Oregon State Bar

Mission

The mission of the Oregon State Bar is to serve justice by promoting respect for the rule of law, by improving the quality of legal services, and by increasing access to justice.

Functions of the Oregon State Bar

We are a regulatory agency providing protection to the public.

We are a partner with the judicial system.

We are a professional organization.

We are leaders helping lawyers serve a diverse community.

We are advocates for access to justice.

And the bar does this as a "public" corporation – as an instrumentality of the Oregon Supreme Court.

Values of the Oregon State Bar

Integrity

Integrity is the measure of the bar's values through its actions. The bar's activities will be, in all cases, consistent with its values.

Fairness

The bar embraces its diverse constituencies and is committed to the elimination of bias in the justice system.

Leadership

The bar will actively pursue its vision. This requires the bar and all individual members to exert leadership to advance their goals.

Diversity

The bar is committed to serving and valuing its diverse community, to advancing equality in the justice system, and to removing barriers to that system.

Promote the Rule of the Law

The rule of law is the premise of the democratic form of government. The bar promotes the rule of law as the best means to resolve conflict and achieve equality. The rule of law underpins all of the programs and services the bar provides.

Accountability

The bar is committed to accountability for its decisions andactions and will provide regular means of communicating its achievements to its various constituencies.

Excellence

Excellence is a fundamental goal in the delivery of programs and services by the bar. Since excellence has no boundary, the bar strives for continuous improvement. The bar will benchmark its activities to organizations who exhibit "best practices" in order to assure high quality and high performance in its programs and services.

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About the Bar

The Oregon State Bar (OSB) was established in 1935 by the Oregon Legislative Assembly to license and discipline lawyers, regulate the practice of law and provide a variety of services to bar members and the public. The bar is a public corporation and an instrumentality of the Oregon Judicial Department, funded by membership and program fees. It is not a state agency and does not receive any financial support or taxpayer dollars from the state's general fund.

Membership

The OSB has nearly 14,000 active members. Approximately half of our members engage in the private practice of law. The rest work primarily in government, corporate and business settings. More than 4,500 of our active members are women. More than 2,000 reside in a state other than Oregon.

Governance

A sixteen-member volunteer Board of Governors oversees the activities of the OSB. Twelve board members are lawyers, elected by the membership by geographic region. The other four board members are public (non-lawyer) members appointed based on their areas of interest and expertise. The Board of Governors has established numerous committees and interests group to advise and make recommendations to the board on matters involving the legal profession and justice system.

The OSB House of Delegates serves as the representative assembly of the membership, voting on proposed changes to rules, membership fees and other matters. It has more than 200 members, most of whom are elected by geographic region. Other delegates represent OSB Sections and local bar associations, and six public members are appointed by the Board of Governors on a regional basis. The House of Delegates meets annually.

The Oregon Supreme Court has authority over appointments to the Disciplinary Board and the Board of Bar Examiners. Members of these boards are also volunteers, and receive staff and administrative support from the OSB.

The OSB Executive Director oversees bar operations, managing a staff of approximately 90 people and an $11 million annual budget.