



NEWS RELEASES

Barnes & Thornburg Announces Enhanced Firmwide Parental Leave Policy Inclusive Of Attorneys And Non-Lawyer Staff

16-week, 100 percent pay policy sets the bar for ‘one for all’ law firm parental leave policies

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16-week, 100 percent pay policy sets the bar for ‘one for all’ law firm parental leave policies

INDIANAPOLIS – Barnes & Thornburg has rolled out an enhanced parental leave policy, effective January 1, 2019, which helps to set the bar for “one for all” parental leave policies in law firms across the U.S. Under the new policy, all firm employees – legal and non-legal alike – will be provided 16 weeks of parental leave at 100 percent pay. This includes parents who are starting a family through adoption.

“Barnes & Thornburg’s leadership recognizes the importance of providing its most valued asset – its talent – with sufficient time and financial resources to enter into new phases of life with more stability,” said Bob Grand, firm managing partner. “Bottom line, this was a deliberate act to move us toward better and is a transformative moment for our culture – one that will benefit the firm for many years to come.”

The effort to enhance the parental leave policy began in November 2017 during the first meeting of the firm’s Women’s Initiative Task Force (WITF). The WITF, a cross-office attorney and staff committee, was formed to identify opportunities and eliminate barriers impacting the success of our female talent – attorneys and professional staff alike. After months of discussion and due diligence, the WITF put a 16-week, 100

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percent pay policy for all before the firm's management committee for consideration, which was approved by unanimous vote.

"As a mom of two small children, I felt moved to join the Women's Initiative Task Force and to give non-lawyer staff a voice in the firm's strategic planning efforts," said Jennifer Borchelt, a legal administrative assistant at Barnes & Thornburg. "It was evident that a change to our existing parental leave policy should be our initial focus. We did extensive research while developing a proposal, and were unable to find other firms that offered 16 weeks, across the board, to both attorneys and staff. I'm extremely proud of Barnes & Thornburg for taking this leap."

Diversity and inclusion has always been part of Barnes & Thornburg's long-standing core values, fully and deliberately integrated into the way the firm does business – from recruiting to staffing to the assembly of client service teams, procurement, promotion, and advancement.

"This change not only aligns us with similar top-tier policies offered by law firms across the country, but also puts our firm at the forefront of "one for all" law firm parental leave policies," said Julia Gard, chair of Barnes & Thornburg's Intellectual Property Department and the firm's parental leave liaison. "Our new policy is a direct reflection of the firm's commitment to identify opportunities and eliminate barriers that impact the success of all members of the Barnes & Thornburg family."

Barnes & Thornburg has long been recognized for its diversity and inclusion initiatives and strategic focus on wellness, including being named one of the "Best Law Firms for Women" by *Working Mother* magazine in 2018. Last year, the firm was also the winner of the Top Performer and Compass awards by the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, an organization that challenges the legal profession to prepare future generations of diverse talent for the highest positions of leadership.

With more than 600 attorneys and other legal professionals, Barnes & Thornburg is one of the largest law firms in the country. The firm serves clients worldwide from 14 offices in Atlanta, California, Chicago, Delaware, Indiana, Michigan, Minneapolis, Ohio, Texas and Washington, D.C.