

WSR 26-02-024
RULES OF COURT
STATE SUPREME COURT
[December 4, 2025]

IN THE MATTER OF THE) ORDER
SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO GR) NO. 25700-A-1678
12.4—WASHINGTON STATE BAR)
ASSOCIATION ACCESS TO)
RECORDS)

The Washington State Bar Association, having recommended the suggested amendments to GR 12.4—Washington State Bar Association Access to Records, and the Court having approved the suggested amendments for publication;

Now, therefore, it is hereby

ORDERED:

(a) That pursuant to the provisions of GR 9(g), the suggested amendments as shown below are to be published for comment in the Washington Reports, Washington Register, Washington State Bar Association and Administrative Office of the Court's websites expeditiously.

(b) The purpose statement as required by GR 9(e) is published solely for the information of the Bench, Bar, and other interested parties.

(c) Comments are to be submitted to the Clerk of the Supreme Court by either U.S. Mail or Internet E-Mail by no later than February 1, 2026. Comments may be sent to the following addresses: P.O. Box 40929, Olympia, Washington 98504-0929, or supreme@courts.wa.gov. Comments submitted by e-mail message must be limited to 1500 words.

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 4th day of December, 2025.

For the Court

Stephens, C.J.

CHIEF JUSTICE

GR 9 COVER SHEET
Suggested Amendments
General Rules
Rule 12.4

Submitted by the Washington State Bar Association

A. Name of Proponent:

Washington State Bar Association

B. Co-Spokespersons:

Francis Adewale, WSBA President
Terra Nevitt, WSBA Executive Director

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C. Purpose:

The primary purpose of the suggested amendment to General Rule (GR) 12.4 is to clarify that records described in this rule section relating to licensed legal interns also are exempt from public access.

Licensed legal interns are authorized by the Court to engage in the limited practice of law in accordance with Rule 9 of the Admission and Practice Rules (APR). Individuals apply for an APR 9 legal intern license under the APR. APR 1(d) makes applications for APR 9 licensed legal interns confidential, but currently no rule expressly provides for the confidentiality of records regarding complaints and investigations into the conduct of licensed legal interns. GR 12.4

(d)(2)(B)(ii) lists certain Bar records that are exempt from public access, including "application, investigation, and hearing or proceeding records relating to lawyer, Limited Practice Officer, or Limited License Legal Technician admissions, licensing or discipline ..." However, licensed legal interns are not included in the rule. This apparent oversight is addressed by the suggested amendment to GR 12.4

The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) proposes adding "licensed legal intern" in order to clarify that records described in this rule section relating to licensed legal interns also are exempt from public access. At its September 26, 2025, meeting, the WSBA Board of Governors (Board) voted to recommend this suggested amendment to the Washington Supreme Court.

D. Hearing: A hearing is not requested.

E. Expedited Consideration: Expedited consideration is requested.

F. Supporting Material: None.

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO GENERAL RULE 12.4

TITLE

GENERAL RULES

RULE 12.4. WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION ACCESS TO RECORDS

(a)-(c) [Unchanged.]

(d) Bar Records - Right of Access.

(1) [Unchanged.]

(2) In addition to exemptions referenced above, the following categories of Bar records are exempt from public access except as may expressly be made public by court rule:

(A). [Unchanged.]

(B). Specific information and records regarding

(i) [Unchanged.]

(ii) application, investigation, and hearing or proceeding records relating to lawyer, licensed legal intern, Limited Practice Officer, or Limited License Legal Technician admissions, licensing, or discipline, or that relate to the work of ELC 2.5 hearing officers, the Board of Bar Examiners, the Character and Fitness Board, the Law Clerk Board, the Limited Practice Board, the MCLE Board, the Limited License Legal Technician Board, the Practice of Law Board, or the Disciplinary Board in conducting investigations, hearings or proceedings; and

(iii) [Unchanged.]

(C.)-(F.) [Unchanged.]

(3) [Unchanged.]

(e)-(j) [Unchanged.]