

Snohomish County Bar Member Monthly Newsletter



SCBA Calendar of Events

May

- 5th - Ethics CLE
- 7th - Swearing-in Ceremony
- 15th - Newsletter Deadline
- 21st - Board of Trustees Meeting



2026 SCBA Annual Golf Tournament

The SCBA is pleased to announce that our Annual Golf Tournament will be held on August 21st at the Nile Shrine Golf Club in Mountlake Terrace.

Our beneficiary for the tournament is the Edmonds School District Athletic Alliance.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Please contact Cynthia at director@snoabar.org to receive details.

Our registration site is live! Click on the link below to sign up or sponsor the tournament.

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/scba-2026-annual-golf-tournament>



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Bar Calendar

SCBA Board Meetings, 5:00 PM

Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81547773463>

Board Meeting Dates:

2/19	7/16
3/26	9/17
4/16	10/15
5/21	11/19
6/18	12/17

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Ads, articles, announcements and changes of address all go to service@snobar.org. Submissions are due by the 15th of the month.



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Join Me in Leaving a Legacy of Justice



As a fifty plus year member of WSBA, there was no question in my mind about joining the Justice Society and naming the Endowment for Equal Justice in my will. I want to make sure that people who need legal representation at critical times in their lives can access it, no matter how meager their resources. The Endowment is working to take some of the stress out of their lives with civil legal aid. The Endowment provides support in perpetuity for the Legal Foundation of Washington in making our communities more equitable places to live, work and raise a family. Please join me.



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We are delighted to welcome attorney David D. Goodwin to our practice.

David earned his undergraduate degree in Political Science from Brigham Young University, graduating in the top 10% of his class. He received his law degree, *cum laude*, from Seattle University School of Law.

Throughout his career, David has represented clients in a wide range of family law matters, including divorce, parenting plan and custody issues, child support, and related family law disputes. He is known for his thoughtful counsel, steady approach, and commitment to helping clients resolve difficult matters with clarity, dignity, and practical solutions.

David is accepting referrals in all aspects of his domestic practice.



David D. Goodwin can be reached at:
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Snohomish Cheers + Justice - July 23, 2026

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23
July

Venue to be
announced
soon!



www.legalfoundation.org/events



Words that Bind: The Washington State Bar Association Considers Revising the Oath of Attorney

By Elizabeth Minish

For generations, newly admitted attorneys in Washington have stood and recited the Oath of Attorney, an act that marks the beginning of their professional lives. It is a moment that is both ceremonial and deeply personal. The Washington State Bar Association has convened a task force to consider modifications to that oath, inviting reflection on what it means to enter the legal profession in 2026 and beyond. That language of the oath is both aspirational and symbolic. So why is the WSBA considering making changes to the oath?

A Brief History of the Text of the Attorney's Oath

Washington State's attorney's oath originated from an 1862 territorial statute and was first codified in 1909. The oath was revised in 1921 to add a United States citizen clause. A 1954 revision added a clause affirming that the oath taker had never been a member of any organization whose purpose was to overthrow the United States government. In the 1970s, the Supreme Court adopted amendments that removed both the citizenship and allegiance requirements and also removed the phrase "so help me God." The oath was amended again in the 1980s to substitute "solemnly declare" for "solemnly swear." A 2016 amendment made changes to gendered language in the oath. Throughout all of these changes, Washington's Oath of Attorney has required lawyers to:

- Support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Washington
- Maintain respect for the courts and judicial officers
- Preserve client confidences
- Counsel or maintain only actions that appear legal or just
- Never seek to mislead a judge or jury
- Conduct themselves in an honest and truthful manner.

The language of the oath reflects the values we aspire to uphold: devotion to Constitutional government, candor to the tribunal, and professional decorum. It also contains outdated phrasing, including the requirement that new attorneys vow to "abstain from offensive personality." When I first read that line to my husband, he joked that if I was going to be abstaining from offensive personalities we might have to get a divorce.

