

WASHINGTON STATE GENDER AND JUSTICE COMMISSION

BY-LAWS

(ADOPTED OCTOBER 24, 1994)
(AMENDED JANUARY 19, 1996)
(AMENDED JANUARY 5, 2001)
(AMENDED NOVEMBER 14, 2003)
(AMENDED MARCH 26, 2010)
(AMENDED May 4, 2018)
(AMENDED May 29, 2020)

PREAMBLE

On June 29, 1994, the Washington Supreme Court established the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission by Order No. 25700-B-392, reauthorized it under Order No. 25700-B-392 on November 16, 2000, Order No. 25700-B-453 on March 24, 2005, Order No. 25700-B-505 on March 15, 2010, Order No. 25700-B-553 on February 5, 2015, and Order 25700-B-601 on January 30, 2020. The Supreme Court charged the Commission to identify concerns and make recommendations regarding the equal treatment of all parties, attorneys, and court employees in state courts and to file an annual report with the Governor, Legislature, and Chief Justice concerning the work of the Commission and its recommendations.

These by-laws have been promulgated by the Commission to provide an orderly framework for carrying out its mission.

ARTICLE I. Name of Commission/Historical Roots

- 1.1 This Commission shall be known as the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission.

ARTICLE II. Principle Purposes

- 2.1 The Mission of the Gender and Justice Commission is to promote gender equality in the system of law and justice through education and by coordinating and cooperating with other organizations and programs and projects designed to eliminate gender discrimination and bias.
- 2.2 The Commission shall share its information about its activities and projects with all levels of state courts, the legal profession, law enforcement, the education community, and the public at large.

- 2.3 The Commission shall devise, recommend and assist with institutionalizing such educational programs, record keeping systems, research projects and other relevant means by which our system of justice may be continuously examined to ensure that gender bias plays no part in the treatment of parties, attorneys and court employees and plays no part in the judicial decision making process.
- 2.4 The Commission shall exercise leadership in partnering with other organizations in addressing gender equality, gender bias and gender discrimination issues in the law and justice community.
- 2.5 The Commission shall cooperate and coordinate with national and regional gender and justice programs, networks, committees, task forces and commissions for purposes of developing effective judicial education programs and research projects and for the purpose of sharing ideas.
- 2.6 The Commission shall report on a regular basis to the Governor, Legislature, and Chief Justice with respect to the work, findings and recommendations of the Commission.
- 2.7. The Commission shall devise ways of communicating its existence, goals, and projects to the legal and judicial communities and to the public at large.

ARTICLE III. Membership

- 3.1 The Commission shall consist of 21 members to be appointed by the Chief Justice of the Washington Supreme Court. 3.2. When vacancies shall occur on the Commission, the Commission shall request the Chief Justice to appoint replacements. The Commission may submit a slate of nominees which shall be made with an eye to the continued racial, ethnic, gender, geographical, professional and citizen diversity and balance of the Commission.
- 3.2 Attendance at meetings is expected. If a member misses three consecutive meetings, he or she will be deemed to have resigned from the Commission. If a Commission member knows in advance that she or he is unable to attend three consecutive meetings for any reason, he or she shall notify the Commission Chair and tender his or her resignation. The Commission Chair has discretion to choose to accept or decline the resignation.
- 3.3 Terms of membership on the Commission shall be three years. Terms shall be staggered so that approximately one-third of the terms expire in any given calendar year. Members appointed to a full term may be reappointed only once to another full term without a break in service. Members appointed initially to a partial term may be reappointed only twice to full terms without a break in service. At the discretion of the Chair and Co-Chair, a member may be

appointed to additional full or partial terms beyond these term limits. The Washington State Supreme Court representative may exceed the two-term limit.

ARTICLE IV. Officers

- 4.1 The Chief Justice shall appoint a Supreme Court representative as Commission Chair, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Chief Justice.
- 4.2 The Commission Chair shall appoint one of the remaining commissioners as Co-Chair, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Commission Chair.

ARTICLE V. Standing Committees

- 5.1 The Commission Chair shall appoint standing committees as the work of the Commission shall require.
- 5.2 The Commission Chair shall appoint a Chair for each standing committee, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Commission Chair.

ARTICLE VI. Ad Hoc Committees

- 6.1 The Commission Chair may appoint ad hoc committees and a committee chair to work on specific time-limited projects or assignments. Commission and non-Commission members may serve on these committees.

ARTICLE VII. Quorum/Majority Vote

- 7.1 A quorum shall consist of 60 percent of the members appointed to the Commission. Vacancies shall not be considered. A member participating in a meeting by teleconference, video conference, or other electronic means approved by the Commission shall be counted in the determination of the quorum.
- 7.2 A majority vote of the Commission is required on all action items.
- 7.3 On time-sensitive decisions, and in the absence of a quorum, absent Commission members will be contacted via email or by telephone requesting their vote on the issue before the Commission. An agreement of a majority of a Commission shall entitle the Commission Chair to go forward with the approved decision.
- 7.4 No proxy voting shall be allowed.

ARTICLE VIII. Meeting Procedure/Scheduling

- 8.1 Meetings may be conducted informally and Commission decisions may be made by consensus. In instances where consensus can not be reached, Roberts Rules of Order shall apply.
- 8.2 AOC shall assign professional staff support to the Commission. Meeting minutes shall be sent to the Commission members prior to the next meeting. The Chair shall call for any corrections of the minutes, which shall be approved as written or corrected. After approval, the minutes shall be deemed to reflect the action of the Commission and made available for public access.
- 8.3 Commission meetings shall be held at least quarterly. Additional meetings may be regularly scheduled or specially called at the discretion of the Chair. Specially called meetings of the Commission may be held by teleconference, video conference, or other electronic means approved by the Commission.
- 8.4 Meetings shall be scheduled a year in advance, with notice being sent to Commission members in July.

ARTICLE IX. Special Funding

- 9.1 The Commission is authorized to seek and accept funding from grants, pilot project funds, and scholarships. Any funds so obtained shall be administered under proper auditing controls by AOC.
- 9.2 The Commission Chair shall appoint a committee to work with staff in identifying and recommending to the Commission which grants, pilot projects and /or scholarships would be appropriate for the Commission to seek.

ARTICLE X. Amendments to By-Laws

- 10.1 These by-laws may be amended by the following process: (1) proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to Commission members at least one month in advance of any regularly scheduled meeting; (2) such proposed amendments shall be placed on the agenda for said upcoming meeting; (3) action may be taken at said meeting, or deferred for final action to the next succeeding meeting, by majority vote of the Commission; (4) if final action is not taken by adjournment of the second meeting, the proposed amendment shall be deemed rejected.


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ARTICLE XI. Continuing Nature of By-Laws

- 11.1 These by-laws, as now written or as hereafter amended, shall continue to govern until such time as the Commission may cease to exist.
- 11.2 By-laws will be reviewed at time of renewal of the order establishing the Commission.

The by-laws were duly amended by the members of the Washington State Gender and Justice Commission at the May 29, 2020 regularly scheduled Commission Meeting.

Attest



Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud, Chair



Judge Marilyn Paja, Co-Chair