

The Best Law Firms For Female Attorneys

By **Jacqueline Bell**

Law360 (May 28, 2018, 8:02 PM EDT) -- Law360's 2018 Glass Ceiling Report shows law firms are making only incremental progress toward increasing opportunities for women at all levels, from associate to equity partner.

Women still represent just over one-third of all attorneys in private practice, according to our report. That number has remained consistent over the past five law firm surveys Law360 has conducted. And the level of female representation varies considerably from the lowest-ranking attorneys to the highest levels of the law firm.

Among nonpartners, women make up just under 45 percent of the attorney workforce. But when it comes to the most elite members of a law firm, women represent only 24 percent of all partners — both equity and nonequity — and just over 20 percent of equity partners.

Law schools have been graduating classes that are at least 40 percent female for more than three decades, so the comparative dearth of women at law firms remains a source of frustration for many in the legal industry.

But some law firms are making strides, and as their numbers suggest, they are opening doors that have long been closed to women seeking to make their mark on the legal profession.

For our ranking, Law360 grouped firms based on U.S. attorney headcount in order to compare them with similarly sized firms. Any firm that had a below-average female representation at any level of the firm was excluded. The remaining firms were ranked by the percentage of female nonpartners and female partners at the firm.

This ranking only takes into account the relative gender diversity of the firm's attorney workforce. There are, of course, other issues firms of all sizes are grappling with, including discrimination, harassment and pay inequity. But the firms on this list are proving that gender diversity pledges can move toward becoming workforce realities.

For the top ranked firms in every tier, women make up at least 50 percent of their total attorney workforce. Several law firms in the ranking, such as Littler Mendelson PC and FordHarrison LLP, have equity partnerships that are more than 30 percent female, dramatically higher than the typical law firm.

The immigration boutique Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP, which is ranked No. 1 among firms with 300-599 attorneys, has an equity partnership that is more than 40 percent female.

These 62 law firms are outpacing their peers — breaking down barriers and forging a path to a more diverse working environment.

The Best Law Firms For Women

600+ Lawyers

Rank	Firm
1	Littler
2	Ogletree Deakins
3	Jackson Lewis
4	WilmerHale
5	Baker McKenzie
6	Hogan Lovells
7	Ropes & Gray
8	Faegre Baker
9	Morgan Lewis
10	Jones Day

300-599 Lawyers

1	Fragomen
2	Quarles & Brady
3	Shook Hardy
4	Davis Wright
5	Ballard Spahr
6	Dinsmore & Shohl Holland & Hart
8	Katten Muchin

150-299 Lawyers

1	FordHarrison
2	Constangy Brooks
3	Bowman and Brooke
4	Best Best Hanson Bridgett

- 6 Shipman & Goodwin
- 7 Bricker & Eckler
- 8 Fredrikson & Byron
- 9 Thompson Coe
- 10 SmithAmundsen
- 11 Hall Render
- 12 Gray Plant
- 13 Lane Powell
- 14 Greenspoon Marder
- 15 Cullen and Dykman
Schiff Hardin
- 17 Chapman and Cutler

20-149 Lawyers

- 1 Pearl Law Group
- 2 Berry Appleman
- 3 Liebert Cassidy
Walsworth
- 5 Nicolaides Fink
Wilkinson Walsh
- 7 Franklin & Prokopik
- 8 Stokes Lawrence
- 9 Adelson Testan
Carothers DiSante
- 11 Fross Zelnick
- 12 Stander Reubens
- 13 Riley Safer
- 14 Katz Marshall
- 15 Hoge Fenton
- 16 Cowan DeBaets
ZwillGen
- 18 Nilan Johnson
- 19 Hudson Cook
- 20 Baron & Budd
Kennedys CMK
Manning Gross
- 23 Conrad O'Brien
Selman Breitman
- 25 Davis Graham
- 26 Murtha Cullina
- 27 Van Ness Feldman

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 Typical Law Firm

The average representation of female attorneys varies by firm size.

	20-149 Attorneys	150-299 Attorneys	300-599 Attorneys	600+ Attorneys
Total Female Attorneys	34.8%	33.7%	34.1%	37.0%
Female Nonpartners	43.1%	44.5%	44.0%	45.8%
Total Female Partners	26.4%	23.9%	23.7%	23.2%
Female Equity Partners	21.8%	19.2%	19.7%	20.0%

--Editing by Jeremy Barker and Aaron Pelc.

Methodology: Law360 surveyed more than 300 U.S. firms, or vereins with a U.S. component, about their demographic makeup as of Dec. 31, 2017. 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.