

Paralegal Occupations

Inland Empire/Desert Region (Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metropolitan Statistical Area)

Summary

- Jobs in paralegal occupations are expected to increase by **6% between 2017 and 2022** in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. A total of **2,452 job openings or 490 annual openings** will be available over the five-year timeframe.
- The entry-level earnings for each of the paralegal occupations is **above the MIT Living Wage estimate of \$12.30 per hour** for a single adult living in the Inland Empire/Desert Region.
- **There appears to be an opportunity for program growth** based on the average annual number of program completions for the selected community college program in the region (**104 annual average credentials**), and the annual openings for paralegal occupations in the local region (**490 average annual openings**).

Introduction

This report details occupations relevant to the paralegal program. This program prepares individuals to work in the legal environment through the instruction of legal terminology, forms and procedures, legal concepts, principles of legal research, analysis of legal issues, documentation of appropriate legal precedents, and presentation of research findings useable by attorneys, judges, and others.¹ The occupations in the paralegal occupational group are listed below:

- Legal Secretaries
- Legal Support Workers, All Other
- Paralegals and Legal Assistants
- Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers

¹ The Taxonomy of Programs, 6th Edition, February 2004
http://extranet.cccco.edu/portals/1/aa/credit/2013files/topmanual6_2009_09corrected_12.5.13.pdf

Job Opportunities

In 2017, there were 4,309 jobs in the paralegal occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. Employment in this group is expected to rise by 6% through 2022. Employers will need to hire 2,452 workers over the projected period to fill new jobs and to backfill positions that workers are leaving—including retirements. Appendix A, Table 1 shows the projected job growth, wages, typical education, training, and work experience required for each of the occupations included in this report.

Exhibit 1: Five-year projections for the paralegal occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

Region	2017 Jobs	5-Yr % Change (New Jobs)	5-Yr Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	% of workers age 55+
Inland Empire/Desert	4,309	6%	2,452	490	27%

Source: EMSI 2018.3

Exhibit 2 displays the number of job ads posted during the last 12 months (October 2017 to September 2018) and the average time to fill for each occupation in the region and nationally. On average, open positions for the paralegal occupational group take 31 days to fill in the Inland Empire/Desert Region. This is only two days longer than the national average, indicating that it takes a similar amount of time to fill paralegal positions in both geographies.

Exhibit 2: Job ads and time to fill for the paralegal occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert during the last 12 months, Oct 2017 – Sep 2018

Occupation	Job Ads	Regional Average Time to Fill (Days)	National Average Time to Fill (Days)
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	170	33	29
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers	45	30	32
Legal Secretaries	44	22	24
Legal Support Workers, All Other	25	33	29
TOTAL	284	-	-

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Earnings

The entry-level wage for each of the paralegal occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region is above the MIT Living Wage estimate of \$12.30 per hour, or \$25,586 annually for a single adult living in the area. These wages are also sufficient for two adults and one child living in the region (\$30,160 annually for each adult, or \$14.50 per hour, per adult).

Exhibit 3: Earnings for the paralegal occupational group in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

Occupation	Entry to Experienced Hourly Earnings Range*	Median Wage*	Average Annual Earnings
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	\$24.81 to \$38.56	\$31.97	\$68,700
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers	\$21.15 to \$28.94	\$24.17	\$54,100
Legal Support Workers, All Other	\$18.97 to \$29.11	\$24.14	\$50,600
Legal Secretaries	\$16.92 to \$28.75	\$23.04	\$48,000

Source: EMSI 2018.3

*Entry Hourly is 25th percentile wage, the median is 50th percentile wage, experienced is 75th percentile wage.

Top Employers

Exhibit 4 displays the top local employers posting job ads from the last 12 months for the Inland Empire/Desert Region.

Exhibit 4: The top employers posting job ads for paralegal occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Oct 2017 – Sep 2018

Occupation	Top Employers
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (<i>n</i> =93)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monster Beverage • The Law Offices of Marc Grossman
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers (<i>n</i> =36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First American Corporation • Dynasty Real Estate
Legal Secretaries (<i>n</i> =26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Healthcare Services • Best, Best, & Krieger LLP
Legal Support Workers, All Other (<i>n</i> =18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Department of the Interior • DTI, LLC

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Skills

Exhibit 5 lists a sample of in-demand specialized and employability skills that local employers are seeking when looking for workers to fill paralegal positions. The skills reported in job postings may be utilized as a helpful guide for curriculum development. Specialized skills are occupation-specific skills employers are requesting for industry or job competency. Employability skills are foundational skills that transcend industries and occupations; this category is commonly referred to as “soft skills.”

