



# INSIGHTS INTO THE LEGAL WORKPLACE

**NELSON**  
WORKPLACE 2023



PERKINS COIE, CHICAGO, IL

## a guide for a new WORLD

The world of work has undergone tremendous change in the last three years. During that time, NELSON has designed 1.5 million square feet of legal workspace for 28 different law firms. Fundamental to our approach has been asking questions that push beyond the borders of a particular project: Rather than responding solely to requests for design services, we explore firm objectives, operational methods, and culture to develop solutions that truly respond to deep organizational needs.

This has given us a unique perspective on what makes a successful legal workplace. We have distilled that knowledge into five core insights that can guide firms as they think about creating contemporary workplaces.



# core insights into the contemporary LEGAL WORKPLACE

**01**

## **FORMALIZED FLEXIBILITY**

We are now seeing more creative ways to address individual office space in order to support more equitable office cultures and reduce the real estate footprint.

**03**

## **ENTERTAINMENT-FORWARD**

More spaces for events and large meetings that offer a variety of seating options and even have alcohol on tap are being prioritized.

**05**

## **21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY**

Increased virtual client meetings and court appearances require spaces that offer one-touch connectivity, A/V technology, and flexible furniture options to create a successful environment for the legal firm of the future.

**02**

## **AGE OF INDIVIDUALITY**

How firms support and celebrate their individual cultures, clients, and employees is now top of mind. It's the people that make the company and the office is a tool to express that belief.

**04**

## **FRESH LOOK AT AMENITIES**

Creating an office that attracts and retains the best talent requires first-class amenities.





01

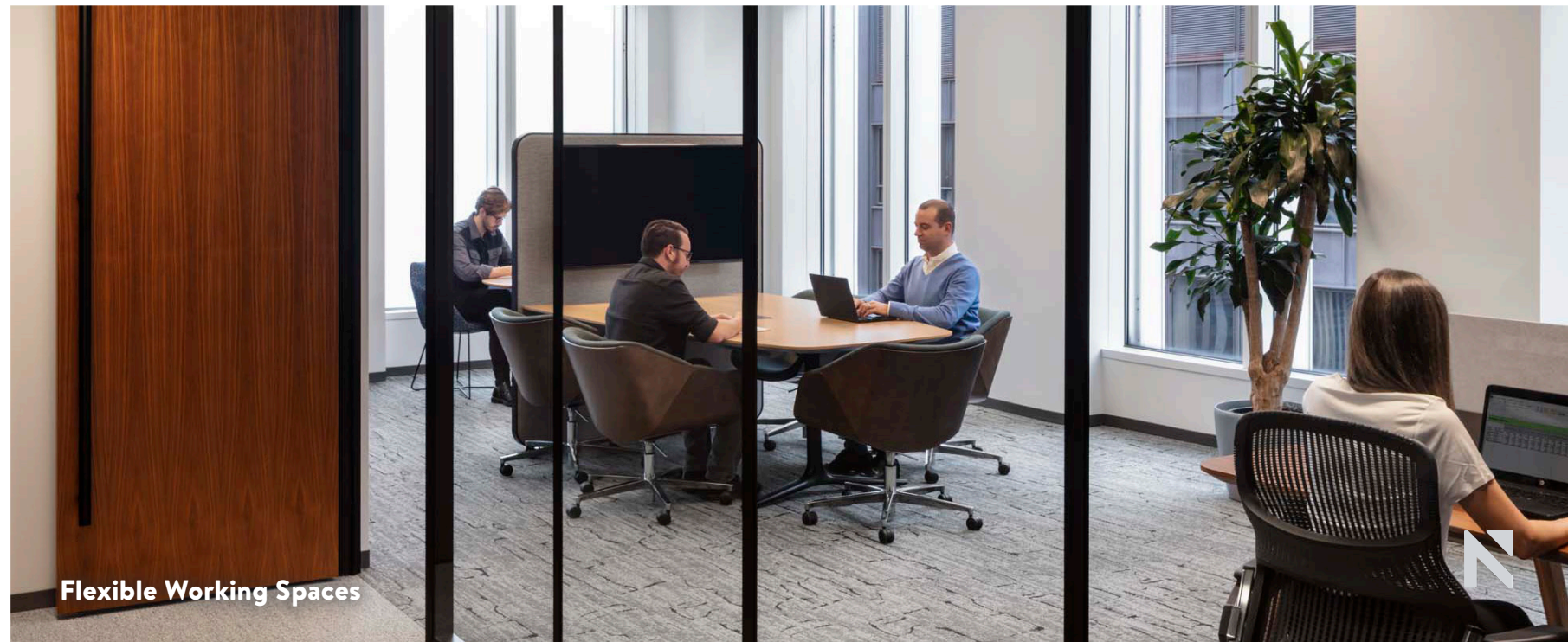
## FORMALIZED FLEXIBILITY

Firms are now committing to flexible work schedules and incorporating these strategies into policy, making it harder to justify one seat to every person. We are seeing more creative solutions to individual office space that support more equitable office cultures and reduce the real estate footprint.