A recent article in the Washington State Bar News shed some light on the "offensive personalities" language in the oath. To abstain from offensive personalities meant that those taking the oath must themselves avoid "personality" in their conduct; to refrain from attacking an opponent's personal character or speaking disrespectfully of others in debate. While this phrasing might have been easily understood in the nineteenth century, its true meaning has been lost with the passing of time.

Why Revisit the Oath Now?

There have been two contemporary efforts from the WSBA to revise the attorney's oath. In 2001 there was a proposal to modernize the language of the oath, and in 2016 there was a proposal to modify the language so that a single oath would cover not only lawyers, but LLTs and LPOs. Neither of these efforts were adopted.

In 2025, hundreds of Washington attorneys renewed the Oath of Attorney as part of Law Day celebr-



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CLE Announcements

Upcoming Ethics CLE

On May 5, 2026 we are offering a CLE from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. on ethics. Our speakers at the present time are Snohomish County District Court Judge Anthony Howard, Snohomish County Superior Court Judge Richard Okrent, Jeanne Marie Clavere from WSBA ethics division, and attorney Aimee Lou Trua.

The CLE will address "Common Ethical Issues During Litigation" by Janne Matie Clavere, with a panel and discussion questions from 10:00 a.m. Until 11:00 a.m., followed by information and discussion on how to remain within ethical boundaries during presentations to the Court, and then our judges will discuss how failure to follow ethical guidelines regarding honesty to the tribunal and general treatment of the court has changed and effected the safety of members of the bench.

We intend to have other members of the bench be part of our speaker line-up, and will advise when the date gets closer.

We encourage attendance at this CLE not just for the ethics credits, which we are applying for, but for the information to assist in your practice to avoid ethical mis-steps and to assist in creating a more appropriate and respectful atmosphere in court to encourage respect which in turn will assist in the safety for our members of the bench.

When: May 5, 2026, from 10 AM - 1 PM

Where: The Health Dept. Bldg. at 3020 Rucker Ave., Suite 306 (NOTE: Please find street parking as non-county vehicles parked behind the building will be towed at the owners' expense).

A CLE Pass is required to attend this CLE.

Please contact Gregory at service@snoabar.org to request an invoice for a CLE Pass.

ations across the state. Following these ceremonies, many people reached out to the bar association with comments about the experience of renewing their oath and about the oath itself. The WSBA convened a task force to discuss revising the Oath of Attorney as part of a broader conversation about professionalism and public trust in the legal system. Earlier this year the task force invited bar members to share their thoughts about revising the oath, and 54% of those who responded recommended that the language in the oath be updated.

Several themes have emerged in discussions surrounding possible revisions:

1. Plain Language and Accessibility

Some have suggested that the oath's phrasing may not be readily understood by the public, or even by those reciting it. Modernizing the language could preserve substance while enhancing clarity.

2. Emphasis on Equity and Inclusion

There is growing recognition that the justice system has not always delivered equal justice. A revised oath might explicitly affirm commitments to fairness, anti-discrimination, and equal access to justice.

3. Professional Civility in a Digital Age

The legal profession now operates in a world of electronic filings, social media commentary, and Zoom hearings. While the prohibition against "offensive personality" remains charmingly unclear, the underlying principle, civility, has renewed relevance.

4. Public Confidence in the Rule of Law

At a time when public trust in institutions wavers, the attorney's oath can serve as a reminder that lawyers are guardians of constitutional governance and the rule of law. Reaffirming that role in explicit, contemporary terms may be beneficial.

Substance vs. Symbolism

One might ask: Does changing the oath change the profession? The answer, predictably, is "it depends." On one hand, the oath is symbolic. Lawyers are bound by statutes, court rules, and the Rules of Professional Conduct regardless of the wording of their ceremonial pledge. On the other hand, symbols matter. Taking the oath is the first collective act new attorneys undertake as members of the bar. It shapes their understanding of the profession's values and priorities. While some may view revising the oath as a purely symbolic undertaking, there is something refreshingly earnest about pausing to reflect on what it is that we value and what we promise to be. It is a shared acknowledgment that the practice of law is both a privilege and a responsibility.

