



2015 National Utilization and Compensation Survey Report

Section 4 Compensation

*Based on Data Collected:
4th Quarter 2014*

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NALA
2015 National Utilization and Compensation Survey Report

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**Section 4
Compensation**

This section provides the findings of NALA Utilization and Compensation Survey related to paralegal salaries and compensation (defined as base salary plus bonus). This section also provides responses to questions regarding benefits available to paralegals.

In consideration of this, or any data relating to compensation, keep in mind that average, or mean, values are presented. At best, these values only approximate real world situations. Data describing salary and compensation vary by many factors, most notably experience, geographic location, and size of firm. Therefore, the numbers are most useful for charting professional trends and changes rather than for direct comparison to any specific situation or person.

In this report, the data describing compensation is presented in relation to geographic location, educational backgrounds, size of firm, experience and years with current employer. The following table provides information about the relationships of these factors to salary and compensation levels. To understand this table, the highest possible relationship expressed in terms of a correlation coefficient is .99, indicating that a relationship between two factors is almost indistinguishable. Likewise, a correlation coefficient of .00 indicates that two factors are not related at all. A test of statistical significance was not conducted on these correlations.

**Table 4.1
Correlations to Salary and Compensation
of Factors Relating to Respondents Demographics**

Factor	Correlation to Salary	Correlation to Compensation
Population of City	.161	.158
Years on Current Job	.136	.153
Years of Experience	.255	.256
Size of Firm - Number of Attorneys	.128	.111
Size of Firm - Number of Paralegals	.094	.089
CP Credential	-.169	-0.15
Advanced Certified Paralegal Credential	.117	.141
Level of General Education	.185	.158

**Table 4.2
Compensation, and Bonus
Average Values Survey Years 2014-2002**

Year	Total Comp	Salary	Bonus
2014	\$58,410	\$55,188	\$4,581
2012	\$57,388	\$54,376	\$4,501
2010	\$54,755	\$52,188	\$3,093
2008	\$50,953	\$48,211	\$3,808
2004	\$46,862	\$44,373	\$3,393
2002	\$46,074	\$43,002	\$2,909

Table 4.3
Average Salary and Compensation by Professional Activity

Activity	Average Salary	Average Compensation*
NALA Member	\$55,360	\$58,923
Non Member	\$54,334	\$57,090
CP Certification	\$56,516	\$59,660
Non CLA	\$51,805	\$55,187
ACP Certification	\$66,051	\$73,321
Non Advanced Certified	\$54,273	\$57,340
National Average	\$55,188	\$58,410

*Compensation is computed by adding salary and bonus amounts.

Table 4.4
Schedule of Increases (N=1056)

Schedule	Responses	Percentage
Every three months	1	0%
Every six months	7	1%
Once a year	688	65%
No set schedule	303	29%

Table 4.5
Annual Salary Ranges- General Findings

Range	Responses	Percentage
Less than 20,000	27	3%
20,001 - 25,000	15	1%
25,001 - 30,000	26	2%
30,001 - 35,000	54	5%
35,001 - 40,000	90	9%
40,001 - 45,000	106	10%
45,001 - 50,000	128	12%
50,001 - 55,000	117	11%
55,001 - 60,000	126	12%
60,001 - 65,000	80	8%
65,001 - 70,000	87	8%
70,001 - 75,000	69	7%
75,001 - 80,000	36	3%
> 80,000	83	8%

Table 4.6
Total Compensation Ranges- General Findings

Range	Responses	Percentage
Less than 20,000	27	3%
20,001 - 25,000	13	1%
25,001 - 30,000	21	2%
30,001 - 35,000	43	4%
35,001 - 40,000	71	7%
40,001 - 45,000	100	10%
45,001 - 50,000	120	11%
50,001 - 55,000	108	10%
55,001 - 60,000	119	11%
60,001 - 65,000	92	9%
65,001 - 70,000	77	7%
70,001 - 75,000	70	7%
75,001 - 80,000	56	5%
>80,000	128	12%

