

THE TIMES

28th November 2016

City law firm launches first transgender policy

One of the City of London's biggest law firms has claimed to be the first in the Square Mile to launch a policy on gender transitioning for its employees and lawyers.

Hogan Lovells, the transatlantic practice with 1,500 staff in London and Birmingham, said the 11-page policy was designed "to ensure appropriate support is provided for transitioning individuals and their colleagues".

In an announcement on Friday, the firm told London staff and lawyers that several members of its senior management team had undertaken "transinclusion" training, which covers advice on how to inform colleagues and clients that a staff member has transitioned and also tutelage in "appropriate language". It is understood that the policy includes a list of 25 definitions covering transgender issues.

A Hogan Lovells spokeswoman said that the policy so far only applied to the firm's London office and not its sister headquarters in Washington. The firm has 45 offices around the world outside London, including in jurisdictions such as Dubai where homosexuality and gender transitioning are illegal. As far as the firm was aware, there were no transgender staff currently working at its London office, the spokeswoman added.

Ruth Grant, the chairwoman of Hogan Lovells' diversity and inclusion committee, said: "We recognise that our success as a global firm depends on our ability to attract and retain the brightest and to foster a work environment where people of all backgrounds and experiences can reach their full potential.

"Recognising the qualities and strengths required throughout the transitioning process, we are committed to supporting our people who wish to transition and to ensuring that their work and personal wellbeing are maintained throughout their transition."

Rachel Reese, the trans-lawyer representative on the Law Society's LGBT committee, welcomed the move, saying that Hogan Lovells had "spent a great deal of time and effort training many staff members in regards to trans-inclusivity". As to whether the firm's policy was the first in the City, Reese said: "No one can truly know that." But she praised the firm as being "ahead of the curve".