

**CONSTITUTION**  
**OF**  
**THE WASHINGTON APPELLATE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**

(Amended May 3, 2023)

**Article 1**

**NAME**

This organization shall be known as

**THE WASHINGTON APPELLATE LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**

**Article 2**

**PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

**Section 1.** The purposes of the Washington Appellate Lawyers Association shall be: (a) to foster and encourage improvements in the practice of appellate advocacy; (b) to promote among members of the Bar enhanced skills to such practice; (c) to promote and encourage changes and reforms in appellate procedure designed to insure effective representation of appellate litigants and more efficient administration of justice at the appellate level; (d) to cooperate with Bar Associations for the purpose of promoting proper representation of appellate litigants, the efficient administration of justice, and improvements in the law; (e) to establish relations and cooperate with the Judiciary, the Legislature, and such other organizations and committees as may be involved in matters relating to the appellate practice; (f) to actively support the integrity of the appellate process and principles of ethical appellate advocacy in the spirit of a free and independent Bar.

**Section 2.** This organization is not organized for the benefit of any private person. The assets and property of this organization are irrevocably dedicated to the purposes set forth in this Article 2 and no part of the net income and assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any member or other private person.

## Article 3

### MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** Criteria for membership shall be as follows:

(a) Except as set forth below, membership shall only be extended to members of the Washington State Bar in good standing who have shown to the satisfaction of the Association that they possess each of the following qualifications: (1) good character and professional reputation, (2) outstanding appellate ability, and (3) a continuing commitment to quality appellate practice. The Association shall not, except pursuant to subsection (d) below, admit as a member a currently-sitting judicial officer or an individual currently employed as a judicial staff attorney.

(b) To be eligible for membership, the applicant must have been a member of the bar for not less than 10 years and been lead counsel in not less than 25 appeals and orally argued at least 15 appeals.

(I) Lead counsel is the attorney who has personally (1) read or directed the review of the record on appeal, (2) performed or directed the principal legal research, and (3) been the principal author of all the briefs.

(ii) An appeal is defined as a proceeding on the merits before an appellate court which has been fully briefed and either is pending or has been terminated by decision or settlement. A proceeding that has been reviewed by more than one appellate court shall count as one proceeding. An appellate court is defined as the U.S. Supreme Court, a Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, the Washington Supreme Court, a Washington Court of Appeals, or equivalent court of another state.

(c) For purposes of ascertaining length of time as a member of the Bar, the time spent by a prospective Member as a clerk to a judge of an appellate court shall be counted.

(d) Notwithstanding the foregoing membership criteria, the membership by a majority vote of the member present and voting at any membership meeting may, from time to time, extend membership, honorary or otherwise, to persons deemed to have significantly contributed to the appellate practice, or who possess equivalent experience or skills as determined by the membership. In addition:

(I) If an Association member is elected or appointed a judicial officer, or becomes employed as a judicial staff attorney, that individual's membership status shall become inactive for the period during which the member serves in such capacity. While on inactive status, the member (1) shall not attend Association business meetings unless specifically invited, (2) shall not be entitled to vote on any issues pending before the Association, (3) shall not be required to pay

dues to retain his or her membership in the Association, but (4) may attend all Association functions to which judicial guests are invited upon paying his or her share of any costs related to such function and allocated to such member by the President.

(ii) When an inactive member leaves service as a judicial officer or a judicial staff attorney, upon the member's notification to the President of the Association that the member has left such service, the member will no longer be on inactive status and will automatically be reinstated to all the rights and privileges, and all the concomitant duties, of an active member of the Association without the necessity of reapplying for membership.

(e) A person who has been an active Association member for five or more years may apply for admission to the status of emeritus member when the member substantially curtails participation in the active practice of law because of age, illness, infirmity or other reason satisfactory to the Association. On recommendation of the membership committee, a majority of the members present at a regular business meeting may admit the member to the status of emeritus member. Emeritus members shall have all the rights of regular members but shall be relieved of the obligation to pay dues.

**Section 2.** Prospective members who meet the criteria for eligibility set forth above shall be admitted to membership with consent of the majority of the members present and voting at any membership meeting. One or more membership committees and committee chairpersons shall be appointed pursuant to Article 6 to evaluate the qualifications of any prospective member and to report thereon to the membership.

**Section 3.** The dues shall be in an amount as determined by a majority vote of the Members present and voting at any membership meeting, provided notice of any proposed dues change is directed to the membership at least 30 days before such a meeting.

**Section 4.** Membership may be terminated by death or resignation, or by expulsion for good cause, upon recommendation of the officers, ratified by a three-fourths vote of the Members present at a membership meeting, providing the person(s) sought to be expelled is (are) given 30 days' notice. There shall be a reasonable opportunity to be heard before a vote to expel is taken.

## **Article 4**

### **OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The officers of this organization shall be:

- (a) President
- (b) 1st Vice President

- (c) 2nd Vice President
- (d) Secretary
- (e) Treasurer

**Section 2.** The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the Members every year for one-year terms. After the first election, only those who have been Members for at least one year shall be eligible for election as officers.

**Section 3.** The officers shall constitute the governing body of this organization. In the event of disagreement among the officers, decisions shall be made by their majority vote. In the event that a majority of the officers do not agree, the decision shall be made by a majority vote of the executive committee. The executive committee shall consist of the officers, the immediate former president, and two other former presidents appointed by the current president at the beginning of his or her term. The officers shall also consult the former presidents on the executive committee for guidance regarding sensitive or difficult decisions when it is not necessary or feasible to consult the entire membership.

**Section 4.** The President shall act as Chairman of the governing body, and in his absence the next officer present, in the order set forth in Article 4, Section 1.

**Section 5.** In the event an officer dies or resigns the other officers shall at the earliest practicable opportunity select a substitute. Such substitute shall serve for the balance of the term of the officer whom he replaces.

**Section 6.** Any officer may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the Members, provided at least thirty (30) days' notice is given to the membership of the intention to bring to a vote at the next membership meeting the removal of such officer. Such notice must be signed by at least thirty percent (30%) of the Members.

## **Article 5**

### **MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** There will be at least one membership meeting during each calendar year. Additional membership meetings may be called for at such reasonable times and places as may be determined by the officers.

**Section 2.** Meetings of the officers may be called by the President for any reasonable time and place, provided that there will be at least four meetings of the officers during each calendar year. Officer meetings may be held telephonically. Officer meetings shall be open to any member,

provided that the President need not give notice of any officer meeting to a member unless specifically requested by the member.

**Article 6**

**COMMITTEES**

The officers may from time to time establish committees to deal with such specific tasks as the officers shall direct. The Chairman and Members of such committees shall be appointed by the President subject to ratification of the officers, shall serve at the President=s pleasure (unless the committee is established for a fixed term) and report to him.

**Article 7**

**AMENDMENT**

This constitution may be amended by the majority of the Members present and voting at any membership meeting provided the text of the proposed Amendment is distributed to the membership at least 30 days before such meeting. The membership may modify, alter or amend the text of the proposed amendment and approve same at such meeting, or at a meeting to which the matter is continued, provided that the modified, altered or amended text deals with the same general subject matter as the amendment as originally proposed.

\* \* \* \* \*