

Dwight A. Bickel Curriculum Vitae 2025

Mr. Bickel graduated from the University of Washington Foster School of Business in 1975 and earned the degree of Juris Doctor in 1978 at the University of Puget Sound School of Law, now known as Seattle University School of Law.

Dwight retired in May of 2019 as the Northwest Region Counsel for the Fidelity National Title Group supporting all its title companies and their agents in six states. He has been privileged to serve the real property industry by speaking at seminars, by writing essays and by appointments on various committees for both title associations and real property bar associations.

Presently Dwight Bickel provides legal services for the public limited to residential real estate. Working with real estate brokers, Dwight meets with purchasers to identify title issues, to explain the title report, to explain title insurance coverage (and its limitations), to inspect the land regarding unrecorded easements and encroachments, then to provide legal advice regarding their purchase. Dwight also meets with sellers and their brokers to cure title defects and identify challenges to the closing. If needed, Dwight also can assist the parties to change the title vesting, or to negotiate and possibly to mediate disputes with neighbors about easements, covenants, or boundary improvements.

Mr. Bickel is also available as a consultant to real estate professionals and attorneys to assist with real estate transactions and to act as an expert supporting litigation related to real property title and title insurance coverage.

Dwight's experience gives him specialized knowledge of title insurance coverage, escrow duties and requirements for compliance with state and federal regulation of the title industry. His past transaction work also has given him specialized knowledge regarding boundary disputes, easement rights, foreclosures, mortgage modification, workout agreements and bankruptcy.

For many years, Dwight Bickel was the Legislative Committee Chair for the Washington Land Title Association, was a member of its Board of Directors for many years and was its President in 2006. For fifteen years until his retirement, Dwight was a member of the Forms Committee of the American Land Title Association responsible for developing new title insurance forms for use throughout the United States. Dwight is an approved instructor for education credits for lawyers, limited practice officers and real estate brokers.

Education:

University of Puget Sound

Juris Doctor

1975 – 1978

After my graduation, this Tacoma, Washington, law school was sold to, and changed its name to, Seattle University.

University of Washington - Michael G. Foster School of Business

BA in Business Administration

1971 – 1975

Recent Employment Experience:

Northwest Regional Counsel

Fidelity National Title Group

Nov 2011 – May 2019

Seattle, Washington

The Regional Counsel is responsible for approval of underwriting decisions (evaluation and acceptance of risks for title insurance coverage) originating from the direct and agent title companies that are underwritten by Fidelity National Financial in the six Northwest states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.

The Fidelity National Title Group in those states includes Fidelity Title, Chicago Title, Ticor Title, Lawyers Title and Commonwealth Land Title. Based from the Seattle office of Chicago Title at Columbia Center, I worked in collaboration with the various State Counsel and other underwriters located throughout those states. I reported to the Chief Underwriting Counsel at the company's headquarters, and worked with his senior staff located throughout the United States, Canada and India.

Corporate Counsel and Senior Vice President

Rainier Title

Apr 2009 – Oct 2011

King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties, Washington

I served many different roles to support this large title company with operations in three Puget Sound counties. I was its advisory title officer, the "go to person" for answers for the escrow operations, and the assistant to the marketing personnel for customer contact and educational seminars. I also acted as General Counsel advising the management on all matters and representing it in litigation.

Rainier Title Company was an agent underwritten by Stewart Title Guaranty [<http://www.stewart.com/>] during the period when I was its counsel.

In August of 2010, I invested as a minority owner of Rainier Title LLC, participating in all owner meetings and discussions. I sold that ownership interest back to the other owners in July of 2014.

In October of 2011, I left this company and assumed my prior role as Regional Counsel for the Fidelity National Title Group. In 2018, Rainier Title became a title agent supported by me as its underwriter again.

Counsel and Vice President

Transamerica/ Commonwealth Land/Lawyers/LandAmerica Title Insurance Company

Jul 1987 – Jun 2008

Initially I was hired as Vice President and counsel for Transamerica Title, responsible for risk underwriting, escrow advice, employee training and claims management for the direct and agent title companies within the state of Washington.

