

The Association of the Bar of the City of New York

Statement of Diversity Principles

The Association of the Bar of the City of New York and the signatories hereto remain committed to fostering diversity in the legal profession. Diversity is an inclusive concept and encompasses, without limitation, race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, nationality, age, disability and marital and parental status. With greater diversity, we can be more creative, effective and just, bringing more varied perspectives, experiences, backgrounds, talents and interests to the practice of law and the administration of justice. A diverse group of talented legal professionals is critically important to the success of every law firm, corporate or government law department, law school, public service organization and every other organization that includes attorneys. Diversity is not about quotas or different standards. Rather, the opportunity to increase diversity should be one important consideration in the decision-making process. We want to hire, retain and promote our lawyers based on each of our unique criteria, while simultaneously maintaining our commitment to diversity. To this end, we pledge to facilitate diversity in the hiring, retention and promotion of attorneys and in the elevation of attorneys to leadership positions within our respective organizations. We believe that all members of the bar should participate equally and fully in our profession.

We recognize that achieving diversity is an evolutionary process that requires a continued renewal of our commitment to strategies of inclusion. Accordingly, we reaffirm our commitment to the following principles and best practices. We further agree to participate in Association programs designed to measure our progress in pursuit of these principles.

Attachment A - Law Firm Goals

Attachment B - Law Department Goals

Attachment C - Law Firm & Law Department Diversity Practices

Statement of Diversity Goals of New York Law Firms

In furtherance of the Statement of Diversity Principles, the Signatories adopt the following goals:

Hiring. To hire entry-level classes that substantially reflect the diversity of graduating law students. We want to achieve this level of diversity as soon as we can, but not later than three years from the date of this Statement. We also will take diversity goals into consideration within our lateral hiring.

Retention. To achieve a level of diversity throughout a class's progression that is at least as great as when the class was first hired. We will strive in good faith to achieve this retention rate as soon as we can, with a goal of doing so within five years from the date of this Statement.

Promotion. To be able, within 10 years, not only to hire diverse first year classes, but also to reflect that diversity through to the point when senior associates are promoted to senior positions, including counsel and partner. When we have successfully achieved representative diversity in our associate classes, it will be our goal that our promotions reflect that diverse workforce.

Leadership. To achieve leadership positions throughout the firm that reflect the diversity among our senior legal professionals. We recognize that promoting diversity in leadership positions reflects our fullest commitment to diversity in the legal profession.

Our overall goal is to identify and eliminate any barriers to the success of the diverse group of legal talent discussed in the Statement of Diversity Principles.

Statement of Diversity Goals of New York Law Departments

In furtherance of the Statement of Diversity Principles, the Signatories adopt the following goals:

Hiring and Retention. To hire attorneys consistent with this Statement of Diversity Goals. Many New York Law Departments do not hire entry level classes but rather hire experienced attorneys at various different levels. Therefore, we aim to hire a diverse staff of attorneys so that, over a relatively short period of time, New York Law Departments, as a whole, will substantially reflect the diversity, as a whole, of the law student classes from which the attorneys were hired. We will strive to achieve this level of diversity as soon as we can, with the goal of doing so within five years from the date of this Statement.

Promotion. To be able, within 10 years, to reflect that diversity within our departments through to the point when we make promotions to senior positions, including general counsel. When a department has successfully accomplished representative diversity in its mid-level ranks, it will be its goal that its promotions reflect that diverse workforce.

Leadership. To achieve leadership positions throughout New York Law Departments that reflect the diversity among our senior legal professionals. We recognize that promoting diversity in leadership positions reflects our fullest commitment to diversity in the legal profession.

Diversity in Outside Counsel. We expect the law firms that represent our companies to work actively to promote diversity within their organizations. In selecting outside counsel, we will consider a firm's commitment and progress, including its success in meeting the goals set forth in the Statement of Diversity Goals of New York Law Firms. We will seek to ensure that attorneys who work on and have responsibility for our matters are representative of various affinity groups. We will also seek to expand opportunities for minority- and women-owned firms.

Our overall goal is to identify and eliminate any barriers to the success of the diverse group of legal talent discussed in the Statement of Diversity Principles.

Diversity Practices New York Law Firms and Law Departments

To realize the Statement of Diversity Goals, we pledge to undertake the following:

Diversity Committee. We each agree to create a diversity committee. A senior partner or executive should be responsible for the committee and promoting its efforts. The diversity committee should itself be diverse.

Diversity committee recommended practices include the development of a mission statement and formal goals, analysis of the organization's historical diversity practices, identification of current needs, development and implementation of practices designed to promote diversity and establishment of a system of metrics to gauge the organization's success. Some successful diversity committees engage outside consultants to assist in these efforts.

One of the goals of the diversity committee should be to make the current work environment equally hospitable to all attorneys. A welcoming work climate facilitates hiring, increases retention and leads to promotion of professionals who add to our diversity. The diversity committee should ensure that all affinity groups (1) have meaningful mentoring available; (2) receive equal opportunities to perform significant work for important clients; (3) receive equal training, guidance and feedback; and (4) are fully included in work-related social activities with other lawyers and clients.

Diversity Training. We each agree to participate in at least one diversity awareness training program bi-annually. Such training is most successful when it is mandatory at all levels.

Diversity Enhancing Programs. We each pledge to implement and maintain:

programs to promote the success of our minority and women hires;

viable work/ life programs such as maternity/ paternity leave, and child care, as well as benefit plans that offer same sex partners the same benefits offered to married couples;

programs for expanding diversity recruitment, including minority internships/ summer associate positions; participation in minority job fairs; involvement of members of all affinity groups in hiring; and diversity training for our recruiting personnel; and

networks of affinity groups that support the attorneys and provide outlets and channels of communication with senior management.

Measuring Success. With the adoption of these principles, the Association is creating an Office for Diversity that will support the Signatories' efforts to promote diversity. The Association recognizes that it will be important for all of the Signatories to share information about their successes – as well as their failures – and to be supported in the programs they implement.

The Association's Office for Diversity will report aggregate diversity statistics for all Signatories in an Annual Diversity Statement, which will be distributed to each Signatory and published in the Record. Demographic statistics for all classes and levels of lawyers will be shared among peer firms and law departments.

The Signatory (or Signatories) who has (have) made the most progress in promoting and achieving diversity will be recognized at an Association Diversity Event to be held each year.

Signatories to the City Bar's Statement of Diversity Principles

Allen & Overy
Alston & Bird LLP
Altria Group, Inc.
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American Express Company
Anderson Kill & Olick, P.C
Arent Fox PLLC
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The New York City Bar gratefully acknowledges the sponsorship of the following law firms, corporations and organizations whose generosity helped fund our Office for Diversity, which supports the participating firms and corporations in their efforts to promote diversity.

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To learn more about the Office and related funding opportunities please contact Alex David at

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