Table 4.7
Annual Salary and Compensation by Total Years of Legal Experience

Years	2014 Average Salary	2014 Average Compensation	2014 Responses	2012 Average Salary	2012 Average Compensation	2010 Average Salary	2010 Average Compensation
1 - 5 Years	\$39,653	\$41,150	127	\$37,949	\$38,867	\$37,282	\$38,908
6 - 10 Years	\$49,767	\$52,061	155	\$49,218	\$51,484	\$43,747	\$45,488
11 - 15 Years	\$53,694	\$57,051	129	\$51,850	\$54,347	\$51,227	\$53,948
16 - 20 Years	\$58,489	\$61,622	185	\$55,220	\$58,952	\$54,128	\$57,175
21 - 25 Years	\$59,925	\$62,608	128	\$60,713	\$65,075	\$58,774	\$61,466
Over 25 Years	\$60,875	\$65,393	309	\$61,058	\$64,552	\$59,923	\$63,097

Chart 4.1 (4.7)
Compensation by Years of Experience 2010 and 2012

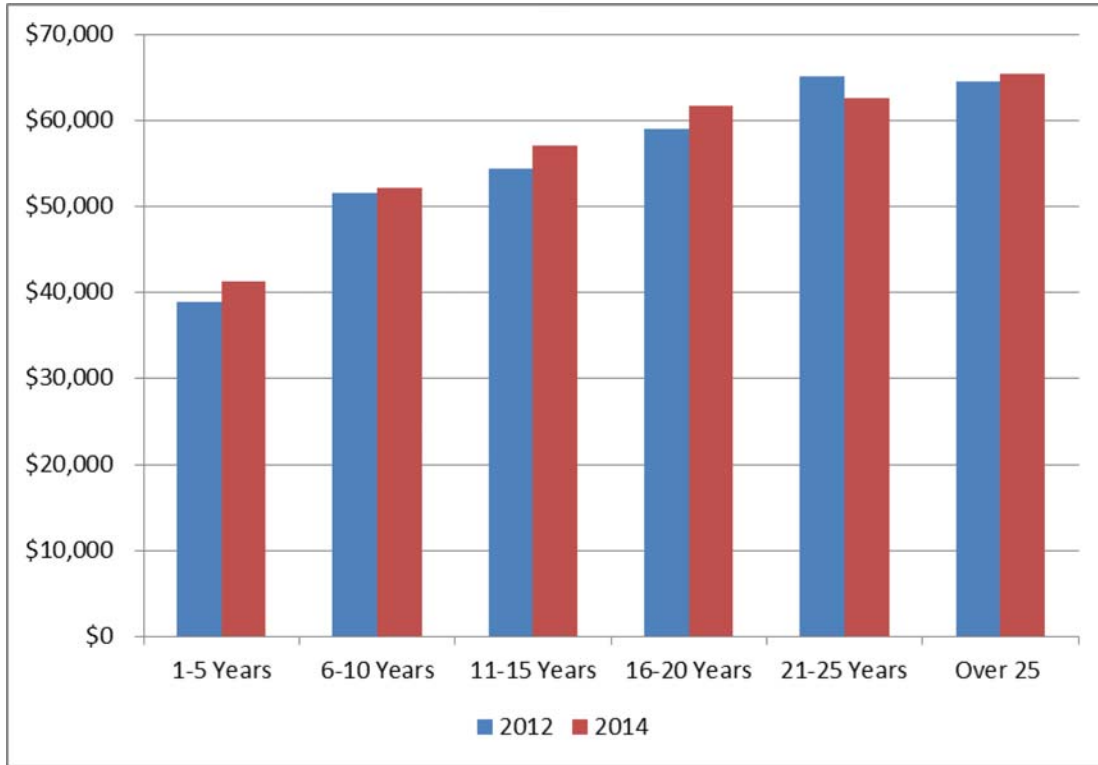


Table 4.8 Annual Salary and Compensation
by Years on Current Job

Years	2014 Average Salary	2014 Average Compensation	2014 Responses	2012 Average Salary	2012 Average Compensation	2010 Average Salary	2010 Average Compensation
1 - 5 Years	\$50,523	\$52,502	460	\$50,219	\$52,719	\$49,008	\$51,592
6 - 10 Years	\$57,265	\$61,192	243	\$56,752	\$60,502	\$53,000	\$55,509
11 - 15 Years	\$59,407	\$63,048	142	\$58,186	\$61,746	\$55,446	\$57,196
16 - 20 Years	\$61,058	\$67,521	103	\$57,359	\$60,139	\$57,002	\$59,289
21-25 Years	\$55,791	\$61,208	37	\$59,672	\$62,219	\$57,612	\$60,834
Over 25 Years	\$62,131	\$65,076	57	\$59,736	\$64,135	\$60,891	\$65,556

Table 4.9
Annual Salary and Compensation by
Type of Paralegal Education

Paralegal Education	Average Salary	Average Compensation	Responses
Undergraduate Certificate	\$56,556	\$60,822	153
Post Baccalaureate Certificate	\$57,282	\$59,818	156
