



## Legal Office Clerks

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Prepared by Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research

### Occupation Codes and Descriptions

Currently, there are 2 occupations in the standard occupational classification (SOC) system related to legal office clerks. A list of occupation titles, job descriptions and reported job titles is included in Exhibit 1.

#### Exhibit 1 – Occupations, job descriptions and sample job title(s)

SOC Code	Title	Description	Sample of Reported Job Titles
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Assist lawyers by investigating facts, preparing legal documents, or researching legal precedent. Conduct research to support a legal proceeding, to formulate a defense, or to initiate legal action.	Certified Paralegal, Immigration Paralegal, Law Clerk, Legal Analyst, Legal Assistant, Legal Clerk, Paralegal, Paralegal Specialist, Real Estate Paralegal, Summer Law Associate
43-6012	Legal Secretaries	Perform secretarial duties using legal terminology, procedures, and documents. Prepare legal papers and correspondence, such as summonses, complaints, motions, and subpoenas. May also assist with legal research.	Confidential Secretary, Judicial Administrative Assistant, Legal Administrative Secretary, Legal Assistant, Legal Secretary, Litigation Assistant, Magistrate Assistant, Secretary

Source: O\*NET Online

### Current and Future Employment

In Los Angeles County, the number of legal office clerk-related jobs is expected to increase by 4% over the next five years. There are forecasted to be nearly 500 job openings each year during the five-year frame. Exhibit 2 contains detailed employment projections data for these occupations.

## Exhibit 2 – Five-year projections for Legal Office Clerks in Los Angeles County

SOC	Occupation	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	2016 - 2021 Change	2016 - 2021 % Change	Annual Openings
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	9,269	9,956	687	7%	350
43-6012	Legal Secretaries	11,079	11,218	137	1%	145
		<b>20,348</b>	<b>21,174</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>495</b>

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) – 2017.2

### Earnings

In Los Angeles County, the combined entry-level average wage for occupations related to legal office clerks is \$14.19 per hour, which is above the MIT Living Wage<sup>1</sup> estimate of \$13.08 per hour for a single adult living in Los Angeles County. The average annual earnings for this occupation group in Los Angeles County is \$56,243 per year, assuming full-time employment.

Exhibit 3 contains hourly wages and annual average earnings for these occupations. Entry hourly earnings are represented by the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile of wages, median hourly earnings are represented by the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of wages, and experienced hourly earnings are represented by the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of wages.

## Exhibit 3 – Earnings for Legal Office Clerks in Los Angeles County, 2016-2021

SOC	Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings	Average Annual Earnings
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	\$14.12	\$27.51	\$45.61	\$59,155
43-6012	Legal Secretaries	\$14.25	\$24.67	\$39.05	\$53,851
		<b>\$14.19</b>	<b>\$25.95</b>	<b>\$42.01</b>	<b>\$56,243</b>

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

<sup>1</sup> MIT Living Wage Calculator. <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

## Employer Job Postings

To identify job postings, the following keywords/search terms were used: paralegals and legal assistants (23-2011) and legal secretaries (43-6012).

### Top Occupations

In 2016, there were 4,611 employer postings for occupations related to legal office clerks. Over two-thirds of the postings (63%) were for paralegals and legal assistants (2,899 job postings). There were 4,603 job postings for legal officer clerks in 2015, and 3,206 job postings in 2014.

**Exhibit 4 – Top occupations in job postings (n=4,611)**

SOC Code	Occupation	Job Postings, Full Year 2016
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	2,899
43-6012	Legal Secretaries	1,712

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

### Top Titles

The top job titles for employers posting job ads for positions related to legal office clerk are listed in exhibit 5. Legal secretary is mentioned as the job title in 20% of all relevant job postings (943 postings).

**Exhibit 5 –Job titles (n=4,611)**

Title	Job Postings, Full Year 2016
Legal Secretary	943
Legal Assistant	896
Paralegal	888
Litigation Secretary	482
Litigation Paralegal	299

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

### Top Employers

Exhibit 6 lists the top employers hiring paralegals, legal assistants, and legal secretaries. Top employers postings job ads locally in 2016 included: Deloitte, Disney, Fox, County of Los Angeles, and AECOM Technology Corporation. The top worksite cities in the region for these occupations were Los Angeles, Beverly Hills, Glendale, Pasadena, and Santa Monica.

**Exhibit 6 – Top employers (n=951)**

<b>Employers</b>	<b>Job Postings, Full Year 2016</b>
Deloitte	69
Disney	22
Fox	22
County of Los Angeles	13
AECOM Technology Corporation	11

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

### Top Skills

Job-specific skills desired by employers are litigation, legal support, Microsoft programs, legal documentation, administrative support, and scheduling

**Exhibit 7 –Job skills (n=3,681)**

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Job Postings, Full Year 2016</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Job Postings, Full Year 2016</b>
Litigation	1,790	Legal Documentation	756
Legal Support	1,134	Administrative Support	732
Microsoft Excel	1,007	Microsoft Office	722
Microsoft Word	921	Scheduling	536

Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

## Industry Concentration

Legal office clerk jobs are most often found in the offices of lawyers industry (83% of total jobs in the industry). Exhibit 8 shows the industries that are the largest employers of legal office clerks in Los Angeles County.

