

American Lawyer Features KattenFlex Workplace Return Program

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American Lawyer spoke with Chief Executive Officer Noah Heller, Private Credit Chair Michael Jacobson, Chief Talent Officer Melanie Priddy, and Chief Innovation Officer Andrew Sprogis regarding Monday's launch of KattenFlex. Rooted in trust, KattenFlex seeks to help attorneys and business professionals find balance between flexibility and the benefits of in-person collaboration when it comes to returning to the office following COVID-19 remote work.

Noting that it "doesn't feel right" to mandate that everyone must come into the office a set number of days, Noah indicated that Katten seeks to create a workplace that values purposeful use of time together and acknowledges the "different circumstances" attorneys and staff may be facing. He stated, "It's a learn-as-we-go approach, which is built on the trust in our people who are working incredibly hard."

With 2021 was one of its best years ever for the Private Credit team, Michael appreciates how KattenFlex allows for departments to assess their own needs and set requirements accordingly. He added that his group would not have a mandatory office presence. "Just given what people have demonstrated over the last two years, to me it's the best approach right now. Everybody has a different view, there's no consensus."

Melanie stated that "people have never worked harder, honestly," which supports having the administrative teams setting their own office schedules based on support needs. "People appreciate that this is something that works best for their schedules [and] at the same time creating the value and opportunity to come in to remind us that we like each other."

Recognizing the overall impact on Katten's culture, Andrew stated, "We wanted to find a way to make this work for all of us." KattenFlex program is an example of how the firm approaches innovation, adding, "This is cool, right up our alley, because we got the whole firm involved."

["Flexibility Guides Return-to-Office Plan at Katten Muchin,"](#) *American Lawyer*, April 1, 2022

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