

PARALEGALS AND LEGAL ASSISTANTS

Paralegals and legal assistants do a variety of tasks to support lawyers, including maintaining and organizing files, conducting legal research, and drafting documents.

DUTIES

Paralegals and legal assistants typically do the following:

- Investigate the facts of a case
- Conduct research on relevant laws, regulations, and legal articles
- Organize and present the information
- Keep information related to cases or transactions in computer databases
- Write reports to help lawyers prepare for trials
- Draft correspondence and other documents, such as contracts and mortgages
- Get affidavits and other formal statements that may be used as evidence in court
- Help lawyers during trials

Paralegals and legal assistants help lawyers prepare for hearings, trials, and corporate meetings. However, their specific duties may vary depending on the size of the firm or organization.

Law firms increasingly use technology and computer software for managing documents and preparing for trials. Paralegals use computer software to draft and index documents and prepare presentations. In addition, paralegals must be familiar with electronic database management and be up to date on the latest software used for electronic discovery. Electronic discovery refers to all electronic materials that are related to a trial, such as emails, data, documents, accounting databases, and websites.

Paralegals can assume more responsibilities by specializing in areas such as litigation, personal injury, corporate law, criminal law, employee benefits, intellectual property, bankruptcy, immigration, family law, and real estate. In addition, experienced paralegals may assume supervisory responsibilities, such as overseeing team projects or delegating work to other paralegals. Paralegal tasks may differ depending on the type of department or the size of the law firm they work for.

The following are examples of types of paralegals:

- **Corporate paralegals** often help lawyers prepare employee contracts, shareholder agreements, stock-option plans, and companies' annual financial reports. Corporate paralegals may monitor and review government regulations to ensure that the corporation is aware of new legal requirements.



SALARY INFORMATION

| Location | 2018 | | | | |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 10% | 25% | Median | 75% | 90% |
| California | \$32,450 | \$42,870 | \$58,110 | \$76,950 | \$97,350 |

*Pay period based on yearly amount.

EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK



Stable growth rate is estimated to be **18%**

3,790 estimated annual job openings

- **Litigation paralegals** maintain documents received from clients, conduct research for lawyers, and retrieve and organize evidence for use at depositions and trials.

RELATED OCCUPATIONS

Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products
Licensing Examiners and Inspectors
Tax Preparers
Lawyers ☀️
Judicial Law Clerks
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers
Court Clerks
Municipal Clerks
Loan Interviewers and Clerks
Legal Secretaries

