

The Best Law Firms For Female Attorneys

By **Cristina Violante**

Law360, New York (July 23, 2017, 8:02 PM EDT) -- While the legal industry continues to struggle with gender parity, this year's Glass Ceiling Report reveals that some firms are ahead of the rest.

Law360's 2017 Glass Ceiling Report shows that women make up around one-third of the attorneys in private legal practice, a number that has stayed largely static over the past four years. Among the law firms surveyed, just under 45 percent of nonpartners and 23 percent of partners identified as female — despite women making up over 40 percent of law students since 1986, according to the American Bar Association.

But the firms on this list have bucked the trend. Law360 grouped firms based on U.S. attorney headcount in order to evaluate them with similar-sized peers. We excluded any firm that had below-average female representation at even a single level of the firm, and then we ranked the rest based on their percentage of female attorneys both at the nonpartner and partner level.

At the No. 1 firm in each of the four size groupings, women made up at least 49 percent of attorneys. At two of those top firms — Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP and Outten & Golden LLP — women constituted more than 60 percent of the headcount.

And that well-above-average representation holds true at every level of these firms. At Fragomen, for example, 40 percent of equity partners are female — double the industry average. Adding nonequity partners into the mix, at least one-third of all partners at each of the top four firms are women.

With an aggregate workforce that is over 40 percent female, the firms on this list are outpacing their peers in breaking down the old boys' club and moving the industry toward a more inclusive status quo.

The Best Law Firms For Women

600+ Lawyers

Rank	Firm
1	Littler
2	Jackson Lewis

3	Baker McKenzie WilmerHale
5	Faegre
6	Hogan Lovells Morgan Lewis
8	McDermott
9	Ropes & Gray
10	Jones Day

300-599 Lawyers

1	Fragomen, Del Rey
2	Quarles & Brady
3	Schiff Hardin
4	Ice Miller
5	Crowell & Moring Fisher Phillips
7	Manatt Phelps
8	Kutak Rock Marshall Dennehey
10	Ballard Spahr

150-299 Lawyers

1	Constangy Brooks
2	FordHarrison
3	Bowman and Brooke
4	Hanson Bridgett
5	Shipman & Goodwin
6	Best Best
7	Gray Plant Miller Nash
9	Thompson Coe
10	Chapman and Cutler Fredrikson & Byron Epstein Becker

20-149 Lawyers	
1	Outten & Golden
2	Liebert Cassidy
3	Berry Appleman Walsworth
5	Fross Zelnick
6	Meagher & Geer
7	Frankfurt Kurnit Stokes Lawrence
9	Conrad O'Brien
10	Burke Williams

To be eligible for the ranking, firms had to report above-average representation of female attorneys in each of the categories listed in the chart below.

Sizing Up The Average Law Firm

The average representation of women in law firm roles — from associate to equity partner — varies slightly by firm size.

	20-149 attys	150-299	300-599	600+
Total Female Attorneys	33.4%	33.2%	33.7%	36.1%
Female Nonpartners	42.9%	43.6%	43.5%	45.2%
Total Female Partners	24.7%	23.7%	22.5%	22.2%
Female Equity Partners	19.3%	18.9%	19.0%	18.7%

--Editing by Jeremy Barker and Mark Lebetkin.

Methodology: Law360 surveyed more than 300 U.S. firms, or vereins with a U.S. component, about their overall and female headcount numbers as of Dec. 31, 2016. Only U.S.-based attorneys were included in the survey, and firms had to have at least 20 U.S.-based attorneys to participate.

For the ranking, firms were first grouped according to size: 20-149 attorneys, 150-299 attorneys, 300-599 attorneys and 600-plus attorneys. Then, firms that fell below the average in any of the following categories were deemed ineligible for the ranking: (1) percentage of female attorneys; (2) percentage of

female nonpartners; (3) percentage of female partners, both equity and nonequity; and (4) percentage of female equity partners. Finally, remaining firms were ranked using a formula that equally weights the percentage of nonpartners and percentage of total partners who are women.

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