

CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION CALL TO ACTION
BEST PRACTICES FOR ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH COMMITMENTS

Signatories to the Call to Action may find it helpful to implement some or all of the initiatives listed below in connection with their efforts to meet their commitments under the Chicago Bar Association Call to Action.

1. Leaders should be committed to the goals and objectives of the Call to Action. The goals and objectives of the Call to Action should become an important part of the organization's mission and strategic plan. Firm and practice group leaders and all partners should be held accountable for meeting the goals and objectives with regard to the Call to Action. The most effective accountability tools involve a direct tie to compensation.
2. There should be an individual or group of people responsible for creating initiatives to achieve the commitments of the Call to Action. This person/team should have resources (time, money and expertise) and authority to implement the strategic plan. Performance measures should be established for each goal or objective and reported to the firm's leadership.
3. Targeted lateral hiring efforts for women attorneys should be implemented. In addition, lateral hiring should be examined so that it does not dilute the percent of women attorneys and women partners.
4. The top 25 clients by revenue of the firm should have women on their legal service teams in the same proportion that women exist in the associate and partner ranks at the firm. Any disparities in representation should be addressed and rectified. Assignments for the top 25 clients of the firm provide the access to high visibility assignments for important clients and powerful partners that are essential for retention and promotion.
5. The firm's flexible hours policy should be examined to determine if:
 - a. it is clear, formal and in writing;
 - b. its existence and availability has been communicated;
 - c. the process by which it can be utilized has been communicated;
 - d. it allows for flexible, not rigid arrangements;
 - e. it is being used (benchmarking to your peers and determining if there are gender disparities in the use);
 - f. it is available to everyone on an equitable basis;
 - g. it is available on a personalized basis;
 - h. it allows a clear path to partnership;
 - i. it provides feedback to those using an alternative schedule on both substantive performance and progression to partnership;
 - j. it subscribes no limit on the duration of their use;
 - k. it is respected by other attorneys at the firm;

- l. it provides for access to reasonable compensation and benefits;
 - m. it provides for access to high quality assignments; and
 - n. it provides for access to important non-billable opportunities.
6. Every firm committee should have proportionate representation by women. Formal succession planning and professional development training should be done for firm committee leadership to ensure that women are “ready now” to take over these key leadership roles.
7. Every practice group should have proportionate representation by women and women partners. Formal succession planning and professional development training should be done for practice group leadership to ensure that women are “ready now” to step into practice group leadership roles.
8. Firm leadership should ensure that each class of partners (equity and non-equity) elected by the firm contains women. The goal should be that the percent of women in each class reflects the same proportion that the firm hires women for entry-level positions.
9. Firm and practice group leadership should commit to informal or formal mentoring that ensures that each associate is mentored not only with respect to substantive skills, but also professional development skills.
10. Firm leadership should review its evaluation system to ensure there are no gender biases and that the system doesn’t result in disproportionate negative impacts on women. Any issues that are discovered should be addressed.
11. Firm leadership should review its compensation system to ensure there are no gender biases and that women’s compensation is proportionate to their representation. Any issues discovered should be addressed.
12. Firm leadership should ensure that there is equal access to and use of material professional development opportunities such as client acquisition efforts, marketing resources and firm resources that support individual attorneys’ outside activities.