Associate Degree	\$53,506	\$56,087	341
Bachelor Degree	\$50,544	\$53,384	95
Master Degree	\$55,000	\$56,650	2
Other	\$61,308	\$64,126	83
None	\$55,125	\$59,790	209

Table 4.10
Annual Salary and Compensation by
Highest Educational Degree

Highest Educational Degree	Average Salary	Average Total Compensation	Responses
High School	\$54,818	\$59,920	138
Associate Degree	\$54,556	\$57,726	308
Bachelor Degree	\$55,287	\$58,334	500
Master's Degree	\$58,025	\$60,522	80

Table 4.11
Annual Salary and Compensation by Region

Region	2014 Average Salary	2014 Average Compensation	Responses	2012 Average Salary	2012 Average Compensation
Region 1 - New England/East	\$60,835	\$63,396	40	\$51,981	\$54,285
Region 2 - Great Lakes	\$52,035	\$55,223	82	\$54,124	\$56,860
Region 3 - Plains States	\$52,846	\$56,211	142	\$48,876	\$51,697
Region 4 - Southeast	\$53,141	\$56,123	381	\$52,639	\$55,086
Region 5 - Southwest	\$57,208	\$61,097	235	\$58,110	\$62,348
Region 6 - Rocky Mountains	\$56,123	\$60,621	49	\$51,194	\$53,948
Region 7 - Far West	\$61,083	\$63,744	114	\$60,371	\$63,603

Table 4.12
Average Compensation by Region
2014-2004 Data Compared

Region	2014	2012	2010	2008	2004
Region 1 - New England/East	\$63,396	\$54,285	\$46,642	\$52,001	\$51,479
Region 2 - Great Lakes	\$55,223	\$56,860	\$51,183	\$51,001	\$44,415
Region 3 - Plains States	\$56,211	\$51,697	\$51,511	\$46,920	\$42,694
Region 4 - Southeast	\$56,123	\$55,086	\$52,371	\$48,995	\$45,460
Region 5 - Southwest	\$61,097	\$62,348	\$57,754	\$54,227	\$47,709
Region 6 - Rocky Mountains	\$60,621	\$53,948	\$54,032	\$44,175	\$43,609
Region 7 - Far West	\$63,744	\$63,603	\$66,376	\$59,787	\$55,760

