

Office of Military and Veterans Legal Assistance

Advisory Board Meeting

Washington State Attorney General's Office

Tuesday, September 23, 2025, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm, Via Zoom & In-Person

Attendees:

AGO Staff:

- Mariah Hanley, OMVLA Manager (Co-Facilitator)
- Ian Anderson, OMVLA Policy Analyst (Co-Facilitator)
- Nick Brown, Washington State Attorney General
- Ellen Austin-Hall, Deputy Director, Policy Division
- Maxwell Schaeffer, Law Enforcement Outreach Lead (Minutes)

Advisory Board:

Voting Members: **Quorum reached**

- Beth Leonard, WA State Office of Civil Legal Aid
- Caesar Kalinowski, WA State Veterans Bar Association
- Joyce Diaz, WA State Bar Association
- Ned Gignoux, VA Puget Sound / US Department of Veterans Affairs
- Kevin Devine, VA Puget Sound / US Department of Veterans Affairs (Alternate)
- Michael Terasaki, Pro Bono Council
- Paul Cruz, WA State Department of Veterans Affairs
- MAJ Brian Chinchar, Washington Army National Guard
- SFC Ra-Sha Sanford, Washington Army National Guard
- Laurie Davenport, Tacoma Probono
- Cayce Hall, Tacoma Probono
- Lauren Romero, Tacoma Probono

Non-voting Members & Guests:

- John Clynch, University of Washington
- Carolyn Roberts, Amazon

11:01am Meeting brought to order by Ian; agenda presented; introductions

11:08am Ian introduced the May 2025 Advisory Board Meeting Minutes for discussion and approval

- No changes requested
- Caesar moved to approve; Joyce seconded

- All voted in favor to approve

11:10am Mariah Provided a recap of 2025 Q2 Data

- Discussed Q2 requests including number of requests, most prevalent legal issues, top rural counties, and income distribution of requestors

11:17am Ian and Mariah discussed 2025 Q2 events and 2025 upcoming events and activities

- Ian shared notable events from Q2:
 - Ian attended Whatcom County Stand-Down in June
 - Mariah and Ian attended *Serving Those Who Served* Conference in Yakima; Mariah presented
 - OMVLA's summer law clerk, Margaret, helped with outreach, cases, and scheduling feedback calls
- Volunteer Feedback Calls – Ongoing
 - Ian is contacting volunteer attorneys to learn about their experience with OMVLA. Approximately 70 lawyers have been contacted so far
- Upcoming Events
 - Clark County Stand Down on September 26th
 - Spokane County Stand Down on October 4th
 - King County Veterans Seniors Human Services Levy Summit October 24th & 25th
 - Microsoft Probono Fair on October 27th
 - OMVLA Wills Clinic on November 1st
 - Thurston County Stand Down November 6th
- Mariah Discussed Volunteer Lawyer Recruitment and Retention
 - OMVLA staff have recruited 17 new attorneys since last meeting, mostly in family law
 - Joyce helped bring in 5 new attorneys through WSBA newsletter recruitment
 - Continuing volunteer outreach to consumer law and bankruptcy attorneys

1:31am Ian and Mariah shared the results of the 500% FPL Trial Period

- The 500% FPL trial period is sunseting. These cases accounted for 8.5% of overall since last September
- Caesar moved to make the change permanent; Kevin seconded
- All voted in Favor

11:38am Mariah presented the Legal Needs Survey report

- Mariah went over the survey background, timeline, top legal issues reported, demographics, outreach efforts, and a summary of overall findings

11:55am Ian opened the floor for member updates

- John Clynch gave an update of UW Veterans Legal Clinic
- Tacoma Probono introduced the VALOR Program, staffed by Lauren Romero, focused on civil legal aid for veterans including VA benefits

11:59am Ian opened to public comment

- No members of public were present

12:00pm Ian adjourned the meeting