

Nixon Peabody launches new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Services Group

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Boston, MA. Nixon Peabody is proud to announce the launch of a new **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Services** offering to provide organizations with the legal, strategic, and practical advice to build more inclusive organizations and create positive impact.

“Our firm has been doing this type of work for a long time, and forming this group came about organically over the past 18 months as a direct response to needs we see with clients and in the marketplace more generally,” said **Stacie Collier**, Nixon Peabody’s Chief Talent Officer and a Labor & Employment partner who co-leads the new group. “Even clients with well-established internal DEI teams are looking for advisors who understand best practices, trends, and larger-scale issues impacting various industries.”

Over the past few years, we have seen a significant increase in the attention and focus companies of all sizes have placed on DEI issues to diversify their leadership, create belonging, reflect increasingly diverse communities, and publicly live their values. A successful DEI program has become a critical business imperative. This has been prompted in large part by a call for greater equity and inclusion during the height of the racial justice movement in 2020, a rise in antisemitism and hate crimes targeting various communities, and the increase in anti-LGBTQ+ legislation across the country.

A wide range of industries and organizations are facing complex challenges as they strive to achieve a more equitable and inclusive environment. For example, the healthcare industry is addressing its history of disparity in medical services and treatment with various minority communities; banking institutions are focused on seeing through their commitments to fund minority-owned businesses; and publicly traded companies are seeking guidance on

diversifying their boards. Nixon Peabody's DEI Strategic Services group brings together a team of attorneys from across practices who can provide an outside perspective and deep understanding of these complex issues. The offering is completely adaptable to an organization's individual needs.

"Having been on the other side, I cannot emphasize enough how necessary this service is," said **Kamau Coar**, a Nixon Peabody Labor & Employment attorney who co-leads DEI Strategic Services. Before joining Nixon Peabody, Kamau was the Chief Legal Officer and Chief Inclusion Officer at a publicly traded international executive search firm. "There's a battle for talent in the marketplace right now, and focusing on these types of issues will help our clients stay competitive in their pursuit of the best people."

The timing for this offering could not be more urgent. Shareholders, customers, and clients are demanding that companies show a commitment to DEI, and employees are holding companies' feet to the fire. Workers are more ready and willing to change companies than at any prior point. The DEI Strategic Services group touches on talent acquisition and retention issues, but the offering also goes far beyond traditional labor and employment issues. It involves privacy on the processing of sensitive personal information, corporate filings that now require human capital disclosures, and how companies view potential mergers and acquisitions. In some cases, this can involve potential litigation following the impacts of how companies implement their DEI programs.

The firm's attorneys go beyond simply analyzing compliance with legal requirements, working with clients to build programs from the ground up, responding effectively to rapid developments in their organizations, and proposing solutions. For instance, Nixon Peabody attorneys recently advised an international fast food franchisor on revamping its franchisee program to open greater opportunities for diverse franchisees, and reduce or eliminate barriers to franchise ownership.

"Our work with the franchisor is a great example of the intersection of our existing legal skills and experience, while including an important DEI dimension," said **Kendal Tyre**, co-leader of Nixon Peabody's Franchising & Distribution practice and a DEI Strategic Services co-leader. "The bottom line is that DEI considerations impact every aspect of a business on a granular level—and it affects every industry. Our involvement enables us to help clients wherever they are on their DEI journey."

Elsewhere, Nixon Peabody's attorneys recently helped a nationally recognized law school develop a diversity action plan and assisted a hospital system in developing a diversity plan to ensure no disparities in patient care for minority patient populations. The group also drafted a "how-to" guide for a supplier diversity program, developed presentations on promoting greater gender inclusion post-pandemic—due to the disproportionate impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on women in the workforce—and developed affirmative action plans and programs, among several other services.

Nixon Peabody has long been a leading voice in diversifying the legal profession and is actively building a firm that reflects its people, its clients, and the communities they serve. [Click here to learn more about Nixon Peabody's DEI Strategic Services offering.](#)