Chart 4.2 (4.12)
Total Compensation by Region 2012 and 2014

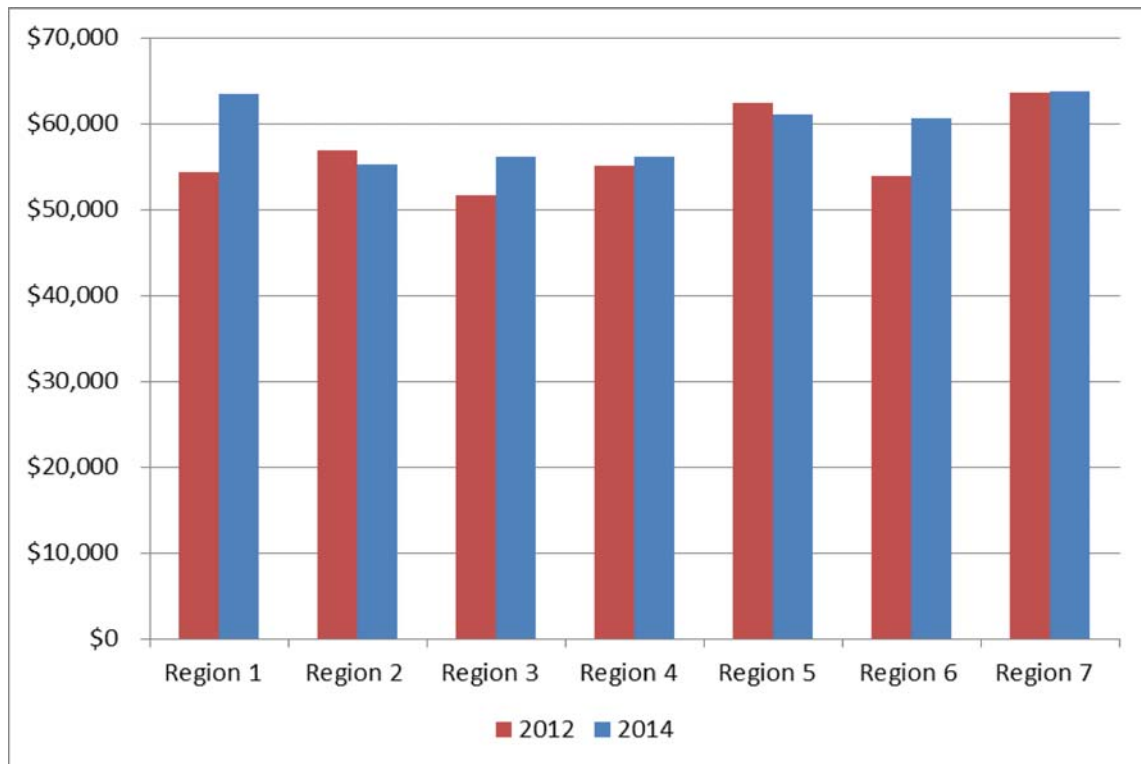


Table 4.13
Annual Salary and Compensation by Number of Attorneys

Number of Attorneys	2014 Average Salary	2014 Average Compensation	Responses	2012 Average Salary	2012 Average Compensation	2010 Average Salary	2010 Average Compensation
Sole	\$51,433	\$55,916	123	\$47,924	\$50,611	\$47,185	\$49,134
2-5 Attorneys	\$53,124	\$56,809	334	\$52,966	\$56,300	\$49,734	\$52,707
6 - 10	\$56,175	\$59,209	183	\$53,245	\$56,278	\$54,939	\$57,823
11 - 15	\$53,446	\$55,463	87	\$55,555	\$58,359	\$51,763	\$53,922
16 - 20	\$59,147	\$61,765	54	\$57,635	\$61,339	\$52,771	\$55,177
21 - 25	\$58,912	\$63,197	47	\$58,407	\$60,664	\$52,514	\$54,687
26 - 30	\$55,686	\$57,462	39	\$63,794	\$67,830	\$56,488	\$55,680
31 - 35	\$60,999	\$62,946	19	\$61,406	\$63,181	\$54,582	\$55,680
36 - 40	\$58,238	\$60,456	16	\$57,654	\$59,675	\$56,303	\$60,050
41 - 45	\$57,193	\$59,175	17	\$56,438	\$61,771	\$54,375	\$58,298
46 - 50	\$51,809	\$54,446	19	\$54,952	\$60,432	\$57,004	\$60,744
51 - 55	\$66,665	\$68,220	10	\$56,706	\$61,509	\$60,077	\$62,494
56 - 60	\$52,685	\$55,086	19	\$62,600	\$63,500	\$55,663	\$57,579
61 - 65	\$55,667	\$64,222	9	\$45,271	\$46,058	\$50,484	\$52,084
66 - 70	n/a	n/a		\$52,500	\$53,417	\$60,433	\$61,600
71 - 75	\$46,077	\$49,727	10	\$54,833	\$58,577	\$56,857	\$64,000
76 - 80	\$64,383	\$65,575	6	\$59,962	\$64,017	\$62,100	\$63,925
81 - 85	\$66,700	\$70,000	5	\$53,631	\$54,672	\$70,000	\$73,600
86 - 90	n/a	n/a		\$53,378	\$55,711	\$75,296	\$78,571
91 - 95	n/a	n/a		\$65,000	\$66,000	\$54,300	\$54,900
96 - 100	\$69,441	\$75,766	10	\$62,933	\$66,723	\$55,014	\$57,147
More than 100	\$62,571	\$64,777	34	\$63,104	\$65,150	\$56,606	\$59,585