Looking Ahead

As the WSBA task force continues its work, input from members of the bar and the public will likely shape the final proposal. Whatever the outcome, the effort underscores a central truth: The

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oath attorneys swear is not merely about compliance with rules. It is a commitment to honesty in advocacy, respect for the courts, and dedication to justice. The task force's work will ensure that when the next generation of lawyers raise their right hand, the words they speak not only reflect the historical values of the legal profession but also serve as a reminder of the importance of carrying those values into the future.





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Helping Children Process their Emotions during divorce and separation A Monthly Resource for the Snohomish County Bar Association By Tio Jorge, Founder of Collaborative Parenting with Tio Jorge (CPwTJ)

As family law attorneys, you are architects of a family's legal and financial restructuring. Yet, the most profound and lasting impact of any divorce is its emotional echo in the lives of children. A child's ability to process the complex feelings of grief, anger, confusion, and divided loyalty will shape their well-being for years to come. Furthermore, a child struggling emotionally is often the source of post-decree conflict, from visitation refusal to behavioral issues that create friction between parents.

This article explores the critical role a parent plays as their child's "emotional guide" through the landscape of divorce. We will delve into a crucial distinction: how a parent can commit to collaboration with the child's needs, even when cooperation from the other parent is limited.

We will provide a framework for understanding how a single parent's commitment to de-escalation and emotional openness can create a safe harbor for their child, and we will offer practical insights that you can share with your clients to help them support their children, stabilize their family system, and ultimately create more durable, peaceful outcomes.

The Parents' Most Important Role: The "Emotional First Responder"

While you manage the legal proceedings, your client is on the front lines of their child's emotional experience. They are the "emotional first responders," the ones who must help their child navigate a world that has been turned upside down.

Children experiencing divorce are not just sad; they are often managing a complex cocktail of emotions:

- Grief: Over the loss of their intact family unit and the life they knew.
- Anger: At one or both parents for the disruption.
- Confusion: About the logistics and the reasons for the change.
- Anxiety: About the future and their own security.
- Loyalty Binds: A painful feeling that loving one parent is a betrayal of the other.



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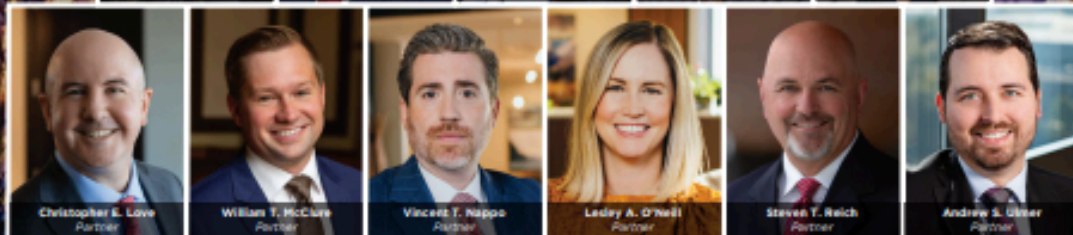
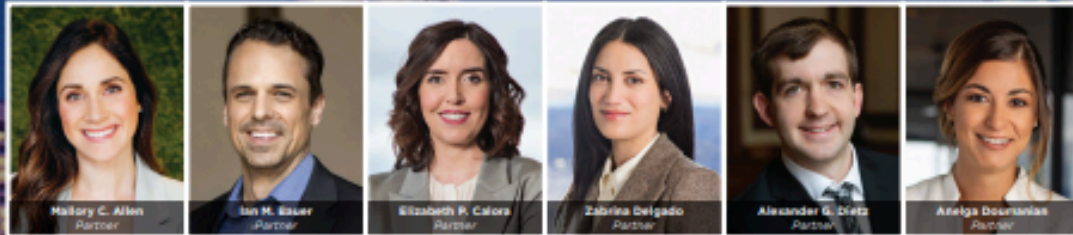
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A parent who is equipped to help their child process these feelings is not only supporting their child's mental health but is also engaging in powerful, preventative conflict management. A child who feels heard and validated is less likely to act out their distress in ways that fuel co-parental disputes.

