

Paralegal

Paralegals are educated and/or experienced support staff who work under the supervision and direction of attorneys. They draft documents, manage case files, conduct legal research, work with clients and the court system, and are trained in the ethics of the legal profession. They do not practice law, give legal advice, or engage in any activities that violate the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Sample Job Titles

- Legal Assistant
- Litigation or Judicial Assistant

Required Skills

- Excellent written and spoken communication and technology skills
- Ability to work independently and collectively
- Professional legal experience
- Strong work ethic, team player
- Knowledge of basic court rules, computers, drafting, general law office duties (typing, filing, scanning, mailing, drafting, etc.)

Getting the Job: Required Degrees, Licensing and/or Certifications

- Accepted: Associate's degree or several years' experience as legal administrative assistant
- Preferred: Bachelor's degree

Salary and Outlook

- Average Salary:
 - National: \$47,000 annually (\$22.60/hour)
 - Idaho: \$33,009 annually (\$15.87/hour)
- Job Growth: 17% (faster than average)

Frequently Asked Advisory Questions/Notes

- ***As a paralegal, can I open up an office and advise people on their cases?*** No, paralegals are engaging in the unauthorized practice of law if they do so.
- ***Will this make me a lawyer once I am done?*** No, to become a lawyer you will need to go to law school for another 3 years and then take a state bar examination to become licensed to practice.
- ***Does being a paralegal mean I have to do secretarial work like type and file?*** Yes, all legal professionals—lawyers, paralegals, and legal administrative assistants alike—have to type and file. Case files are the lawyer's primary tool and legal support personnel are charged with the responsibility of capably maintaining them.