The following data provides the average compensation levels for paralegals based on the specialty areas of practice.

The survey asked respondents to indicate how much time they spend working in a particular specialty area. Respondents were asked to estimate their time in the following categories:

- Less than 20% of the time
- More than 20% of time; less than 40%
- More than 40% of time; less than 60%
- More than 60% of time; less than 80%
- From 80% to 100% of the time

The table below compares total compensation within each specialty area on the basis of those who spend less than 40% of their time working in the area, and those who spend more than 40% of their time in the area.

Table 4.14
Total Compensation by Specialty Area of Practice
(Data not shown for responses of 3 or under per practice area)

Area	Average Compensation Greater than 40% time	Average Compensation Less than 40% time	Number of Responses	Average Compensation Total Group
Administrative/government/public	\$56,154	\$60,914	111	\$58,964
Banking/finance	\$64,590	\$59,659	45	\$60,996
Bankruptcy	\$50,454	\$57,353	29	\$56,203
Collections	\$46,435	\$54,755	32	\$53,323
Corporate	\$70,225	\$59,636	112	\$63,285
Contract	\$67,715	\$58,110	112	\$61,370
Criminal	\$48,314	\$52,762	38	\$51,664
Elder law	\$59,684	\$56,256	18	\$56,828
Employee benefits	\$76,436	\$57,698	11	\$59,625
Employment/labor law	\$60,780	\$57,585	65	\$58,538
Environmental law	\$55,106	\$56,735	19	\$56,443
Energy/utility	\$54,459	\$60,363	15	\$59,345
Family law/domestic relations	\$42,117	\$53,684	69	\$49,016
Immigration	\$68,338	\$57,711	8	\$58,845
Insurance	\$56,436	\$57,157	91	\$56,864
Intellectual property	\$67,215	\$61,145	45	\$62,680
Legislation/lobbying	\$64,021	\$58,589	11	\$59,326
Litigation-civil	\$55,856	\$55,615	337	\$55,776
Mass tort litigation	\$59,684	\$58,314	27	\$58,670
Medical malpractice	\$54,062	\$58,141	41	\$57,076
Mergers/acquisitions	\$82,535	\$64,336	18	\$67,044
Multi-state litigation	\$57,674	\$59,876	19	\$59,426
Office management	\$56,087	\$57,498	42	\$57,188
Oil & gas	\$54,855	\$57,740	22	\$57,130
Personal injury	\$53,857	\$55,684	121	\$54,847
Probate	\$54,301	\$55,977	71	\$55,436
Product liability	\$57,745	\$59,657	28	\$59,248
Real estate	\$58,005	\$57,111	89	\$57,398
Securities/antitrust	\$115,780	\$61,350	7	\$65,997
Social security	\$43,196	\$55,371	19	\$52,617
Tax	\$71,858	\$61,702	19	\$63,425
Trusts & estates	\$60,624	\$54,009	77	\$56,345
Workers compensation	\$51,212	\$55,351	35	\$54,359

The final portion of this section provides a summary of general findings related to benefits.

