected as Chair-Elect shall serve a three-year term, split accordingly: one year as Chair-Elect; one year as Chair, and; one year as Immediate Past-Chair.

- *At-Large, District Representative Recommendations:* The Recommendations Subcommittee shall recommend individuals to the at-large and district representative positions based on factors which will achieve the broadest range of diversity, practice area, and experience possible.
- *Prolonged Vacancies:* If any at-large or district representative positions have not been filled after six consecutive months of vacancy, the Recommendations Subcommittee may recommend to such position(s) any qualified new member(s) that agree to represent the perspective of that position in good faith, regardless of the individual's practice area or district of residence/employment.

Success Criteria

- Data showing net-positive new member satisfaction and integration across current and relevant priorities.
- Increased evidence of new members regularly attending, engaging with, and providing evaluative feedback on WNMC events and initiatives.
- Regular communication with new members, with corresponding positive social media engagement analytics.
- A fully staffed and engaged committee both in terms of attendance and project team participation.
- Proactive engagement and consultation with the WNMC by the WSBA Board of Governors and other bar entities.

Reporting & Evaluation

- *Annual Report.* The committee will produce an annual report pursuant to the WSBA Bylaws.
- *Charter and Entity Evaluation.* The work of the committee and its charter should be reviewed and renewed by the Board of Governors every five years after approval of the original charter.

Supremacy and Clean-Up

- This document shall be considered superior to and replace all previous WNMC governing documents and policies related to the topics above. This includes the 2014 Washington Young Lawyers Committee Appointment Policy, previous bylaws for the former WYLC and WYLD, and any other such documents not named here.
- Upon the approval of any relevant WSBA Bylaws amendment, this Charter shall be updated accordingly to reflect that change and ensure continued compliance with the WSBA Bylaws.

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

Washington New Members Committee

Washington New Members Committee Meeting
Microsoft Teams
Saturday, September 26, 2026, | 10:06 a.m. – 12:31 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

WNMC Members Present: Steven Brown, Ariel Cook, Hanna Harrison, Mason Ji (arrived 10:32 a.m.), Chawisa Laicharoenwat, Mackenzie Lloyd, Alexander Reaganson, Matthew Rommelmann, Janta Steele, Stephan Yhann

WNMC Members Absent: Fatima Al-Rikabi (unexcused), Thomas Garvey (unexcused), Michelle Hesse (unexcused), Bethany Nolan

Board of Governors Liaison: Jordan Couch (absent)

WSBA Staff: Chelle Gegax – WSBA Member Services and Engagement Staff Liaison, Vanessa Sweeney – WSBA Member Services and Engagement Program Coordinator, Kevin Plachy – WSBA Director of Advancement, Dan Crystal – WSBA Program Manager, Member Wellness Program

Welcome & Introductions; Approval of Two August Meetings Minutes – Alex

WNMC Chair Alexander Reaganson, opened the meeting at 10:06 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance. On motion by WNMC Member Hanna Harrison, seconded by WNMC Member Chawisa Laicharoenwat, the WNMC approved the WNMC August Meeting, and August Special Meeting minutes (9-0-0).

WSBA Updates – Jordan, Chelle

WSBA Member Services and Engagement Staff Liaison Chelle Gegax noted that the next MentorLink Mixer, in partnership with the WNMC, is coming up in four weeks. The theme is networking and community building. Chelle added that the charter was approved on consent at the Board of Governors meeting over the weekend. There were some issues with the documents that were submitted for the July meeting so they were amended and resubmitted. The charter will be posted to the WNMC webpage soon, along with some additional webpage updates reflecting the change from regional to congressional district representation.

WSBA Director of Advancement Kevin Plachy provided Board of Governors (BOG) updates noting that the BOG considered an ongoing issue involving the expansion of the definition of law schools. In May, it voted to revise its policy to include state-approved or accredited schools that meet the qualifications for graduates to take that state's bar exam. The matter returned in July for clarification, and a motion was later introduced to repeal the revised definition. After approximately 90 minutes of debate and extensive

public comment from various stakeholders, the board voted 11–3 to maintain the policy. It was the last BOG meeting of the fiscal year, and new president Kari Petrasek was sworn in, along with three new governors.

Alex added that the proposed bylaws amendment concerning at-large governor elections was not placed on the calendar for a first reading at the recent BOG meeting, but may be addressed at the first meeting of the next bar year. Discussions regarding Rule 9 and related fees were also not included on the BOG agenda and may warrant continued attention from interested WNMC members. The elections-related bylaws amendment is considered the most urgent issue because the Governance Committee and other relevant parties at the Bar Association want to move quickly in preparation for the upcoming election cycle.

Chelle added a note about the upcoming MentorLink Mixer and requested assistance from 1-2 WNMC members for targeted mentor recruitment as the internal WSBA team does most of the coordinating internally. WNMC Member Hanna Harrison volunteered to help.

FY26 Appointment Updates – Alex, Chelle

Chelle listed the names of the incoming WNMC representatives, and added that districts 7N, 9, 10, 3 remain vacant at this time and targeted recruiting will take place soon. Alex noted the WNMC leadership team for FY27 as WNMC Member Janta Steele as Chair, WNMC Member Ariel Cook as Chair-elect, and Alex as Immediate Past-Chair.

Chelle shared a reminder for the APEX Awards party next week at Stoup Brewing, for WNMC Member and APEX Outstanding New Member winner, outgoing WNMC members, and this year's Public Service and Leadership Award winners.

Alex noted that, following the transition to the new congressional district representation structure, one committee member had submitted a resignation. The committee also needs to consider removing another member for failing to attend any meetings. The charter encourages members to have no more than two unexcused absences per year and emphasizes that attendance is part of their responsibility to represent their districts. On motion by Alex, seconded by Ariel, and abstention from WNMC Member Stephan Yhann, the WNMC voted to approve the removal of Thomas Garvey (7-0-1).

Wellness Report Discussion – Kevin Plachy, Dan Crystal

The session opens with WSBA Program Manager of the Member Wellness Program, Dan Crystal introducing the WSBA Member Wellness Program, which provides confidential counseling and support services to Washington legal professionals. Dan describes offerings such as telehealth appointments with licensed clinicians, meditation groups, productivity support, and career guidance. This framing sets the stage for a broader discussion of the Well-Being Task Force—a two-year initiative created in response to nationwide recognition that traditional lawyer assistance programs were no longer sufficient to address systemic wellness challenges within the legal profession.

Dan outlines the Task Force's origins, noting that Washington was initially behind other states in adopting institutional reforms. However, once formed, the Washington task force became one of the most comprehensive nationwide. Its mandate emphasized that well-being is fundamental to ethical and competent legal practice. The task force included judges, large-firm attorneys, solo practitioners, academics, and mental-health professionals, ensuring diversity of perspective. Adopting a sprint-based workgroup model, each subgroup focused on a domain such as private practice, judiciary, law students/new members, government and legal aid, addiction, suicide, and DEI impacts on well-being.

A key pillar of their work was a large-scale statewide survey conducted with University of Utah researcher Matt Thies, designed to assess burnout, mental health, institutional stressors, and workload patterns among Washington attorneys. Out of 10,000 surveyed members, 903 responded—close to a 10% response rate—allowing for a 99.8% confidence level. Yet the sample skewed older: fewer than 10% of respondents were under 40, limiting visibility into the experiences of newer attorneys. Despite this limitation, findings related to new members were stark. **Newer attorneys reported significantly heavier billable-hour expectations**, with 18% billing 31–40 hours per week (compared to 12% of the general legal population) and 15% billing 41–50 hours (compared to only 6% overall). Since billable hours often underestimate total hours worked, these numbers imply workweeks of 60+ hours for many new lawyers. Additionally, **30% of new members reported worrying daily about billable hours**, double the rate of the general lawyer population. The financial burden on new attorneys was also dramatic: **46% had over \$150,000 in law-school debt**, compared to just 15% of attorneys overall. Burnout emerged as one of the most alarming findings. While 56% of all lawyers reported feeling burned out regularly, a staggering **80% of new members** said they experience regular burnout. Dan highlighted the emotional impact of this: new attorneys often invest 6–10 years of effort into entering the profession, only to feel hopeless early in their careers.

The law-school and new-member workgroup supplemented the general survey with its own 24-question “mini survey,” sent to Washington’s three law schools. Though responses were limited (~20), thematic findings were consistent: students cited stigma, lack of time, institutional pressure to overwork, and lack of visible wellness culture as barriers to well-being. They also expressed a desire for more integrated, culturally normalized wellness support—not just resources, but signals from institutions that well-being is valued.

Turning to solutions, Kevin presented recommendations organized in four stages:

1. **Provide general support** – Increase CLE programming specifically addressing stress, anxiety, depression, and other wellness topics. Create calendars of wellness events aligned with professional trends. Develop self-guided mental-health resource packages.
2. **Foster connection to resources** – Curate targeted materials addressing the unique stressors identified in each workgroup (e.g., secondary trauma in public interest roles, financial stress for new lawyers). Improve communication pathways between new lawyers and decision-makers to demystify workplace expectations.
3. **Facilitate community-building** – Encourage cross-organizational collaboration, foster peer-support groups, offer yoga/meditation opportunities, and recruit external experts. A major recommendation was exploring a **formal mentorship program** that explicitly includes well-being

conversations, normalizes mental-health discussions, and helps new lawyers integrate into the profession.

4. **Cultivate culture change** – Promote a statewide well-being pledge modeled on the ABA’s national initiative. Encourage firms and courts to adopt policies advancing well-being, including transparent leave policies and workload expectations. Normalize conversations about mental health to reduce stigma, encouraging lawyers to seek help before crises occur.

Multiple participants—from big law, public service, rural practice, and small firms—shared deeply personal experiences that illuminated how systemic the profession’s wellness challenges are.

Participants emphasized that **culture change must start with the judiciary and firm leadership**, not simply with new lawyers. Many described harmful judicial behaviors—public criticism, unrealistic deadlines, lack of empathy—that directly contribute to burnout and anxiety. Stephan described the Washington legal culture as “East Coast light,” contrasting it with Oregon’s more collaborative “Oregon Way,” where attorneys are expected to resolve disputes respectfully before involving courts. Participants urged WSBA to influence judicial culture more directly, perhaps through training, oversight, or feedback systems.

Several big-law associates spoke candidly about the crushing nature of 70- to 100-hour workweeks, noting that institutional mentorship programs within firms often fail because mentors—typically senior partners—no longer remember or relate to the challenges faced by junior lawyers. They suggested that peers, practice-area networks, and informal group chats provide far more meaningful support than formal mentorship pairings.

Other participants highlighted structural challenges: law-school debt limiting job mobility; inequities in how different sectors of law interact; lack of resources in public-interest settings; and the gendered impact of shifting family structures, which make traditional expectations of total work commitment unrealistic for many attorneys.

Several proposed bold ideas, such as random audits of large law firms to assess workplace culture, court-watching programs to monitor judicial behavior toward attorneys, and more aggressive scrutiny of private-equity involvement in law firms to protect professional integrity and lawyer well-being.

The conversation closed with Dan and Kevin acknowledging the depth of concerns raised. They explained that next steps include identifying which recommendations can be implemented operationally by WSBA staff and which require policy changes or Supreme Court involvement. They emphasized the importance of ongoing feedback, collaboration with new-lawyer groups, and the need for both wellness and professionalism communication campaigns across the state. Participants expressed gratitude for being heard and encouraged WSBA to push for meaningful, systemic reform.

Team Updates and Regional Reports – All

Social Media – Ariel

Ariel shared that engagement declined this month after a significant 2,000-fold increase in July related to the July bar examination. Engagement has now returned to its regular level. WNMC Member Matt Rommelmann’s spotlight feature was posted on Monday, and WNMC Member Chawisa Laicharoenwat’s

spotlight feature will be posted next. Ariel would benefit from additional coverage and would like to publish more spotlights in the coming months, and will contact all departing committee members.

Mentorship Project Team – Janta

Janta reported that the initial lunch-and-learn session on public speaking was well attended. There is also interest in participating in a focus group next year. The next session, “Dealing with Difficult Clients 101,” is scheduled for October 14. Janta encouraged everyone to attend and provide feedback to improve future sessions and support new members.

CLE Team – Chawisa, Hanna

Hanna shared feedback from the June Legal Lunchbox seminar on expert witnesses. Overall, the feedback was positive, with attendees giving the session high ratings for its educational value. However, some attendees mistakenly expected a financial-related CLE because the seminar had been categorized as one. The next Legal Lunchbox seminar is scheduled for July 2027.

Chawisa covered the Financial Focus CLE with the Senior Lawyers Section, noting that the first half featured a presentation and the second half consisted of a panel discussion. Chawisa expects to receive a post-event report from the WSBA CLE team and can provide additional feedback at the next meeting.

FY27 Meeting Schedule - Janta

The meeting schedule for the year was discussed and the group decided to keep the current cadence, the third Monday of each month, 12-1pm, with a consideration for an in person meeting in July, which would coincide with the BOG meeting. Chelle reminded the WNMC that twenty percent of the FY27 WNMC budget is allocated for in-person meetings. These funds can cover venue rental fees, catering, and committee member’s travel expenses. The October meeting will be 90 minutes, and a longer, in person meeting will take place in November and include the orientation. The November meeting will include introducing the charter and determine what projects and goals the committee can prioritize for the year. The committee decided on November 14. The October meeting will include solidifying the meeting schedule for the year.

