Did you know that just a few years ago, the term "paralegal" did not even exist? The evolution of the paralegal profession is marked by speed.

The paralegal role was created in the 1970s.
The paralegal profession has evolved significantly since it emerged in the 1970s, making it easier to define paralegals’ roles by what they can’t do: sign pleadings, represent clients in court and give legal advice.

The new paralegal plays a strategic and fundamental role in the modern legal model.

- Investigate the facts of a case for the attorney.
- Conduct research on relevant laws, regulations, and legal articles.
- Keep information related to cases or transactions in computer databases.
- Establish and maintain network of expert witnesses.
- Contact and communicate with clients on behalf of the attorney.
- Draft correspondence and other documents, and file them with the court.
- Get affidavits & other formal statements that may be used as evidence in court.
- Organize attorney’s calendar & assist with subsidiary scheduling needs.
- Organize and present motions and relevant legal documents.
- Write reports to help lawyers prepare for hearings and trials.
WHERE CAN YOU FIND PARALEGALS TODAY?

INDUSTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARALEGALS IN THE FOLLOWING INDUSTRIES
Data: MAY 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Number of Paralegals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEGAL SERVICES</td>
<td>197,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL GOVERNMENT (OES Designation)</td>
<td>14,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BRANCH (OES Designation)</td>
<td>13,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE GOVERNMENT (OES Designation)</td>
<td>9,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT OF COMPANIES &amp; ENTERPRISES</td>
<td>6,390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PARALEGAL WAGES COMPARISON PER INDUSTRY
Data: MAY 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Hourly Mean Wage</th>
<th>Annual Mean Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEGAL SERVICES</td>
<td>$23.16</td>
<td>$48,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL GOVERNMENT (OES Designation)</td>
<td>$24.30</td>
<td>$50,540</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEDERAL EXECUTIVE BRANCH (OES Designation)</td>
<td>$31.57</td>
<td>$65,660</td>
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<tr>
<td>STATE GOVERNMENT (OES Designation)</td>
<td>$21.43</td>
<td>$44,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT OF COMPANIES &amp; ENTERPRISES</td>
<td>$29.10</td>
<td>$60,520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEGAL PRACTICE SPECIALTIES

- Contracts
- Insurance
- Medical Malpractice
- Intellectual Property
- Healthcare Compliance
- Corporate Law
- Workers' Comp
- Banking & Investments
- Employment/Labor Law
- Real Estate
- Litigation
- Family Law
- Entertainment Law
- Personal Injury

PARALEGAL VS LAWYER

WHAT'S THE BIG DIFFERENCE?

Paralegals are the detail-oriented technicians, organizers, and fact experts.

Attorneys are the planners, strategists, and directors.
QUICK FACTS
PARALEGALS & LEGAL ASSISTANTS

MEDIAN PAY
$22.44 PER HOUR
$46,680 PER YEAR

NUMBER OF JOBS
256,600

EMPLOYMENT CHANGE
46,900

JOB OUTLOOK
Competition will be strong. Experienced, formally-trained paralegals should have the best prospects.

PARALEGAL
EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

17th
RANKING ON THE
LIST OF CAREERCAST’S
200 BEST JOBS

18%
PROJECTED JOB GROWTH
BETWEEN 2010 - 2020

$46,680
MEAN ANNUAL WAGE

LAW SCHOOL / JURIS DOCTOR
EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

82nd
RANKING ON THE
LIST OF CAREERCAST’S
200 BEST JOBS

EMPLOYMENT RATE DROP FOR FULL-TIME LAWYERS

74.1%
THE NUMBER OF NEW JOBS WORKING PART-TIME OR UNEMPLOYED HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED SINCE 2007

59.8%
4.1%
10%
5.8%
12.1%
2007
2011
FULL-TIME LAWYERS
PART-TIME LAWYERS
UNEMPLOYED LAWYERS
Paralegals are highly educated support professionals who use judgment and discretion.

**REDUCE COSTS**
Firms can bill paralegals’ time to clients at a far lower rate than attorneys’ time. Unbilled time costs the firm less.

**INCREASE PROFITS**
“Lawyers are overqualified for many of the tasks they have performed in the past. To the extent that well-qualified paralegals can take on a larger portion of the work, the lawyer can justify a higher hourly rate for a more limited role, without increasing the cost to the client.”
- American Bar Association

**IMPROVE CLIENT SATISFACTION**
Paralegals can maintain a high level of client contact and produce a large portion of a client’s work, lowering client bills and leaving attorneys free to do tasks that only they can do.
10 REASONS TO HIRE A PARALEGAL

1. Paralegals provide increased profitability for your firm by increasing revenue and decreasing expenses.

2. Paralegal time can be billed out separately to the client and at a lower cost.

3. Paralegals can handle many substantive tasks under an attorney's supervision, freeing attorneys to direct cases and cultivate clients.

4. Paralegals perform substantive legal tasks such as legal research, interviewing clients, drafting documents, drafting pleadings, assisting at closings and more.

5. Paralegals free up attorney time allowing firms to increase their caseload.

6. Paralegals permit attorneys to focus on complex legal work.

7. Paralegals improve client satisfaction by being accessible points of contact.

8. Paralegals reliably track deadlines and make sure attorneys meet them.

9. Paralegals can assist on pro bono cases, benefiting the firm, the attorney, the legal profession, and society.

10. Paralegals round out the legal team by improving the overall efficiency and productivity of the law office.

REFERENCES

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

http://www.paralegalstudiesdegreeonline.gwu.edu