

ConnecticutLawTribune

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So Long, New York: Big Law Attorneys Are Seeking Jobs in Connecticut to Flee the Pandemic

As the pandemic enters its eighth month, statistics show more and more New Yorkers are leaving for Connecticut. That's also true for Big Law attorneys, who are sending their resumes to Connecticut.

By Robert Storage | November 11, 2020



Andy Corea, incoming managing partner at Murtha Cullina, and Laurie Mallach, chief talent officer at Day Pitney. Courtesy photos

Lawyers from Big Law in New York City are sending their resumes in droves to Connecticut firms, such as Murtha Cullina and Day Pitney.

The migration of New York City residents to Connecticut since the COVID-19 pandemic has skyrocketed, and that's also been the trend with attorneys. In the first three months of the pandemic, nearly 10,000 New Yorkers moved to Connecticut, representing an eightfold increase over the same time period in 2019, according to the CT Mirror (<https://ctmirror.org/category/ct-viewpoints/new-york-is-losing-its-young-people-is-connecticut-gaining-them-jessica-freedman/>).

That's also translated into resumes to some of the top law firms in the Nutmeg State.

Andy Corea (https://www.murthalaw.com/our_people/andy-corea), incoming managing partner at Murtha Cullina in New Haven, said his firm has had "two to three times more quality resumes from New York City since the pandemic." Corea declined to say exactly how many resumes the firm had received because it keeps employment and hiring practices confidential.

Similarly, Day Pitney, the state's largest law firm, has also seen an uptick in job candidates since the pandemic.

"We are all seeing a bigger surge of New York City-trained lawyers coming into the Connecticut market," said Laurie Mallach (<https://www.daypitney.com/professionals/m/mallach-laurie>), chief talent officer at Day Pitney. "For those from New York City who want more of a New England feel, they can work out of our Hartford or New Haven offices. For those who want to stay close to the city, they can work out of our Stamford offices."

Areas of opportunities

So why the migration toward Connecticut?

Mallach cites several reasons. "Very good schools, more space, and people know they can still get challenging work in Connecticut with a sophisticated client base," she said.

Plus, the billing rates are substantially lower, and clients can benefit from that, Corea said.

"About eight months of working remotely has shown some attorneys that they don't need to be physically in New York City to thrive," Corea said. "Meetings are being done remotely, and business development is being done remotely, and people are communicating by video links. They are comfortable with their clients, and can continue to succeed even when they don't have that physical presence in Manhattan."

Both Day Pitney and Murtha Cullina are hiring and will look for the best New York City has to offer, Mallach and Corea said.

And Mallach, who grew up in New Rochelle, New York, and once lived in Brooklyn, has found New York City attorneys, in general, "have a very strong work ethic, strong training and some diversity in the work" they've handled.

"We have a number of opportunities and are looking for people," she said. "COVID has put some practice areas front and center."

Areas of opportunities include corporate law, because of an "uptick in donors and investors with sales of distressed businesses," Mallach said. Trusts and estates are also thriving.

Mallach said, "People are planning for their future, based on current events like COVID."

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Big Law Is Doing Better Than Expected—But Mostly Because Businesses Are Tanking

(<https://www.law.com/ctlawtribune/2020/10/02/big-law-is-doing-better-than-expected-but-mostly-because-businesses-are-tanking/>)