Table 4.15
Employer Provided Benefits Reported by Responses and % of Total

Do you participate in any of the following?	Yes	No	N/A
Employers Retirement/Pension Plan	834 79%	104 10%	119 11%
Employers Profit Sharing	362 36%	319 32%	313 31%
Does your employer contribute to a retirement/pension or profit sharing plan on your behalf?	864 82%	129 12%	60 6%

Average number of sick days/PTO was 14; average number of vacation days 16, and average holidays was 9 days. 54% of those with sick leave are allowed to carry it over to another period; 34% are not.

Table 4.16
Employer Provided Benefits
Reported in Percentage of Responses

Benefit	Yes	No	Partial
Health Insurance	59%	11%	30%
Life Insurance	62%	25%	13%
Dental Insurance	45%	32%	23%
Disability Insurance	55%	32%	13%
Free Representation	32%	57%	11%
Health club membership	14%	77%	9%
Maternity Benefits	48%	41%	11%
Parking	3%	94%	3%
Child Care	62%	33%	6%
Leased Car	3%	97%	0%
Mileage	59%	38%	3%
Professional Dues	77%	18%	5%
Tuition	45%	42%	13%
Vision Insurance	39%	41%	20%
For Family: Health Insurance	34%	39%	27%
For Family: Life Insurance	21%	67%	12%
For Family: Dental Insurance	32%	47%	21%
For Family: Free Representation	15%	77%	8%
For Family: Maternity Benefits	16%	78%	7%
For Family: Vision Insurance	29%	53%	17%

-End of Section 4 of 4-

The Participants

The data is based on analysis of the responses to the 2014 National Utilization and Compensation Survey which was collected by a web based survey from November 2014 – January 15, 2015. There were 1069 responses received and utilized for this report. 5% of the population are males; 95% are females. The average age of survey participants is 44. 64% of the participants are members of NALA; 68% have received the Certified Paralegal credential.

Respondents are from a diverse geographical area. Forty-seven states, the Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia are represented by the population. Among the regions of the United States, the Southeast region was represented by 37% of the respondents; Southwest region was represented by 22%; Plains States was represented by 14%; Far West was represented by 11%; Great Lakes was represented by 8%; Rocky Mountain states were represented by 4%; and New England/Mid East was represented by 4% of the respondents. The average population of the cities represented is 584,865. The regions and states are defined in the table below.

The respondents have about 20 years of legal experience; 10 years with the same employer. Most (61%) of respondents work for a private law firm, and, of those, 70% work in firms of 1-15 attorneys; 16% of the respondents work for corporations. With reference to educational backgrounds, 48% of respondents have a bachelor’s degree; 30% have an associate’s degree.

The 2015 National Utilization and Compensation Survey presents information concerning the work environment, practice areas, billing rates and compensation levels of paralegals. Conducted bi-annually since 1986, the survey analysis includes a review of current findings in comparison with findings of previous surveys. Economic data is presented in terms of such factors as size of city, size of firm, educational backgrounds, years of experience, and specialty area of practice.

Previous surveys have asked about duties and responsibilities of paralegals. A Job Analysis study of paralegals was conducted by NALA and results release in May 2012. The survey report and analysis appears on the NALA web site. Consult this for detailed information about on-the-job duties and responsibilities of paralegals, and skills needed for their work. The Job Analysis study is conducted every 5-7 years.

Region 1 - New England/Mid East			Number	Percentage
			42	4%
Connecticut Maine Massachusetts	Maryland New Hampshire New Jersey	New York Pennsylvania Rhode Island		
Region 2 - Great Lakes			82	8%
Illinois Indiana	Michigan Ohio	Wisconsin		
Region 3 - Plains States			149	14%
Iowa Kansas	Minnesota Missouri	Nebraska North Dakota South Dakota		
Region 4 - Southeast			391	37%
Alabama Arkansas Florida Georgia	Kentucky Louisiana Mississippi North Carolina	South Carolina Tennessee Virginia West Virginia		
Region 5 – Southwest			238	22%
Arizona New Mexico	Oklahoma	Texas		
Region 6 - Rocky Mountains			48	4%
Colorado Idaho	Montana Utah	Wyoming		
Region 7 - Far West			117	11%
Alaska California	Hawaii Nevada	Oregon Washington		