

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

LICENSURE PATHWAYS IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Seattle, WA
November 12, 2024

Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting of the Licensure Pathways Implementation Steering Committee of the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) was called to order by Chair Zaida Rivera on Tuesday, November 12, at 9:00 a.m. Committee members in attendance were:

Zaida Rivera
Julia McGann
Serena Sayani
Vivian Hernandez
Jacob Rooksby
Terra Nevitt
Yuriko Hannali Styles
Jordan Couch
Cathy Helman
Greg Crowder
Anthony Varona
Justice Montoya-Lewis
Dusty LaMay
Leone Reinbold
Tamara Lawson
Alfredo González Benítez

Also in attendance were WSBA Chief Regulatory Counsel Renata Garcia, WSBA Associate Director Bobby Henry, WSBA Assistant General Counsel Catherine Schur, Troy Wood, and Gina Alexandris.

Welcome and Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves and shared their role on the committee, professional background, and what they hope to accomplish on the Steering Committee.

Current State of Licensing

Historical Context of Lawyer Admissions in the US: WSBA Executive Director and Steering Committee member Terra Nevitt presented on the historical evolution of lawyer licensing requirements in the United States. The presentation highlighted pioneering minority individuals who pursued admission to the practice

of law and the role of the bar exam and other admissions requirements in creating barriers for minority individuals joining the legal profession.

Current Admissions and Licensing Process: WSBA Chief Regulatory Counsel Renata Garcia and Associate Director Bobby Henry presented on the current pathways to admission to the Bar in Washington. The presentation covered the rules and requirements for lawyer admission by bar exam, UBE score transfer, and admission by motion; Washington's APR 6 Law Clerk Program requirements; and prerequisites for the APR 9 Licensed Legal Intern Program.

Task Force Recommendations: WSBA Governor and Steering Committee member Jordan Couch presented on the additional pathways to licensure recommended by the Bar Licensure Task Force. Jordan discussed the Washington Supreme Court's adoption of the NextGen Bar Exam and the Task Force's recommendation that admission by exam be supplemented with a law graduate apprenticeship pathway, law school experiential pathway, and APR 6 law clerk apprenticeship pathway.

Licensing Pathways in Other Jurisdictions

Oregon Experiences: The Steering Committee heard about efforts in Oregon to create additional pathways to lawyer licensure from Troy Wood, currently Jurisdiction Relations Manager at the National Conference of Bar Examiners and previously Regulatory Counsel at the Oregon State Bar.

Ontario Experiences: The Steering Committee also heard about the multiple pathways to lawyer licensure used in Ontario and other Canadian jurisdictions. Gina Alexandris, who was part of the team that developed Ontario's Law Practice Program and integrated practice curriculum at Toronto Metropolitan University's Lincoln Alexander School of Law, presented on this topic. Gina provided an overview of the required competencies applicants must attain and the development of the Virtual Law Firm tool used to teach practical skills.

Washington Supreme Court Rulemaking & Policy Best Practices

WSBA Policy Counsel Catherine Schur presented to the Steering Committee on the Washington Supreme Court's rulemaking process and a typical policymaking cycle. Catherine outlined the requirements and rulemaking timeline set forth in the Court's General Rule 9 and key stages in the policymaking process.

Subcommittee Formation Discussion

Catherine Schur presented a proposal for the creation of several subcommittees to undertake specific implementation topics. Specifically, the proposal recommended immediate creation of two subcommittees to focus on the subject matter competencies and supervised practice requirements for the new licensing pathways. Steering Committee members discussed the timing, scope, and specific tasks for the subcommittees. The suggestion was made to change the name of one of the proposed subcommittees from "Curriculum Development Subcommittee" to "Core Competencies Subcommittee" to avoid conflation of the subcommittee's work with law schools' role in setting their own curricula.

Core Competencies Subcommittee: Jordan moved to create the Core Competencies Subcommittee and to task the subcommittee with identifying the core competencies in which prospective Bar members must demonstrate proficiency prior to admission through the new pathways to admission. These competencies

encompass the subject matters in which attorneys should be knowledgeable in order to competently practice law and represent clients. Leone Reinbold seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Supervised Practice Subcommittee: Jordan moved to create a Supervised Practice Subcommittee to be tasked with determining the requirements for the experiential, supervised practice component of each licensure pathway. Alfredo González Benítez seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Designating Liaisons: Jordan nominated himself as liaison for the Core Competencies Subcommittee and Serena Sayani as liaison for the Supervised Practice Subcommittee. Julia McGann seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Rivera adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 12, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Schur

Catherine Schur

WSBA Policy Counsel