New Ideas for Next Meeting – All

Alex opened the floor to the WNMC to share ideas for the upcoming year, including inviting the opportunity to express things of which outgoing members wish they could have seen and started moving forward on. Outgoing WNMC Member Stephan Yhann mentioned student loan debt/ PSLF. Stephan suggested making student loan relief, particularly Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), a priority and possibly issuing a statement to encourage participation. Alex mentioned a developing Bar Foundation initiative focused on assisting small and rural practices. Matt reflected on the pressures facing young attorneys, including financial, time, career, and family demands, and described the challenge of balancing competing priorities. Matt praised the meeting’s focus on rethinking longstanding practices in the legal industry and emphasized the importance of expanding access to free or low-cost continuing legal education, noting that high registration fees can force attorneys to choose between professional development and essential expenses such as student loan payments. Outgoing WNMC Immediate Past

Chair Mason Ji thanked the committee for its trust during his term as chair and expressed pride in the committee's accomplishments, particularly its renewed momentum and productivity. Mason emphasized that wellness concerns and challenges facing new members remain important priorities requiring continued advocacy.

Adjournment

Alex adjourned the meeting at 12:31 p.m.

Some material in this document was generated using Microsoft Copilot and was reviewed and modified by Vanessa Sweeney, WSBA Member Services and Engagement.

DRAFT



Application for Scholarship to Attend ABA Young Lawyer Division Meeting

The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) and the Washington New Members Committee (WNMC) have prioritized the use of funds to send one (1) WSBA New Member to attend American Bar Association (ABA) Young Lawyer Division (YLD) meetings and/or conferences.

This scholarship is designed to:

1. encourage attendance and participation at the ABA YLD meetings.
2. ensure that Washington is represented by Delegates to YLD Assembly at ABA Annual and Midyear; and
3. to create the opportunity for scholarship recipients to bring ideas back to the WNMC about how to engage and serve new members in Washington.

Scholarship recipients will receive the reimbursement after each meeting by completing a WSBA Expense Report form and including all applicable receipts up to the limit specified in the scholarship they receive. In addition to receipts, scholarship recipients must submit a schedule of ABA YLD events attended. Reimbursement will only be made for expenses for airfare, hotel, registration, or meals (excluding alcoholic beverages) incurred in connection with the meeting.

Responsibilities: Each scholarship recipient is required to serve as a Washington Delegate to the YLD Assembly. All scholarship recipients must attend the WNMC meeting (either in person or virtually) on either February 15, 2027 (for Midyear meeting attendee) or August 16, 2027 (for Annual meeting attendee), to share what they learned that may be applicable to new members in Washington state. Scholarship recipients may also be asked to provide a written summary to be shared on the WSBA new members list serve and/or the WSBA blog, NWSidebar.

Requirements to Apply

1. Applicants must be current members or become members of the ABA YLD.
2. Applicants must be considered a "young lawyer" as defined by the ABA at the time of the selection. **Young Lawyer Definition:** All ABA members either admitted to practice within the past 10 years OR under 36 years old.

Selection Criteria: Applicants must submit complete applications by the deadline for consideration. The WNMC will conduct an initial screening to ensure eligibility, followed by holistic evaluation based on selection criteria such as bar engagement, ABA YLD mission interest, pro bono service, professional involvement, and representation potential. The committee will review and discuss eligible applicants, vote to select the recipient, and notify all applicants. The chosen applicant must confirm acceptance and commit to fulfilling all scholarship responsibilities; if unable to attend, the scholarship may be offered to another candidate.

Applications will be accepted through January 15, 2027 for Midyear Meeting, and June 1, 2027 for Annual Meeting.

Please contact newmembers@wsba.org with questions.

1. What is your first name? *

2. What is your last name? *

3. What is your bar number? *

4. Are you currently an ABA YLD Member, or willing to become one before January 27, 2027? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Who is your current employer? If none, write N/A *

6. Which ABA YLD Meeting are you applying for? (please select all that apply) *

☐ Annual Meeting July 28-August 3, 2027

☐ Midyear Meeting January 27-February 1, 2027

7. Why are you interested in attending the ABA annual meeting? *

8. Are you actively involved in any Bar Association programs or projects? If so, please name them and briefly describe your involvement, including any positions held. *

9. Please list any *pro bono* participation and/or activities: *

10. Have you ever attended any other ABA meetings? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

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Microsoft Forms



WASHINGTON NEW MEMBERS COMMITTEE

Scholarship to Attend ABA Young Lawyer Division Meetings

The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) Washington New Members Committee (WNMC) has prioritized the use of funds to send one (1) WSBA New Member to attend American Bar Association (ABA) Young Lawyer Division (YLD) meetings and/or conferences. This scholarship is designed to:

1. encourage attendance and participation at the ABA YLD meetings.
2. ensure that Washington is represented by Delegates to the YLD Assembly at ABA Annual and Midyear; and
3. to create the opportunity for scholarship recipients to bring ideas back to the WNMC about how to engage and serve new members in Washington.

