



SALARY GUIDE 2026 • FOR JOB SEEKERS

# Legal

What legal professionals are asking to be paid, and how to use it to get paid what you're worth.

**\$82K**

Typical ask for a Paralegal

**22%**

Are looking for growth or a next step

**76%**

Would work fully in the office

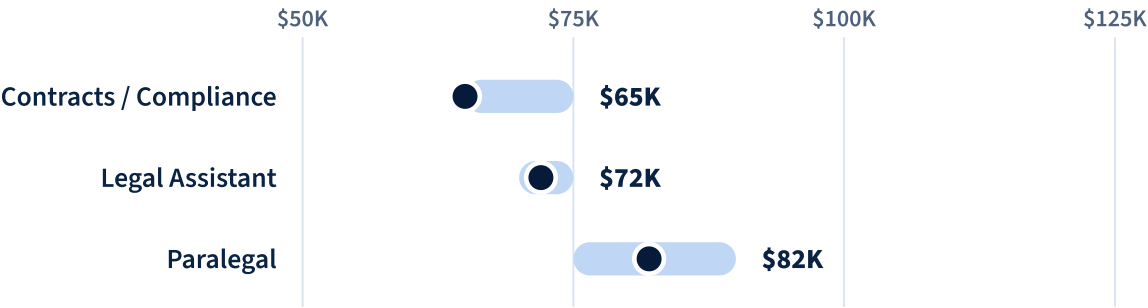
**92**

Candidates behind this guide

Built from 92 NorthPoint Search Group candidate questionnaires and job applications (January 2025 – October 2026) and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

# What they're asking to be paid

Desired base salary, from 40 candidates who told us what they want in their next role. The bar is the middle half of answers. The dot is the typical ask (the median).



Most people set their lowest number close to their ask. A Paralegal asking \$82K says the lowest they'd take is about \$75K. Decide your own floor before the first call.

| TITLE                       | ANSWERS | MIDDLE HALF   | TYPICAL ASK | LOWEST THEY'D TAKE |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Contracts / Compliance      | 5       | \$65K – \$75K | \$65K       | —                  |
| Legal Assistant / Secretary | 5       | \$70K – \$75K | \$72K       | —                  |
| Paralegal                   | 30      | \$75K – \$90K | \$82K       | \$75K              |

## Government numbers for comparison

Median annual pay, metro Atlanta, May 2025 (BLS). These include every experience level, so they can run lower than what experienced candidates ask for.

|                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Lawyers                         | \$138,210 |
| Compliance officers             | \$72,810  |
| Paralegals and legal assistants | \$64,080  |
| Legal secretaries               | \$60,100  |

## How to read this

Asking pay is base salary only, before bonus and benefits. Titles with fewer than 5 answers aren't shown. About 39% of candidates who gave a location are in Georgia; the rest are spread across the U.S.

WHERE THEY'LL WORK

# Most will come to the office

From 38 candidates. They could pick every setup they'd accept.



76% would work fully in the office and 74% would work hybrid. Say what you'll accept in your first message, so nobody has to guess.

TURNOVER

# How often people leave

Departures per 100 jobs in a year (all separations, 2025), from the BLS Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey.



## How long people stay

Median years with their current employer, January 2026 (BLS).

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Legal occupations | 4.3 years |
| All occupations   | 4.1 years |

## What that means for you

At professional services employers, about 55 of every 100 jobs come open over a year. At the average private employer, about 43. People leave all year long, so new openings keep coming, not just in January.

A year is 12 times the average monthly rate. It counts departures, so one seat can turn over more than once.

## Five ways to get paid what you're worth

### 1. Know your number.

Find your title in the pay table. Ask near the typical ask, and decide the lowest number you'd take before the first call. Most people set a floor close to their ask: a Paralegal asking \$82K says the lowest they'd take is about \$75K.

### 2. Ask about the path, not just the pay.

22% are looking for growth. Ask what the next title is, who you'd learn from, and what you'd own.

### 3. Say where you'll work.

76% would work fully in the office and 74% would work hybrid. Put what you'll accept in your first message.

### 4. Lead with your systems.

Put your practice-management and e-filing systems near the top of your résumé, where a hiring manager will see it in seconds.

### 5. Go to the hiring manager.

When you apply online, your résumé goes to HR first. Find the person you'd work for and send a short note with a 30-second video intro.

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## Don't just apply. Connect.

When you apply online, your résumé goes to HR, not the hiring manager. With MyZipApply you record a 30-second video intro, find the hiring managers at the companies you want, and our AI writes your outreach. You send it. Then MyZipApply reminds you to follow up on day 3, 7 and 14.

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## METHOD AND SOURCES

Pay, reasons, work setup and software come from screening questionnaires and job applications that candidates completed for NorthPoint Search Group between January 29, 2025 and October 1, 2026: 92 people, newest form per person. Pay figures are desired base salary for the titles shown; the middle half is the 25th to 75th percentile, rounded to \$500. Groups with fewer than 5 answers are left out, and no individual answer is shown.

- BLS Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, 2025 annual averages (released March 13, 2026), Tables 20 and 22.
- BLS Employee Tenure, median years with current employer by occupation, January 2026, Table 6.
- BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2025, Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA.