# Vault Law Firm Culture & Inclusion Questionnaire

## Firm Information

- **Firm Name:** Please provide the full name of your firm.

Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP

## Leadership

- **Head(s) of Firm:** Please provide the name and title of the head(s) of the firm (e.g., Chair, CEO, Managing Partner). Enter information for more than one individual, if applicable.

Peter Sullivan, Chairman

- **Inclusion Professional(s):** Does the firm have a Chief Diversity Officer, Director of Inclusion, or other professional(s) leading the firm's inclusion initiatives? If so, please provide the name and title of the inclusion professional. Enter information for more than one individual, if applicable.

D.L. Morriss, DEI Partner
Courtenay Joseph, Sr. DEI Manager
Jillien Miller, DEI Administrator

- **Ownership:** Is the firm women-owned, minority-owned, and/or LGBTQ+-owned? If so, please note any related certifications (e.g., NAMWOLF).



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## Culture and Community

- **Affinity Groups:** Does the firm have internal affinity groups or networks (open to all employees)? What affinity groups or networks does the firm have? What kind of support does the firm provide for these affinity groups or networks?

The firm has six affinity networks open to all attorneys and three employee resource groups open to all employees. The affinity networks are Asian Pacific American Affinity Network, Black Affinity Network, Hispanic/Latino Affinity Network, LGBTQ Affinity Network, and Women Affinity Network. The employee resource groups are Hinshaw Caregiver Circle, Jewish Cultural Heritage ERG, and Veterans ERG. The firm supports each group to facilitate programming for professional development, business development, and social networking. Additionally, the DEI Office coordinates bi-monthly meetings for each group and provides support in coordinating initiatives.

- **Culture and Inclusion Events:** Does the firm host culture and inclusion retreats or conferences? If so, please describe these events.

The firm has held culture group retreats in the past and continues to explore ways to meaningfully gather members to advance culture and inclusion initiatives. During the 2025 Capital Partner Retreat, the firm held a workshop focused on leveraging the Enneagram assessment as a means to foster inclusive leadership.

- **Cultural Awareness:** How does the firm commemorate important dates honoring different cultures of employees within the firm (e.g., Black History Month, Women's History Month, Pride Month, etc.)?

The firm's culture groups, along with the DEI Office, plan educational programming throughout the year that commemorates and honors different cultures. Culture groups can also issue firm-wide communications to honor their respective heritage/awareness months.



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- **Inclusiveness:** Please describe steps the firm has taken to create an inclusive environment for women, people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and parents/caregivers.

The firm supports numerous affinity networks and employee resource groups that serve as sources of community, cultural education, mentoring, and external engagement. The firm hosted inclusive leadership workshops in partnership with EQUIIDA and an Enneagram facilitator. The firm piloted Everway Read & Write software for employees who desire additional support with focus, comprehension and task management; this software was ultimately made available to all employees. The Caregiver Circle hosted an educational webinar on caregiver benefits provided by the firm; and the Attorney Life Committee - Associate Sub-Committee spearheaded a Supplemental Parental Leave Guide to assist parents preparing for leave and returning.

## Networking, Mentoring, and Professional Development

- **Mentoring & Sponsorship:** Does the firm offer a mentorship or sponsorship program that connects junior attorneys with senior leadership? If so, please describe.

The firm views mentoring as a means to help develop talent more effectively. The mentorship program for junior attorneys is designed to build confidence and support the mentee so they are able to take ownership of their own career development. Mentors are more senior attorneys who are either their direct supervisor or an attorney within their practice group. The Mentoring Committee will always take into consideration several factors to determine the best mentor/mentee fit. The firm also has developed and published mentoring guidelines that provide insight into the responsibilities of mentors and mentees, suggestions for meeting topics, and guidance on closing the mentor relationship.

- **Reverse Mentoring:** Does the firm pair senior attorneys with junior attorneys to help bridge generational or cultural gaps, share perspectives and skills, and foster a more inclusive culture?

The firm implements a 360 review process as part of the Mentoring Program. One of the roles and responsibilities of the mentee is to give feedback to their mentors about effective work productivity and critical evaluation of firm policies.



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- **Associate Committee:** Does the firm have an associate committee that consults with the partnership? If so, please describe how that committee engages with the partnership.

The firm's Attorney Life Committee - Associate Sub-Committee meets with firm leadership and partners across the firm to advance internal initiatives, develop programming, and provide support for all associates. In 2025, this committee offered feedback on Associate recruiting, retention, productivity bonus, and developed a parental leave policy supplemental guide.

- **Professional Development:** Does the firm offer professional development programs specifically for junior attorneys? Please elaborate on the professional development programs available to junior attorneys.