Options we are seeing firms experiment with: giving every employee access to an unassigned private office, doubling associates up two people to one office, utilizing areas of the office to function more like flexible working spaces for those who are more transient, and even going back to the hub and spoke model where a firm retains a smaller office in a large city center with all of the amenities but then has additional office space in areas nearer their attorney populations, where real estate tends to be more affordable.



# A LOOK AT FORMALIZED FLEXIBILITY





02

## AGE OF INDIVIDUALITY

Rather than comparing themselves to others, firms are now focusing on supporting and celebrating their individual culture, clients, and employees. Design solutions can include increasingly personalized spaces that allow control of acoustics, temperature, lighting, and posture while still adhering to overall standards.

The legal office is also borrowing from hotel lobby and airport lounge functions with bespoke details such as branded environmental graphics, curated accessories, rugs, lighting, and sound settings to make the office feel like home while maintaining a cohesive aesthetic and giving employees choice.



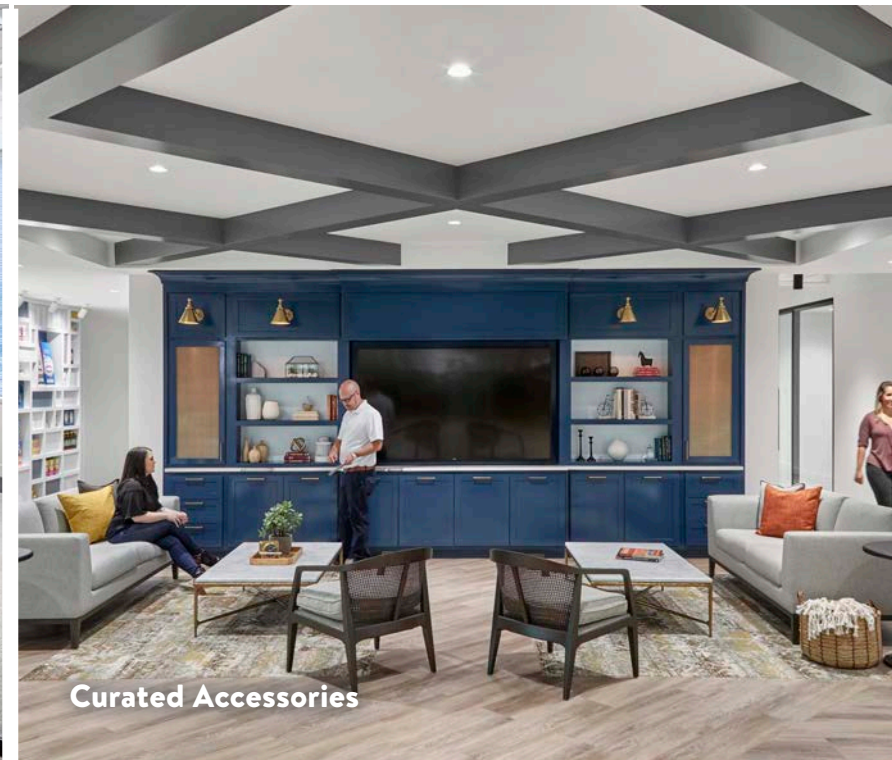
# A LOOK AT THE AGE OF INDIVIDUALITY



Hotel/Lounge Function



Personalized Workspaces



Curated Accessories



Workplace Choice



### 03

## ENTERTAINMENT-FORWARD

Formalized meeting spaces have morphed into larger scale, multi-use spaces for internal and external events. These spaces can have the capacity to hold 200+ people with a variety of seating types and feature movable walls, and softer details like rugs, drapery, decorative lighting and background music. Proximity to employee cafe spaces, coffee service, and outdoor space is key.