Other than a brief hiatus in 1997 when I worked as a title department manager for Evergreen Title (a local agent of Transnation in two Puget Sound Counties), I continued to work in changing roles for this company as it was acquired by Commonwealth Land Title, then both were acquired by Lawyers Title, then all three operated as LandAmerica. Later, Transamerica changed its name to Transnation, then Transnation Title was merged into Lawyers Title by LandAmerica to reorganize its subsidiaries on June 30, 2008.

The last chapter of my role for Transamerica/Transnation/LandAmerica was as Regional Counsel for Fidelity National Title after it acquired all the title companies that were operated as LandAmerica in 2009. See my experience listed at those companies for later details.

See nine further descriptions of initial professional work experience since May of 1978, including further samples of work at www.linkedin.com/in/dwightbickel.

Trade Association Service and Honors

Washington State Bar Association

Executive Committee of Real Property Division: 2003 to 2005

Washington Land Title Association

Judiciary Committee: 1987 to 1990

Board of Directors: 1997 to 2019

President and Vice President: 2005 to 2007

Chair Legislative Committee: 2006 to 2017

Chair Underwriters Committee: 2017 to 2018

Washington Title Professional Subcommittee: 2015 to 2018

The Washington Land Title Association recognized my knowledge about real property title with its designation as a Washington Title Professional. In 2018 WLTA awarded its Lifetime Achievement Award to me, the second person to receive that highest honor.

American Land Title Association

Trustee, Title Insurance Federal Political Action Committee: 1997 to 1998

Member of the Forms Committee: 2001 to 2019

The Forms Committee is responsible for drafting and revising the standard forms, such as title insurance policies, endorsements, mutual indemnity agreements and escrow closing protection letters used by most of the title companies throughout most of the United States.

Recent Testimony in Judicial Proceedings:

United States Court of Federal Claims

Nos. 03-785L, 04-1456L, 04-1459L,
04-1463L, 04-1465L, 04-1467L,
04-1472L, 04-1473L (consolidated)

Warren and Vicki Beres, et al., Plaintiffs v. The United States, Defendant.

May 7, 2020: Deposition taken by adverse party, the defendant United States. I was acting as title expert witness for the plaintiffs.

Plaintiffs were seeking compensation for loss of ownership reserved by conveyance of railroad right of way subsequently taken by a change in Federal law.

King County Superior Court

Case No. 20-2-08557-0 KNT

Jeffrey Hemmen, Robert Clardy, Wende Doohan and Greg and Sherry Cochran, Plaintiffs, v. Jimmy Cho and Amy Cho, Defendants

June 15, 2021: Deposition taken by adverse party, the defendants. I was acting as title expert witness for the plaintiffs.

June 17 and 21, 2021: Trial testimony, as a title expert witness for the plaintiffs.

Plaintiffs obtained judicial determination of access easement upon defendant's land.

Unpublished decision by Division I, Court of Appeals filed January 17, 2023, affirmed the Court's factual conclusions based upon title expert testimony. *Hemmen v Cho*, Case No. 83136-4.

King County Superior Court

Case No. 21-2-03478-7

Derek and Megan Watson, Plaintiffs, v.

Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, Williams, Kastner & Gibbs, LevyVon Beck Comstock and Robert Sargeant, Defendants

February 24, 2022: Deposition taken by one of the malpractice defendants. I was deposed as a fact witness related to my prior role as a real property title consulting expert for a law firm (that was not a defendant in the present case), related to a prior case:

Thomas Chung, et al v Derek Watson, et al

Snohomish Superior No. 16-2-02410-4

Spokane County Superior Court

Case No. 19-2-01500-32

David Terry Investments, LLC, Plaintiff, v. Headwaters Development Group, LLC, HENNESSEY & EDWARDS, P.S., and LUCENT LAW, PLLC, et al., Defendants

April 17, 2023: Deposition taken by adverse parties. I was acting as an escrow agent expert witness for the plaintiff. Plaintiff was seeking compensation for damages suffered when escrow agent closed the sale of real property owned by the plaintiff without authorization.

King County Superior Court

Case No. 22-2-07326-8

Qinghua Victor Zou, Plaintiff, v. Arlene Ritzhaupt, Defendant

October 6, 2023: Deposition taken by adverse party. I was acting as title expert witness for the defendant. The dispute related to easement rights.