**Exhibit 8 – Industries with the largest number of jobs related to legal office, 2016**

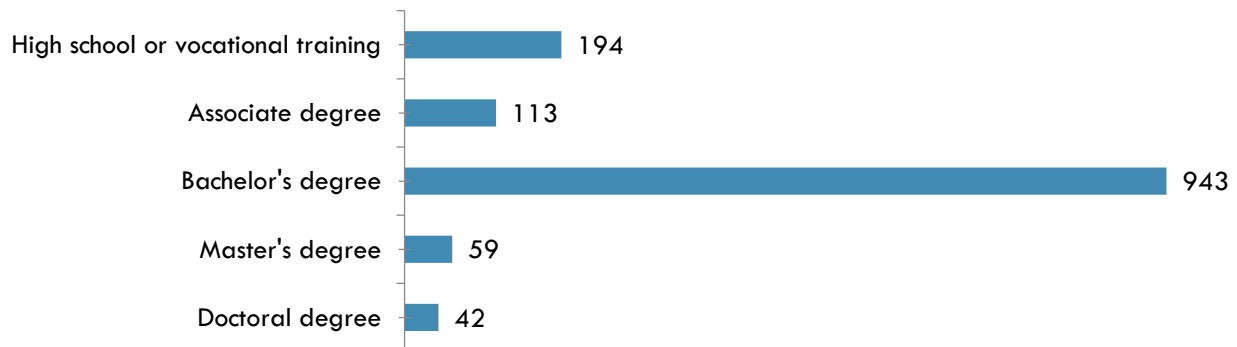
NAICS (6-Digit)	Industry	Occupation Group Jobs in Industry (2016)	% of Occupation Group in Industry
541110	Offices of Lawyers	16,826	83%
903999	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	1,094	5%
541199	All Other Legal Services	644	3%

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

## Education and Training

Exhibit 8 displays the education level requested by employers in online job ads. The majority of legal office clerk employers in 2016 were looking for a candidate with a bachelor's degree. Approximately 71% of job postings did not specify a level of education.

**Exhibit 8 – 2016 online job ads with minimum advertised education requirements for legal office clerks**



Source: Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

Student completion data was compiled for California community college (CCC) programs that train students for these occupations. Exhibit 9 shows the typical entry-level educational requirement for the occupations of interest, along with the typical on-the-job training requirements, and percentage of workers in the field who hold a community college award or have completed some postsecondary courses.

**Exhibit 9 – Education and training requirements (2015-2020)**

SOC	Occupation	Typical entry-level education	Typical on-the-job training	% of Community College Award Holders or Some Postsecondary Coursework
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Associate degree	None	43%
43-6012	Legal Secretaries	HS Diploma or equivalent	Moderate	48%

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists International, Bureau of Labor Statistics Employment Projections (Educational Attainment)

Currently, there are 8 CCCs in Los Angeles County that train students in programs related to legal office clerks. Exhibit 10 displays the headcount and annual average community college awards for each of the colleges training in this field. Between 2012-2015, the total annual average community college awards conferred was 23 (6 associate degrees and 17 certificates) across the program.

Headcount is the actual number of students enrolled, regardless of credit hours. It is also important to note that an award is not equivalent to a single person in search of a job opening, since a student may earn more than one award (e.g. an associate degree and a certificate).

**Table 10 – CCC Student Awards (by TOP and College)**

TOP Code	Program	College	2012 – 2015 Annual Average			
			CCC Headcount	CCC Associate Degrees	CCC Certificates	Total Average CC Awards
0514.10	Legal Office Technology	Cerritos	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		East LA	N/A	4	4	8
		Glendale	28	N/A	N/A	N/A
		LA City	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		LA Pierce	N/A	1	1	2
		Long Beach	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Santa Monica	11	1	N/A	1
		West LA	N/A	N/A	12	12
			<b>39</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>

Source: California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office MIS Data Mart

## **Student Outcomes**

Student outcome information is based on the TOP code(s) relevant to the occupation group and Los Angeles County.

1602.00 Legal Office Technology programs in Los Angeles County for academic year 2013-14

- The median annual wage after program completion is \$14,001
- 43% of students are earning a living wage
- 79% of students are employed within six months after completing a program

Source: CTE LaunchBoard

## **Program Recommendation**

This report was compiled by the Los Angeles/Orange County Center of Excellence to provide regional labor market data for the program recommendation of Legal Office. This report is to help determine whether there is demand in the local labor market that is not being met by the supply from programs of study (CCC and non-CCC) that align with this occupation group.

Based on the data, the COE can recommend the Legal Office program in Los Angeles County. Reasons include:

- Legal office clerk jobs are forecasted to increase by 4% in the next five years, resulting in nearly 500 job openings annually
- On average, only 23 community college awards were conferred annually between 2012-15
- Legal office clerks typically require a high school diploma/equivalent or associate degree

## **Sources**

O\*Net Online, Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass), Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), MIT Living Wage Calculator, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Education Attainment, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS) Data Mart, CTE LaunchBoard, Statewide CTE Outcomes Survey, Employment Development Department Unemployment Insurance Dataset

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## Notes

Data included in this analysis represents the labor market demand for positions most closely related to legal office clerks. Standard occupational classification (SOC) codes were chosen based on the national education level required for employment (associate degree and postsecondary certificate) as well as the proportion of current workers who hold a community college award or have had some community college training. This selection process narrows the labor market analysis to the most relevant employment opportunities for students with community college education and/or training.

Traditional labor market information was used to show current and projected employment based on data trends, as well as annual average awards granted by regional community colleges. Real-time labor market information was used to provide a more nuanced view of the current job market, as it captures job post advertisements for occupations relevant to the field of study. Job postings should not be used to establish current job openings, because the numbers may include duplicate job postings or postings intended to gather a pool of applicants. Real-time labor market information can signal demand and show what employers are looking for in potential employees, but is not a perfect measure of the quantity of open positions.