

Glass Ceiling Report: How Does Your Firm Measure Up?

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Law360 (October 18, 2020, 8:05 PM EDT) -- Law firms have long struggled to clear the barriers that women face in the industry, particularly when it comes to accessing the top ranks.

Progress over the past few years has been, at best, minimal. The representation of women at U.S. law firms shrinks significantly at the level of partner and above, according to Law360's 2020 Glass Ceiling Report.

Less than a quarter of equity partners at surveyed U.S. firms are women. Executive committees have a similar lack of female representation.

Law firms as a whole fundamentally struggle to support the rise of women in their workforce, at all levels. This was true even before the onset of a global pandemic, and questions remain as to whether even those meager efforts will be stalled as the economic uncertainty continues.

Our survey data shows where law firms stood at the end of 2019, before the start of what has been an unprecedented year, one that has altered the working life of attorneys across the U.S.

Law firms face sharpened questions on gender parity in the workplace: What has worked, what hasn't, and where do they hope to be?

Law360's Glass Ceiling Report attempts to shed some light on those questions.

Here, we look at how law firms compare with firms of a similar size on two straightforward measures: the percentage of female attorneys at the firm and the percentage of female equity partners.

For the firms that rise to the top, we also provide a more detailed look at other measures: the percentage of female nonpartners, the percentage of attorneys who are women of color, the female representation on the firm's executive committee or similar management committee, and the percentage of recently promoted partners who are women.

We see this review as the beginning of a conversation that we hope will expand as we develop new ways of examining gender diversity in the profession and evaluate the data that is the most relevant to answering these difficult questions. As we continue to collect and analyze data, we welcome your comments here.