Collaboration vs. Cooperation: Let's explore how Collaboration is more powerful than Cooperation

A common point of despair for clients is the feeling of being powerless when faced with an uncooperative co-parent. "How can I make things better if they won't work with me?" This is where understanding the difference between cooperation and collaboration becomes a game-changer.

- **Cooperation Requires Two.** Cooperation is transactional. It involves two parties agreeing on logistics, sharing information, and working together on a specific task. If one person refuses to engage, cooperation fails.
- **Collaboration Can Start with One.** In the context of supporting a child, collaboration is a mindset and a unilateral commitment. A parent can choose to collaborate with the child's needs, regardless of the other parent's behavior. This is a profound shift in perspective. It means committing to creating an emotionally safe environment on their side of the bridge, no matter what is happening on the other side.

This unilateral commitment is not about being a doormat; it is a strategic, child-centered choice.

A parent who commits to this path decides: "On my watch, in my home, my child will have a safe space to process their emotions about this divorce without fear or judgment." This decision alone can fundamentally alter a child's experience of the divorce.

The Tools of Unilateral Collaboration: De-escalation and Openness How does a parent collaborate with their child's needs when the other parent is still in conflict mode? They use two powerful tools to create an emotional "buffer zone" for the child.

1. **The Effect of De-escalation:** De-escalation is the parent's commitment to being the "emotional thermostat" for their household. It is the conscious choice not to participate in the cycle of conflict.

- **Modeling Regulation:** When a parent receives a provocative text, they practice their own emotional regulation skills (like the 3-Step PAUSE) and respond calmly or not at all. The child witnesses a parent who is a source of calm, not chaos.

- **Refusing to Engage:** The parent makes a firm rule not to speak negatively about the other parent in front of the child. They do not use the child as a messenger or a confidant.

- **The Result:** This creates a sanctuary. The child learns that at least one part of their world is predictable and safe from adult conflict. This dramatically lowers their ambient stress level and frees up emotional energy for their own developmental tasks.

2. **The Power of Openness:** Emotional openness is the parent's commitment to making all of the child's feelings welcome. It is the direct antidote to loyalty binds.

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- Creating the "One-Roof" Rule: The parent explicitly tells the child: "Under this roof, it is always okay to love and miss your other parent. You can talk about the fun you had with them. It is also okay to feel angry or sad about the divorce. All of your feelings are welcome here."
- Using Validation Scripts: Instead of correcting or dismissing a child's feelings, the parent learns to validate them. ○ Instead of: "Don't be sad, you'll see Dad on Friday." ○ Try: "It sounds like you're feeling really sad right now. It's hard to miss someone you love. I understand."
- The Result: The child is freed from the burden of managing their parent's emotions. They learn that their feelings are normal and acceptable, which is the foundation of healthy emotional processing and long-term mental health.

Your Role to further support your clients: Connecting Clients to Essential Training

These skills—emotional regulation, de-escalation, validation—are not intuitive. They are especially difficult for a parent who is simultaneously navigating their own grief, anger, and stress from the divorce. This is where training becomes essential.

As their trusted legal advisor, you can frame this not as therapy but as strategic skill-building to protect their child and stabilize their post-divorce life.

- "The best thing you can do to support your child right now is to become an expert at helping them manage their big feelings. This is a skill you can learn. I recommend you connect with a parenting coach who can give you tools and scripts for these exact situations."
- "Even if your co-parent is not on board, the skills you learn can create a more peaceful environment for your child. This will make the entire process less stressful for everyone, including you."

By guiding your clients toward these resources, you empower them to take proactive, meaningful action that will benefit their child for a lifetime and reduce the likelihood of future legal disputes stemming from a child's unresolved emotional distress.

A Resource for Your Clients Facing This Challenge

Helping a child process the emotions of divorce is one of the most difficult and important tasks a parent will ever face. Our Successful Co-Parenting Program provides dedicated modules and coaching on this very topic.

- Court-Approved: The official, required parenting seminar provider for Snohomish Superior Court since 2017, with acceptance in Skagit, Island, Grant, Walla Walla, Kitsap, and approved in King, Yakima, and various other counties in WA state
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