

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS ON THE ALASKA BAR
DIVERSITY INITIATIVE:**

BACKGROUND: The Alaska Bar Association’s current membership does not reflect the diversity of Alaska. Creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive legal community and bar membership is critical to assure the fair and just application of the law, strengthen the public trust in the administration of justice, foster a professional environment that values and respects differences, and help the legal community better meet the needs of Alaskans.

GOAL: To create a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse organization and to increase the membership of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in the Alaska Bar Association.

ACTION: The Board of Governors of the Alaska Bar Association resolves to create the Alaska Bar Diversity Initiative.

The Diversity Initiative will consist of a nine-member Commission tasked with identifying barriers, impediments, and other access issues that affect, foster, and contribute—implicitly and structurally—to the lack of diversity in Alaska Bar membership. The Commission will meet and confer from July 1, 2021, through July 1, 2022, with the objective of furnishing a report to the Alaska Bar Association on matters including, but not limited to:

- (1) identification of systemic issues, policies, and practices impacting or limiting membership of BIPOC lawyers in the Alaska Bar Association and contributing to the lack of diversity in bar membership;
- (2) identification of current barriers, impediments, and other problems confronting BIPOC lawyers within the Alaska Bar Association;
- (3) identification of ways the Alaska Bar Association and Board of Governors can help address and work towards dismantling systemic issues, barriers, impediments, or other concerns the Commission believes contribute to a lack of a diverse bar;
- (4) identification of what steps and actions the Board of Governors and the Alaska Bar Association can take to increase

membership of BIPOC lawyers in the Alaska Bar Association, and to better attract, recruit, and retain BIPOC lawyers in the Alaska; and

- (5) identification of ways to better support diverse members of the Alaska Bar Association.

The Commission will coordinate and collaborate with the Alaska Judicial Council and the Diversity Subcommittee of the Alaska Fairness and Access Commission (“Diversity Subcommittee”), to assist with its work and to enhance those entities’ ongoing efforts to increase the diversity of the bench and the Bar.

The Commission, at its discretion, may also coordinate and collaborate with other entities, organizations, or experts that the Commission identifies that will assist the Commission’s work.

PROCEDURE: In order to facilitate the work of the Commission, the following procedures will be instituted:

- (1) The Commission will consist of eleven positions—nine voting members and two ex officio members. The nine voting positions will be held by BIPOC members, seven of whom must be lawyers who are current members of the Alaska Bar Association. The remaining two positions will be non-attorneys. The Commission members will be selected by the president of the Alaska Bar Association with the advice and recommendations of the Board of Governors, the Alaska Court System, the Alaska Judicial Council, and the Diversity Subcommittee. The Commission will attempt to include at least one member from each judicial district, and include rural as well as urban representation.
- (2) The two ex officio positions will serve to help facilitate the work of the Commission and will be filled by: (1) a voting member of the Board of Governors, and (2) a member of the Fairness and Access Commission of the Alaska Court System.
- (3) The Commission will be led by one chairperson, who will preside over the diversity initiative and guide the Commission in achieving its goals. The chair will be selected by the Commission at its first meeting.

- (4) The Alaska Bar Association will provide what it deems reasonable administrative support to the Commission. The Alaska Bar Association will also provide reasonable financial resources to support the Committee's work, including the travel and per diem of up to two in person meetings. Further resources may be allocated upon request of the Commission based on approval by the Board of Governors.
- (5) At the Commission's discretion, the Alaska Judicial Council and the Diversity Subcommittee will be invited participate in the Commission meetings and provide assistance to the Commission.
- (6) The Commission will hold at least four meetings that are open to the public in order to encourage and elicit public feedback to the maximum extent possible.
- (7) The Commission will furnish its report to the Board of Governors on September 1, 2022. If the Commission determines that more time is necessary, it will meet with the president of the Alaska Bar Association to set a new date to furnish the report.
- (8) At its next regularly scheduled meeting after the Commission has completed its report, the chair of the Commission and/or a representative designee will present an overview of the report's findings and recommendations to the Board of Governors. After deliberation and review, the Board of Governors will decide how to advance the report. The Board of Governors may consider asking the Commission to supplement its work.
- (9) If the Board asks the Commission to undertake additional steps or supplement its work, and the Commission agrees, the Commission may resume its work. The Commission will then be given a new date from the Board to complete any supplemental work before furnishing the Board of Governors with a revised final report. The Board of Governors will then meet at its next regularly scheduled board meeting to review the revised final report and decide how to advance the report.

- (10) If the Board asks the Commission to undertake additional steps and/or supplements its report and the Commission declines to do so, the Commission's report will then be considered its final report.
- (11) Once the Commission's report is finalized the Board will publish the report on the Alaska Bar Association's website and provide the report to the Alaska Judicial Council and the Diversity Subcommittee.
- (12) The Board of Governors will invite the Alaska Judicial Council, the Diversity Subcommittee, and members of the Alaska Bar Association to provide feedback and suggestions on the report and to recommend what additional action, outreach, and education the Board of Governors should take to further the goal of increasing bar membership diversity and increasing the representation, recruitment, and retention of BIPOC lawyers in Alaska.
- (13) The Board of Governors will address as a separate agenda item any action recommended by the Commission in its final report or any recommended action by the Alaska Judicial Council and the Diversity Subcommittee at its next regularly scheduled meeting after the report is approved.
- (14) The Board of Governors agenda discussion will include the creation of an Implementation Task Force that can be charged with directing, reviewing, and facilitating implementation of the actions and activities identified in the report, and coordinating and collaborating with Alaska Bar Association staff, the Board of Governors, the Alaska Judicial Council, and the Diversity Subcommittee in the future.