Clallam County Superior Court

Case No. 23-2-00064-05

Kelly Blume, Plaintiff, v. Melvin Loomis, Defendant

May 9, 2024: Deposition taken by adverse party. I was acting as title expert witness for the plaintiff. The dispute related to easement rights.

Mason County Superior Court

Case No. 22-2-00697-23

Daniel Ray Edwards v Jill Halvorson and Carol O'Donley

February 12 and 13, 2025: trial testimony. I acted as title expert witness on behalf of the plaintiff.

The dispute related to interpretation of deeds in the chain of title to determine present ownership of a vacated roadway.

King County Superior Court

Case No. 23-2-19868-9 SEA

Catherine Campbell v Blakely Island Maintenance Commission

February 18, 2025: Deposition taken by adverse party. I was acting as title expert witness for the plaintiff. May 13, 2025: trial testimony. I acted as title expert witness on behalf of the plaintiff.

The dispute related to interpretation of recorded documents to determine easement rights.

Essays and Published Articles:

TITLE ISSUES RELATED TO DISSOLUTION AND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS IN WASHINGTON

Essay for presentation at Seattle on March 29, 2019

American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers

25th Annual Family Law Conference

Title Insurance Policies in Washington:**Exceptions and Endorsements**

Essay for presentation at Seattle on May 2, 2018

National Business Institute

Real Estate Legal Boot Camp

Non-Probate Passing of Real Property

Essay for presentation at Seattle on October 28, 2016

Washington Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

Fall CLE & Annual Conference

**TITLE REPORTS AND TITLE INSURANCE and
CURING TITLE DEFECTS**

Two essays for two presentations in Seattle on February 9th and 16th, 2016
WSBA Young Lawyers Section
New Lawyer Education Series:
Buying and Selling Residential Real Estate
(A three-day seminar devoted to real estate for new lawyers)

Title Issues in Foreclosures and Workouts

Essay for presentation at Seattle on November 4, 2013
National Business Institute

The Difference Between Promises of Title Provided by Common Deed Forms

Essay for presentation at Seattle on September 18, 2010
Escrow Association of Washington
Annual State Education Conference

Title Insurance Policies in Washington

Essay for presentation at Seattle on December 9, 2009
National Business Institute
Resolving Real Estate Title Defects

Navigating Residential Loan Defaults

Essay for presentation at Seattle on December 4, 2009
WSBA Real Property, Probate & Trust Section
16th Annual Fall Real Estate Conference

**TITLE ISSUES PERTAINING TO VARIOUS TRANSFERS, INCLUDING FUNDING ESTATE
PLANNING TRUSTS AND FAMILY COMPANIES**

Essay for presentation at Spokane on June 14, 2007
WSBA Real Property, Probate & Trust Section
Mid-Year Meeting and Seminar

Title Insurance Commitments and Policies in Washington

Essay for presentation at Seattle on June 7, 2007
National Business Institute
In-Depth Title Insurance Principles

The Value Provided by the 2006 ALTA Policies

Article published in the Quarterly Newsletter
WSBA Real Property, Probate & Trust Section
Vol. 33, Number 2 dated September 15, 2006

The Value Provided to Owners and Lenders by the new 2006 ALTA Policy Forms

Essay dated July 23, 2006, prepared for dozens of presentations at seminars for real estate lawyers, brokers and title company employees.

**Title Issues in the Purchase and Sale
of Commercial Real Estate**

Essay for presentation at Seattle on April 19, 2002

WSBA Real Property, Probate & Trust Section

Doing the Deal: Handling Complex Issues in the Purchase and Sale of Commercial Real Estate

Leasehold title insurance: New ALTA endorsements

Article published in the Puget Sound Journal of Commerce

February 28, 2002

<https://www.djc.com/news/re/11130941.html>

Writing Samples and More Information:

More detailed information, such as all prior professional work experience since May of 1978, detailed skill descriptions, essays, seminar materials, other publications, recommendations, volunteer experience, interests, can be found published to the public on LinkedIn (accessible without membership or license at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dwightbickel/>).