

NO GLASS CEILING TASK FORCE OF SACRAMENTO

Breaking the Glass Ceiling 2006

Core Purpose: Participation, retention and advancement of women at all levels of the legal profession in Sacramento.

The Commitments

On behalf of my law firm/legal department/governmental entity, I commit to taking concrete action to achieve the following objectives:

1. Involvement of female attorneys in all aspects of leadership and senior management positions by January 1, 2008 (e.g., striving to have female chairpersons or managing partners, either firm wide or in one or more branch offices, as well as female leaders of departments, practice groups, client service teams, or the like).
2. Representation of women at the shareholder/partnership (equity and income) level in law firms by January 1, 2008 to at least the following:
 - (1) 15% of partners for firms consisting of 5-10 attorneys;
 - (2) 20% of partners for firms consisting of 11-29 attorneys; and
 - (3) 25% of partners for firms consisting of 30 or more attorneys.
3. A pro-rata increase in the percentage of women participating in management, which includes, but is not limited to, holding the position of managing partner, committee chair membership on executive, financial or compensation committees, and head of a practice group or department. For public sector and corporate legal departments, achieve representation of women at the senior attorney level to at least 25% by January 1, 2008.
4. Development and implementation of objective and unbiased criteria and procedures for evaluation and promotion of women to management positions.¹
5. Equal retention rates of male and female attorneys, especially in the third through eighth years of practice, by January 1, 2008.
6. Adoption of part-time and flexible work policies for all attorneys, including within those policies part time and flexible work policies for partners. The policies should be adopted in consultation with those who would benefit from the policies. The policies should be designed so that they present a fair and viable option to those who might consider availing themselves of the

¹ (See ABA commission on Women in the Profession, Fair Measure: Toward Effective Attorney Evaluations (1997).

policies. Firms that already have policies in place should commit to reviewing those policies every two years taking into consideration the views of those who have benefited and/or may benefit from such policies.

7. Adoption by January 1, 2008 of a parental leave or equivalent leave policy that allows for an attorney, after the birth or adoption of his or her child, to take a leave of absence for a period not less than twelve full weeks, (with no loss of or increase in cost for health benefits) to care for the child. This leave policy will allow the attorney to return to work in the same or equivalent position upon the expiration of leave. To the extent permitted by law, paid leave shall be provided to any attorney who has been employed for at least three and one-half years prior to commencing leave, such that, integrated with available state disability (SDI), state paid family leave (PFL) and/or other available compensation, including but not limited to accrued vacation or personal time off (PTO), the attorney will receive the equivalent of a full salary for a minimum period of six weeks while on leave.

8. Reduction of gender bias through better communication. Obtain feedback from employees on their assessment of gender issues in the workplace, either in face-to-face discussions or through written comments. Distribute written information and/or conduct at least one formal program designed to raise awareness about and address subconscious stereotypes and perceptions of gender bias and related issues. Participation in this process should be mandatory for all attorneys, and should focus on increasing communication and tolerance for different perspectives, and on finding solutions.

9. Increased business and professional development. Offer formal and informal networking opportunities, client development activities, and mentoring programs that include woman attorneys at all levels, to establish women's professional profiles and to develop client bases. Identify and promote opportunities to involve female attorneys in challenging projects, key client development and relationship positions, organizational committees, practice groups and management training that include women at all levels so that women assume significant leadership and management roles within their law firms or law departments.

10. Broadcast the message that senior management of the organization embraces these Commitments. Provide information on the organization's web site and to the National Association of Law Placement and Women Lawyers of Sacramento² regarding the number and percentage of women attorneys serving in management positions and the number and gender of part-time associates and partners at the firm or organization.

Firm or Entity: _____

By _____
Print Name: _____ Title: _____

Date: _____

² <http://www.nalp.org/>
<http://www.womenlawyers-sacramento.org/>