

Member Status Workgroup – Meeting Minutes

June 17, 2024, 4:30PM– 5:30PM

Members Present

- Kari Petrasek, Chair
- Francis Adewale, WSBA Treasurer
- Steve Crossland, Active Member from the Senior Lawyers Section
- Kathleen Pierce (inactive), Inactive/Judicial or Honorary Member
- Althea Paulson, Pro Bono Member
- P.J. Grabicki, At-Large Member

WSBA Liaisons and Staff Present

- Renata de Carvalho Garcia, RSD Director
- Bobby Henry, RSD Associate Director
- Anne Trent, RSD Paralegal
- Tom Ahearne, BOG Liaison

Call to Order

Kari called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Approve May 29, 2024 Meeting Minutes

The May 29, 2024 Meeting Minutes were approved.

Inactive License Fee Exemption Due to Incapacity

Renata shared that the Disciplinary Advisory Round Table (DART) has been discussing an alternative pathway for members wishing to change to disability inactive status that does not involve the discipline system. The current process as set by the Rules for Enforcement of Lawyer Conduct (ELC) is overly burdensome and takes too much time. DART is exploring the creation of a license fee exemption for those in inactive status due to a significant health condition.

Revised Fiscal Analysis

WSBA staff shared a revised fiscal analysis as follows:

Active License Fee Hardship Reduction for Senior Members

Approximately 90 members take advantage of the hardship exemption annually. Because the income threshold is double, we can estimate slightly more than double the number of members might then qualify; let's say 200. There are currently about 33,830 active members. Applying this ratio (200 of 33,830) to the 5,406 members who are age 65+ or licensed 40+ years, we get 32 members who might qualify for a hardship reduction. The estimated financial impact, therefore, is approximately \$8,256 (\$258*32) annually.

Pro Tempore Judicial Status

It is hard to estimate how many members might take advantage of this or what the demand is for pro

tempore judges. We know 132 active members currently age 65+ or licensed 40+ years were on judicial status prior to returning to active status. If, for example, 10% (or 13) of these members chose judicial status for pro tempore positions, the financial impact would be \$5,304 ($\408×13).

Allow Volunteering by Inactive and Honorary Members

Any financial impact from this change would be fairly nominal. If, for example, ten active members who are not practicing decided to go to inactive because all they want to do is volunteer, then the impact would be \$2,580 ($\258×10).

Honorary Status – From 50 Years to 40 Years to Be Eligible

There are currently 427 inactive members who would qualify for honorary status if this recommendation were adopted. All of them would clearly change to honorary status. Therefore, the initial financial impact of this recommendation would be \$85,400 ($\200×427). Thereafter, we estimate approximately 30 members who would've otherwise chosen inactive status each year would qualify for honorary status. This is based on identifying that there are currently 329 members on inactive status who have 40-49 years of active or judicial status. Given it is a ten-year range, approximately 30 members would become eligible each year. This results in an annual financial impact of \$6,000 ($\200×30).

Feedback on Draft Proposed Bylaw Amendments

- Paragraph 2. Inactive – The language in this paragraph needs to be changed so it does not create an issue with disability inactive status. The language added to paragraph 2 will need to be added to all categories.
- Paragraph 7 is a completely new addition. The workgroup would like to review the federal poverty rules to decide how best to determine income.

Next Steps

- Review the current and proposed license statuses as a chart
- Reconsider the language used in paragraph 7 of the Proposed Bylaws Amendments
- Staff will circulate a revised version of the proposed amendments and memo to the BOG

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m.