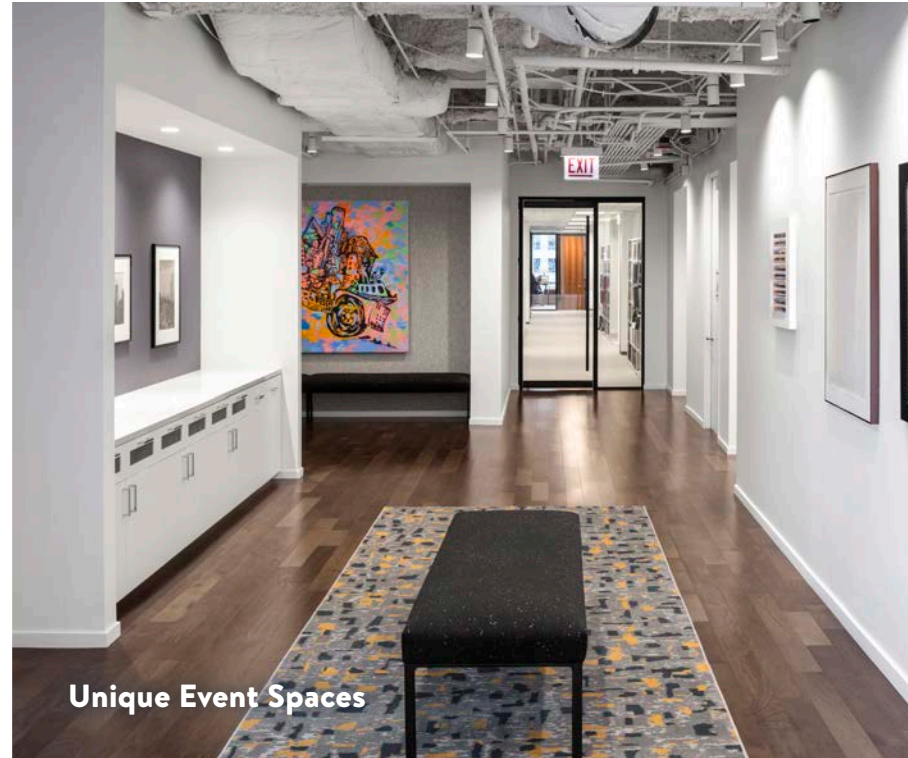




# A LOOK AT ENTERTAINMENT-FORWARD SPACES



Large Capacity, Multipurpose Spaces



Unique Event Spaces



Softer Details



Outdoor Space Proximity



TWO22 SOUTH 9TH STREET, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

04

## A FRESH LOOK AT OFFICE AMENITIES

Attorneys prefer spaces that borrow from hospitality settings that emulate their favorite coffee shop, or give a law library feel, where they can work alone but amongst others. Within these spaces, access to natural light and natural views is often prized.

Since the coffee shops and cafes that once serviced crowded urban areas are still hard to come by, firms are going back to offering food and drink within their office space. This includes small-scale warming pantries or areas for soups, sandwiches and small plates, staffed coffee bars, more robust self-service options, and warmed food lockers for delivery services to drop off.

We are also seeing an increase in office concierge service offerings like dry cleaning, room set-up and scheduling assistance, as well as access to wellness rooms that can be used for stretching, praying, napping.



# A FRESH LOOK AT OFFICE AMENITIES





05

## 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

It's more than "Zoom rooms" with better acoustics, lighting and furniture arrangements. We are designing upgraded spaces for virtual court appearances with one-touch connectivity, proper acoustics, microphones, lighting, green screens and height-adjustable surfaces and technology. Mock trial rooms feature cameras and screens on walls, movable furniture, and holograms for more realistic experiences.



# A LOOK AT 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGY



Height-Adjustable Equipment



Virtual Courtroom Experience



One-Touch Connectivity



Future Forward Tech



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## your firm, your GOALS

These are the major trends that we have been seeing, but there's something else we are telling clients across the board: There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Your needs are unique to you, and the best solutions will also be unique. With these insights as a starting point, we can help you navigate the ever-evolving and increasingly consequential world of work.



# THANK

# YOU.

**Holly Williamson**  
NCIDQ, LEED AP  
National Design Leader, Workplace  
646 680 8822  
[HWilliamson@nelsonww.com](mailto:HWilliamson@nelsonww.com)

**Kristin Cerutti**  
NCIDQ, LEED AP ID+C, WELL AP  
Legal Workplace Design Leader  
312 578 5334  
[KCerutti@nelsonww.com](mailto:KCerutti@nelsonww.com)

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