

COVID-19: Inclusion Impact

Inequality concerns are often magnified and compounded during trying times. The last recession had a disproportionate negative impact on underrepresented groups in the legal profession, and there is mounting evidence that this crisis may again lead to inequitable outcomes.

As we work through this challenging period, fundamental values of inclusion and diversity must remain central and top of mind.

- Research indicates that the overall impact of this crisis may have a disproportionately negative impact on underrepresented groups in the workplace. See the [below](#) articles that provide further context and background. Leaders should thoughtfully and proactively ensure that diverse professionals within their organizations are effectively supported to prevent long term career-limiting consequences based on this temporary challenge.
- This crisis also underscores the importance of having diverse representation in leadership. Having diversity among those responsible for key talent decisions is vital to ensure that all perspectives and impacts are appropriately considered.
- During trying times, **mentorship and sponsorship** are more important than ever. Though most teams are working remotely, there are many ways to connect. Reach out proactively to colleagues and do not wait for your team to come to you.
- **Organizations will continue to be held accountable for diversity, equity and inclusion post-COVID-19.** To maintain progress toward core D&I goals, we must all be extra vigilant to interrupt potential bias in decision-making; confirm equitable allocation of work, skills development and client contact opportunities; and closely monitor the impact of promotions, redundancies, compensation changes, work arrangements and related measures taken during this time.

FURTHER READING

Impact on Workplace Equality:

- [Impact on Workplace Equality: COVID-19: What Mothers in Your Office Aren't Telling You](#), Catalyst, 9 April 2020
- [Pandemic Could Jeopardize Law Firm Diversity Efforts](#), Law360, 6 April 2020
- [Women And The Frontlines Of COVID-19](#), Forbes, 5 April 2020
- [Coronavirus Layoffs Could Erase Many of Women's Workplace Gains](#), Catalyst, 26 March 2020
- [The Coronavirus Is a Disaster for Feminism: Pandemics affect men and women differently](#), The Atlantic, 19 March 2020
- [How Chief Diversity Officers are steering their Companies through the COVID-19 crisis](#), Forbes, 16 April 2020
- [Coronavirus Is Having an Outsized Impact on Working Moms: The consequences of COVID-19 are already gendered](#), Medium, 10, March 2020
- [How "Neutral" Layoffs Disproportionately Affect Women and Minorities](#), Harvard Business Review, 26 July 2016
- [Unemployment Rising Faster for Women and People of Color](#), Harvard Business Review, 20 April 2020

Mental Health Impact:

- [Parents' stress levels spike as pandemic drags on](#), Axios, 19 April 2020
- [Coronavirus Lockdown Is Taking A Toll On Mental Health, Especially Among Women, Study Finds](#), Forbes, 8 April 2020
- [Homeworking: isolation, anxiety and burnout](#), Financial Times, 15 April 2010
- [Related Study: Is There a Widening Gender Gap in Coronavirus Stress?](#) Kaiser Family Foundation, 6, April 2020
- [Coronavirus: A Look at Gender Differences in Awareness and Actions](#), Kaiser Family Foundation, 20 March 2020

Overall Global Impact on Equality:

- [Policy Brief: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women](#), United Nations, 9 April 2020
- [Why we need women's leadership in the COVID-19 response](#), World Economic Forum, 3 April 2020
- [The coronavirus fallout may be worse for women than men. Here's why](#), World Economic Forum, 12 March 2020
- [Why the Coronavirus Outbreak Could Hit Women Hardest](#), Time, 12 March 2020
- [Coronavirus: Five ways virus upheaval is hitting women in Asia](#), BBC News, 8, March, 2020



Susan F. Eandi
Partner
Labor, Employment & Employee Benefits
Susan.Eandi@bakermckenzie.com



Anna Brown
Director
Global Diversity & Inclusion
Anna.Brown@bakermckenzie.com