The firm offers professional development opportunities through Hinshaw University and partnership with LCLD. This programming includes annual CLE credits and leadership development training. New associates are also offered training in the firm's Basic Skills and Trial Advocacy program.

## Recruitment, Promotion, and Advancement

- **Recruitment Process:** What steps has the firm taken to build a more inclusive recruitment process (e.g., interview training, behavioral interview questions, blind resume review, etc.)?

Some of the ways the firm has created a more inclusive recruiting experience include: implementation of the Mansfield Rule by Diversity Lab; establishing an interview committee that is comprised of a diverse representation of firm partners; and employee-wide implicit bias training.



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- **Fellowship/Scholarship:** Does the firm offer any scholarships, fellowships, or internships? If so, describe those programs. How many of the law students who participated in the firm's most recent 2L summer associate program were hired through such a program?

The firm offers a Summer Law Achievement Scholarship to rising 3L students and hosts a Summer Associate program. For the Summer Law Achievement Scholarship, the firm awards two scholarships in the amount of $5,000 each to rising 3L students who articulate how their cultural background and scholastic achievements impact their perspectives in the legal community. Summer Law Achievement Scholarship recipients are often hired through this program. The Summer Associate program consists of 8 weeks of practice group rotation with practical assignments and project experience.

- **Advancement:** Describe any firm initiatives to create equal opportunities for all attorneys with respect to work allocation, performance reviews and upward reviews, and/or promotions.

Practice Group Leaders regularly monitor work allocations among associates and partners. The Practice Group Leaders also conduct performance reviews that address work efficiency and areas for improvement.

Based on the framework of Mansfield Certification, client pitch opportunities and subsequent staffing on those matters are reviewed to ensure all attorneys have equal opportunities to participate where relevant. The firm has transparent policies regarding billing credit as well. This data is reviewed by firm management.

Regarding promotion processes, criteria for promotion eligibility is documented and communicated to our attorneys. Candidates for promotion are reviewed by Management Committee, Executive Committee, and DEI Committee, with input from candidates.

- **Multitiered Partnership:** Does the firm offer a multitiered partnership? If so, please describe.

Yes, the firm offers a capital and non-capital tiered partnership.



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- **Alternatives to Partnership:** Does the firm offer a non-partner track alternative for attorneys? If so, please describe.

Yes, the firm allows certain senior associates to convert to senior counsel positions based on practice needs.

- **Reduced Hours and Flex-Time Options:** Does the firm offer reduced hours and/or flex-time options? If so, please describe and explain how working an alternative schedule might affect an associate's path to partnership.

Yes, the firm has a reduced hours/flex-time policy for all attorneys. Associates on an alternate schedule are given pro-rated metrics that still meet advancement criteria.

- **Credit for Work Other Than Client Billable:** Does the firm provide hours credit for work not pertaining to clients, such as recruiting, business development, knowledge management, or inclusion efforts? Note that this does not include pro bono projects. If so, describe the policy for such work.

The firm provides hours credit for work not pertaining to clients. Accountable time is offered for culture group and mentoring activities.



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## Successes and Priorities

- What are the firm's top three accomplishments or areas in which the firm has had its greatest success with respect to fostering inclusion within the firm?

The firm's top three accomplishments with regard to fostering inclusion include the following:

1) Adoption of industry and Mansfield best practices leading to consecutive Mansfield 5.0, 6.0, and 7.0 certifications, earning Mansfield Certification Plus recognition.

2) Expanded participation in leadership programs such as LCLD which lead to earning the LCLD Top Performer Award noting dedication to advancing inclusion in the legal field.

3) Implementation of LGBTQ+ workplace best practices resulting in 17 consecutive HRC CEI 100 ratings.

- What are the firm's top three priorities for advancing inclusion within the firm?

The firm's top three priorities for advancing inclusion are:
1) Strengthening talent development, retention, and leadership pathways to ensure equitable access to hiring and advancement opportunities;
2) Leveraging our Culture Groups as a means for increasing employee engagement and driving integration across the firm; and
3) Continued expansion and development of inclusive leadership training, cultural fluency, and educational programs that are designed to help all attorneys develop behaviors and systems that yield inclusion.

## Advice to Candidates

- What advice do you have for candidates who are looking for an inclusive work environment? What questions should they ask when interviewing to help them assess the extent of a firm's commitment to inclusion?

Candidates should gauge representation across firm leadership and how the firm supports participation in broader legal industry diversity initiatives.



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## Additional Response Space

Please use this page for information that did not fit in the spaces provided. If this is a continuation of a prior answer, please indicate which question(s) are being addressed.



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