Vault Law Firm Culture & Inclusion Questionnaire

Firm Information

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

McCarter & English, 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.

Joseph Lubertazzi, Chair
Joseph T. Boccassini, Managing Partner
Mary Gabriel, Deputy Managing Partner
John D. Brefach, Chief Operating Officer

- **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.

Moyahoena Ogilvie, Hartford Office Managing Partner, Culture & Inclusion Partner

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

Not applicable

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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?

At the time, the firm has a Women's Initiative, and a Working Parents Support Group. The firm provides leadership, funding, and assists with event and program coordination.

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

We are not hosting a retreat in 2026, but we have periodically hosted them in prior years.

- **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 may shares educational information by email regarding some historical or culturally significant events. When we do, attorneys may be invited to participate in the preparation of emails. We sometimes invite speakers or authors to present about historical or significant events.

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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 has expanded parental leave for all our attorneys, including a ramp down/ramp up billable hours reduction to facilitate the transition to and return from parental leave. We have both a reduced hour policy and a flex-time policy to encourage a healthy work/life balance. Billable hours requirements and bonus targets are prorated for parents who take leave. We provide private nursing rooms with lockable refrigerated storage. Our health care insurance plans cover in-vitro fertilization that include four egg retrieval processes per lifetime. The firm has an employee assistance program that is available to all employees, and we offer back-up childcare coordinated through Bright Horizons, and other services that are offered through our health care provider. We provide gender-neutral parental leave for adoption. We provide gender-neutral restroom facilities, have health care coverage that provides equitable benefits for employees and their dependents, provide an opportunity for employees to share their pronouns, and use gender-neutral terminology in our policies. Our employees are provided opportunities to self-identify, and may include their preferred pronouns in their signature block. We have put an additional focus on wellness and mental health. The firm has addressed issues of accessibility in our buildings, workspaces, and parking facilities. All employees may request accommodations to enable them to work safely and effectively. Our non-discrimination policy explicitly includes gender identity & expression and disability as protected categories.

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 tries to connect attorneys, formally and informally, to mentors and sponsorsat various stages of their careers.

- **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?

Not at this time.

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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.

Not at this time

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

In addition to general skills topics, associate training programs include topics such as business development, rain-making, attorney wellness, work/life balance, networking, and other skills that help a young attorney to develop professionally. We monitor hours to ensure the equitable distribution of quality assignments, client exposure, and work opportunities. Additionally, the firm sponsors memberships of and events with local community organizations, bar associations, law schools, and business organizations, and we encourage and support our attorneys involvement in such organizations.

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.)?

Our open positions are posted on our website, and with a variety of job boards and affinity organizations to get exposure to a broad candidate pool. We also encourage referrals from employees. We have provided training for those who interview for us through OCI and other events . Our interviewers are also provided with information to guide their questions and conversations.

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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 coordinates three or fours scholarships for law students through sponsorships of bar association events. Each year, we host an undergraduate intern in our Hartford office through the Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity, and we hire between four and six 1L law students for paid ten-week positions in our 1L program that runs in tandem with our 2L summer associate program. Our 1L program is a stand-alone program - there is no guarantee of a 2L spot for participants in our 1L program which is intended primarily to provide an opportunity for law students who have limited or no previous law firm exposure to work alongside, and be mentored by, lawyers.

- **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.

We monitor hours to ensure the equitable distribution of quality assignments, client exposure, and work opportunities. In the past, we hosted a bias in evaluations training. Our Culture & Inclusion Partner is a member of the Partner Selection Committee.

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

The firm has both Equity Partners, and Income Partners.

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

The firm may promote to Special Counsel those senior associates who do not wish to be promoted to partner but still provide significant value to the firm and to our clients, Special Counsel may still be considered for partnership as a later time if they so wish.

- **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.

A flexible work arrangement does not change the evaluation process of the factors considered with regard to promotion to partnership, and those on flexible work arrangements remain eligible for partnership. It should be noted, however, that a balanced hour schedule generally will extend the time at which an attorney is considered for partnership, depending on the proportion to standard hours worked and the duration of the balanced hours schedule.

- **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.

Our attorneys have a committed hours requirement in addition to their billable hours requirement. Committed hours include time spent mentoring, training, interviewing, bar association activities, networking events, conference attendance, and client development activities in addition to other general categories that form part of an attorney's every day obligations. Work on Culture & Inclusion matters qualifies as committed hours.

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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?

1) More partners are involved in Culture & Inclusion efforts
2) We continue to experience a gradual but consistent increase in the diversification of firm leadership.
3) We continue to prepare a braod slate of new leaders for potential elevation.

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

1) Ongoing education to leaders and managers regarding inclusive leadership
2) Continuing to improve retention and mentorship
3) continuing to elevate a broad slate of new leaders

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?

The firm recommends that candidates look for an environment where they feel comfortable to learn and grow as an attorney, and for an environment that celebrates everyone. They should look at the nature of a firm's engagement with external groups and organizations, their to pro bono work, and to issues impacting our local under-served communities.

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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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