The ABA YLD is a network of over 130,000 members and 300-plus affiliated young lawyer organizations from around the world. Twice a year, at the ABA Midyear and Annual Meetings, the ABA YLD Assembly meets to debate and vote on issues of importance to new members that if passed are recommended to the ABA House of Delegates to become official policies of the ABA. The ABA YLD also holds two conferences a year, one in the spring and another in the fall.

As a scholarship recipient, you will be given the opportunity to represent the interests of new members in Washington state at a national level by participating in the ABA YLD Assembly and attending ABA YLD conferences. Attending YLD meetings will also give you the opportunity to network with other lawyers, attend CLEs, and learn what other states are doing to tackle important young lawyer issues. You will also review and consider ideas and programs to bring back to WSBA and the WNMC. Scholarship recipients are strongly encouraged to attend plenary and closing sessions at the Midyear and Annual Meetings and at least one block of programming each day. If you are unsure of what to attend, please reach out to your FY27 WNMC Chair, Janta Steele janta@psestatelaw.com.

The scholarship is designed to partially offset your expenses to attend the meetings. You are encouraged to seek additional funding through the ABA or other resources available to you.

Scholarship for ABA YLD Midyear: There will be one (1) \$2,000 scholarship awarded to a WSBA New Member to attend the ABA YLD Midyear Meeting in Chicago, IL from January 27, 2027 – February 1, 2027. The scholarship will come in the form of a reimbursement.

Scholarship for ABA YLD Annual: There will be one (1) \$2,000 scholarship awarded to a WSBA New Member to attend the ABA YLD Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL from July 28, 2027 – August 3, 2027. The scholarship will come in the form of a reimbursement.

Responsibilities

Each scholarship recipient is **required** to serve as a Washington Delegate to the YLD Assembly. All scholarship recipients must attend the following WNMC meeting (either in person or virtually) on **February 15th, 2027 (for Midyear Meeting attendee), or August 16, 2027 (for Annual Meeting attendee)** to share what they learned that may be applicable to new members in Washington state. Scholarship recipients may also be asked to provide a written summary to be shared on the WSBA new members list serve and/or the WSBA blog, NWSidebar.

Requirements to Apply

1. Applicants must be current members or become members of the ABA YLD.

2. Applicants must be considered “young lawyer” as defined by the ABA at the time of the selection. **Young Lawyer Definition:** *All ABA members either admitted to practice within the past 10 years OR under 36 years old.*

Selection Process

The Washington New Members Committee (WNMC) will oversee and administer the selection process for the FY27 ABA YLD Scholarship. Applications will be reviewed according to the criteria established by the Committee and the needs and goals of the WSBA and WNMC. The selection process will proceed as follows:

- **Application Submission**
All applicants must submit a completed application and any required supporting materials by the stated deadline. Incomplete or late applications may not be considered.
- **Initial Screening**
WNMC members will conduct an initial review to confirm that applicants meet the eligibility requirements, including ABA YLD membership status and WSBA New Member (or applicable Young Lawyer) qualifications.
- **Evaluation Against Selection Criteria**
Qualified applications will be evaluated holistically based on the published selection criteria, including engagement with bar activities, demonstrated interest in the ABA YLD mission, pro bono service, professional involvement, and potential to effectively represent Washington new members at the YLD Assembly.
- **Committee Review & Deliberation**
The WNMC will discuss all eligible applicants, balancing individual qualifications with the strategic goals of the Committee, including leadership development, representation, and member engagement. Additional clarification may be requested from applicants if needed.
- **Final Selection & Notification**
The Committee will vote to determine the scholarship recipient. All applicants will be notified of the decision by email. Selected applicants will be provided with instructions regarding reimbursement requirements, expectations for participation in the ABA YLD Assembly, and the date/time of the required post-meeting WNMC debrief session.
- **Confirmation & Acceptance**
The selected applicant must confirm acceptance of the scholarship and commit to fulfilling all responsibilities outlined in the scholarship description. If a selected applicant is unable to attend, the WNMC may offer the scholarship to another applicant.

For more information, contact newmembers@wsba.org