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Robinson+Cole celebrates new office opening; design by Studio Alliance

September 20, 2024 - Connecticut



Shown (from left) are: Greg Barats, president and chief executive officer of HSB; Keisha Palmer, office partner in charge, Robinson+Cole; Rhonda Tobin, managing partner, Robinson+Cole; Arunan Arulampalam, mayor, City of Hartford; and Michael Orce, COO, Robinson+Cole

Hartford, CT Robinson+Cole celebrated the opening of its newly relocated Hartford office at One State St., more commonly known as the Hartford Steam Boiler (HSB) Building, on September 5, 2024, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and reception for employees, special guests, and dignitaries, including city of Hartford mayor Arunan Arulampalam and MetroHartford Alliance president and chief

executive officer David Griggs. The largest of the law firm's 11-office national footprint, where more than 200 lawyers and staff are in residence, officially began operating from the new location on August 12, 2024.

Robinson+Cole occupies four of the 24-story building's top floors, which offer panoramic views of the city and the Connecticut River. The stunning sights are strategically enhanced by contemporary glass office fronts that promote light equity, where light seamlessly filters through the space to create a healthier, energizing environment. The firm's design committee worked closely with Studio Alliance, a design and architecture firm that focuses on transforming spaces for the future and employing people-first and vision-centric design strategies.

"Together with Studio Alliance, we've created a bold, sophisticated, and innovative work environment that will enhance collaboration among our people to continue to provide exceptional services to our clients. The new space also embodies our firm culture for now and in the future," said Robinson+Cole managing partner Rhonda Tobin. "This move represents more than just a new address and a change of scenery. We set out to design an environment that embraces and amplifies our core values of collaboration, civility, and inclusion. The result is a vibrant office space that supports modern law firm life while celebrating Robinson+Cole's storied history, which is especially exciting as we begin our 180th year in the city of Hartford. We have already seen a surge of energy and engagement in our new space, with more people opting to work from the office."

The HSB Building is centrally located in the business district of downtown, among some of the city's best restaurants and attractions. In addition, the U.S Green Building Council has awarded the building the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification. Robinson+Cole's office space includes modernized electrical and mechanical systems to increase efficiency and contribute to LEED standards.

Like Robinson+Cole, HSB, a specialty insurer and provider of technology services, is a historic Hartford business founded in 1866. Both businesses have called Hartford home for more than 150 years. "It's wonderful to have an exceptional law firm like Robinson+Cole be a part of One State Street, especially given our long shared history in the City of Hartford," said Greg Barats, president and chief executive officer of HSB, part of Munich Re. "I'm thrilled to welcome the firm, and its employees, and look forward to continuing to enhance the vibrancy of the building."

Robinson+Cole's new Hartford office include workspaces that facilitate seamless remote and on-site collaboration and team building while also promoting focused work. For example, while the glass front offices offer a contemporary aesthetic and promote light equity, in an effort to alleviate potential distraction and disruption, sound masking was used in the hallways and each office employs "busylight" technology, which indicates whether a colleague is available to connect based on the selected light color displaying from their space. There are conference rooms, huddle spaces and day offices supportive of the firm's hybrid work model through the use of technology, such as a mobile app-based digital room reservation system and Zoom rooms that give virtual meeting

participants the appearance that they are in a shared space when conferencing due to the size and shape of the room, table and chair configuration, and acoustician-certified sound. In addition, because community involvement is a cornerstone of Robinson+Cole's culture with many of its lawyers and staff members contributing their time, energy, and talents to help serve the interests of numerous organizations and activities, modern, flexible conference center space was essential to the office design to enable the firm to host more internal, client, industry, and community organization events. For example, the Pro Bono Partnership's Hartford program, which offers business and transactional legal services to nonprofits, and the Lawyers Collaborative for Diversity, a nonprofit organization that works to increase diversity in the legal profession in Connecticut and western Massachusetts, continue to reside in Robinson+Cole's Hartford office.

As exemplified by the focus on light equity, employee well-being was also at the forefront of Robinson+Cole's office design, with an emphasis placed on creating an enticing work environment for all lawyers and staff. Every workstation includes sit-to-stand desks. There are café-like pantry areas equipped with fridges stocked with various beverages, convenient bottle fillers, high-end coffee machines, and a bistro-style café furnished with cozy booths, high tops, and community tables enveloped by river views. A large installation by Connecticut-based artist Donald Martiny evokes the firm's core values of collaboration and inclusion upon entering Robinson+Cole's reception space.

Robinson+Cole is also excited to provide employees with other amenities extending beyond the floors it occupies in the building, including a full-service cafeteria, newly renovated health club, daycare center, and golf simulator. The firm is looking forward to the addition of an exciting new restaurant in the building later in the year.

Robinson+Cole was recognized as a 2024 Best Places to Work in Connecticut by the Hartford Business Journal. In addition, the firm continues to be top-ranked in Vault's Best Law Firms to Work For and has ranked among Vault's top 30 law firms in the categories of Firm Culture, Technology & Innovation, Transparency, and Wellness for the past four years.

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