



2019 Executive Summary

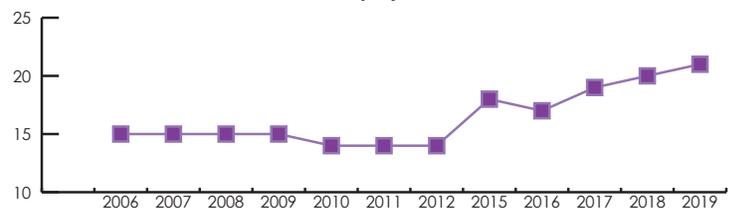
Survey Report On the Promotion and Retention of Women in Law Firms

This report reflects the 12th year of data collection by the annual NAWL Survey on the Retention and Promotion of Women in Law Firms. The NAWL Survey provides objective statistics regarding the position and advancement of women lawyers in law firms, and it remains the only national survey that collects this industry benchmarking data in such detail. In addition to the key data points regarding representation of women among law firm partners, non-equity and equity, and hours and compensation data for men and women in various positions in the law firm, this year's survey further examines the mechanisms that may explain the disparities between men and women, such as policies and practices that hinder women's progress. Overall, the results suggest that firms need to be more active about disrupting subtle biases if they hope to significantly change these numbers.

Every year, NAWL surveys the AmLaw 200, and in the last three years has collected data from 66% of firms in that group, with nearly 50% of the group participating in any given year. While over the last 10 years, the representation of women has changed, for example

from about 16% women equity partners in 2007 and 19% in 2017, the numbers in the last three years reflect small changes despite NAWL's One-Third by 2020 Challenge and strong movement in the industry to address gender inequities. Women continue to be underrepresented among equity partners and firm governance in particular, and while women work as much as men, their client billings and compensation continue to lag behind that of similarly-situated men. But there are signs of positive change, with firms adopting more women and family-friendly policies, investing more in training and support for women and diverse attorneys, and some recent activity, such as the make-up of new classes of equity partners, showing increasing representation of women.

Woman Equity Partners



Key Findings:

Men and women start off relatively equal as associates, but diverge at non-equity and equity partner.

- Women are 47% of associates compared to 30% of non-equity partners and about 20% of equity partners.
- Compensation, billing rates, and billable and total hours worked are comparable for men and women associates, but this changes at non-equity and equity partner.

The representation of women as equity partners seems to have plateaued overall, but new equity partner classes and recent successions show promise.

- Women remain about 20% of all equity partners, with this representation holding steady for the last three years.
- In line with NAWL's *One-Third by 2020 Challenge*, new equity partner classes have been about 33% women for the last three years.



- In the last three years, 35% of new relationship partners for a firm's top-30 clients were women compared to 28% of the departing relationship partners and 23% of all relationship partners for the top-30 clients.

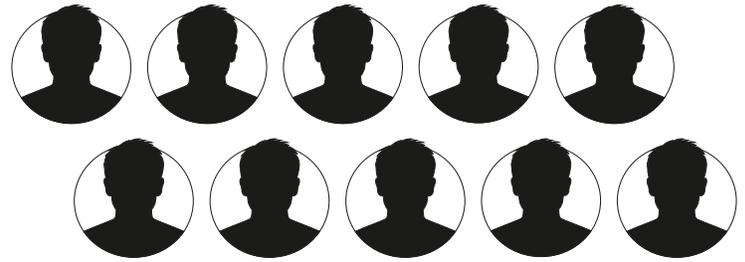
Women have made progress but still struggle for access to firm leadership positions.



- 20 – 25% of governance and compensation committee members and office-level managing partners and practice group leaders are women, but women are largely unrepresented as firm managing partners.

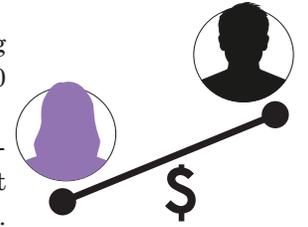
Compensation is differently distributed for men and women, with men more likely to be represented at the higher end of the compensation spectrum.

- Men are paid more per year than women, and this pattern existed without significant variance across the AmLaw



200 for all attorney types and levels.

- Women work the same hours as men but their billing rates and client billings fall short of men's.
- 93% of firms reported that their most highly compensated attorney is a man.
- Of the top 10 revenue-generating attorneys, most firms have 0 women in that group.
- Of the top 10 most highly-compensated attorneys, most firms have 0 women in that group.



The representation of diverse attorneys continues to lag behind that of women overall.

- Women of color are 14% of associates, 5% of non-equity partners, and 3% of equity partners. Altogether, people of color are 9% of equity partners.
- LGBTQI+ people are 4% of associates and about 2% of non-equity and equity partners.
- People with disabilities are less than 1% of associates, non-equity partners, or equity partners.

Firm Efforts to Reduce Bias

- Firms are more likely to engage in (and report on) bias reduction efforts at the earliest stages of an attorney's relationship with the firm (i.e., recruitment, with associates), where the disparities between men and women are relatively small, but less likely to engage in similar efforts across the career lifespan when men's and women's trajectories diverge.
- Firms may need to rethink their women's and diversity initiatives to better understand what purposes they are serving and to more effectively utilize them in service of supporting and advancing women and diverse attorneys.

Conclusion:

The progress women have made in law firms over the last decade has been slow and incremental at best, and law firms continue to face challenges supporting and promoting women and diverse attorneys. Despite universal adoption of women's initiatives, a ramping up of diversity initiatives, and increased awareness of the challenges women face in the law firm, there have been only small increases in overall representation of women and diverse attorneys, particularly at the more senior, higher-status positions in the law firm. As firms confront this reality, more interrogation of the processes and decision points that affect women's advancement is needed in order to identify where and why women's progress stalls during their careers. In addition, firms need to move away from current practices toward best practices in bias-reduction in order to fully address the challenges women continue to face.