

OSB BOARD OF GOVERNORS

STATUTORY CHARGE

The Oregon State Bar (OSB) is a public corporation and an instrumentality of the Judicial Department of the State of Oregon.¹ The OSB Board of Governors (BOG) governs the state bar and must “at all times direct its power to serve the public interest by:

- (a) Regulating the legal profession and improving the quality of legal services;
- (b) Supporting the judiciary and improving the administration of justice; and
- (c) Advancing a fair, inclusive and accessible justice system.”²

As a unified bar, the OSB may use mandatory member fees only for activities that are germane to the purposes for which the bar was established.³

MISSION

The mission of the OSB is to serve justice and the public interest by promoting respect for the rule of law, by improving the quality of legal services, and by increasing access to justice.

FUNCTIONS AND GOALS

The BOG has adopted the following goals for its three statutory functions:

FUNCTION #1 – REGULATE THE LEGAL PROFESSION AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LEGAL SERVICES

GOAL: Cultivate competence, integrity, diversity, equity, inclusion, and well-being in the legal profession.

FUNCTION #2 – SUPPORT THE JUDICIARY AND IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

GOAL: Protect and advance the quality, integrity, diversity, and impartiality of the judicial system.

FUNCTION #3 – ADVANCE A FAIR, INCLUSIVE, AND ACCESSIBLE JUSTICE SYSTEM

GOAL: Foster trust in, respect for, understanding of, and access to the justice system.

FIDUCIARY ROLE

In order to advance the mission and achieve its goals, the BOG must ensure that the OSB is effectively governed and managed, and that it has adequate resources to maintain the desired level of programs and activities.

¹ ORS 9.010.

² ORS 9.080.

³ In *Keller v. State Bar of California*, 499 US 1,111 SCt 2228 (1990), the US Supreme Court held that an integrated bar's use of compulsory dues to finance political and ideological activities violates the 1st Amendment rights of dissenting members when such expenditures are not "necessarily or reasonably incurred" for the purpose of regulating the legal profession or improving the quality of legal services.

BOG AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2024

- 1. Access to Justice.**
 - a. Conduct landscape assessment regarding access to justice gaps
 - b. Develop strategic plan for improving access to justice in Oregon, including consideration of the following:
 - i. Support and encourage lawyer practice in rural Oregon.
 - ii. Implement 2022 HOD Delegate Resolution #2 (re: Advancing a Fair, Inclusive, and Accessible Justice System).
 - iii. Flat bar membership in Oregon.
 - iv. Continued support for OregonLawHelp (Portal Project).
- 2. Diversity Action Plan.** Develop strategic plan around diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- 3. Well-Being in the Legal Profession.** Develop strategic plan to improve well-being in the legal profession.
- 4. Program Review and Oversight.** Review and provide feedback on program impact report.
- 5. Governance.** Consider how to integrate Licensed Paralegals into bar governance structure (e.g., HOD, BOG, ONLD, committees, sections).
- 6. Regulation of Legal Profession.**
 - a. Consider report from Oregon RPC 5.4(a)(5) Committee.
 - b. Continue participation in alternative pathways to lawyer licensure.
 - c. Adopt Bar Rules of Licensure.
- 7. Board Development.** Identify and implement board leadership development needs.
- 8. Finance/Budget.** Provide OSB finance/budget oversight.
- 9. Pay Parity.** Institutionalize pay parity between the PLF and OSB.
- 10. Legislative Priorities.**
 - a. Implement legislative priorities adopted for 2024.
 - b. Identify and adopt legislative priorities for 2025.
- 11. Communication/Outreach.** Identify and implement areas for improved board outreach to members and the public.