Exhibit 5: Sample of in-demand skills from employer job ads for paralegal occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Oct 2017 – Sep 2018

Occupation	Specialized skills	Employability skills
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (n=146)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litigation • Legal Documentation • Administrative Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detail-Oriented • Organizational Skills • Microsoft Office
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers (n=39)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real Estate Experience • Customer Service • Insurance Underwriting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills • Problem Solving • Microsoft Office
Legal Secretaries (n=42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Support • Administrative Support • Litigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills • Microsoft Office • Organizational Skills
Legal Support Workers, All Other (n=25)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Documentation • Data Entry • Litigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Skills • Writing • Microsoft Office

Source: Burning Glass – Labor Insights

Education

Exhibit 6 displays the entry-level education level education typically required to enter these occupations according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). This chart also displays educational attainment for incumbent workers with “some college, no degree” and an “associate degree” according to the U.S. Census (2015-16) and the minimum advertised education requirement requested by employers in online job ads.

Exhibit 6: Educational attainment and online job ads with minimum advertised education requirements for paralegal occupations in the Inland Empire/Desert Region, Oct 2017 – Sep 2018

Occupations	Typical Entry-Level Education Requirement	Two-Year Postsecondary Level of Educational Attainment*	Minimum Advertised Education Requirement from Job Ads			
			Number of Job Postings (n=)	High school diploma or vocational training	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Associate degree	44%	55	33%	4%	63%
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers	High school diploma or equivalent	39%	21	95%	-	5%
Legal Secretaries	High school diploma or equivalent	47%	7	72%	14%	14%
Legal Support Workers, All Other	Associate degree	39%	12	50%	-	50%

Source: EMSI 2018.3, Current Population Survey, Burning Glass – Labor Insights

* Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Credential or Some Postsecondary Coursework

Student Completions

Exhibit 7 shows the annual average regional community college credentials (associate degrees and certificates) conferred during the three academic years between 2014 and 2017, with the relevant TOP code as well as the program titles used at each college, sourced from the Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI). Credentials granted from other educational institutions from 2013 to 2016 are displayed in Exhibit 8, along with the relevant CIP code. Please note, a credential is not equivalent to a single person in search of a job opening since a student may earn more than one credential, such as an associate degree in addition to a certificate. Community College student outcome information is from the CTE LaunchBoard based on the selected TOP code(s) and region.

Exhibit 7: Annual average community college student completions for paralegal programs in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

1402.00 Paralegal	Annual Community College Headcount (2016-17)	Community College Annual Average Awards (2014-17)
Chaffey – Paralegal Studies	126	
Certificate 18 to < 30 semester units		26
Mt. San Jacinto – Legal Assistant	101	
Associate Degree		6
Certificate 30 to < 60 semester units		5
Riverside – Paralegal Studies	191	
Associate Degree		10
Victor Valley – Paralegal Studies	43	
Certificate 30 to < 60 semester units		10
Total Community College Headcount (2016-17)	461	
Total Annual Average Community College Awards		57

Source: LaunchBoard, IPEDS, COCI

1402.00 – Paralegal program Strong Workforce outcomes in the Inland Empire/Desert Region in the academic year 2015-16 [unless noted otherwise]:

- Number of course enrollments: 872 (California median: 442) [2016-17]
- Number of students who transferred to a 4-year institution: 28 (CA: 20)
- Employed in the second fiscal quarter after exit: 68% (CA: 70%)
- Median earnings in the second fiscal quarter after exit: \$7,134 (CA: \$9,704)
- Employed in the fourth fiscal quarter after exit: 64% (CA: 69%)
- Median annual earnings: \$24,498 (CA: \$35,159)
- The percentage in a job closely related to the field of study: 63% (CA: 73%) [2014-15]
- Median change in earnings: 44% (CA: 40%)
- The proportion of students who attained a living wage: 46% (CA: 61%)

Exhibit 8: Annual average community college student completions for legal assistant/paralegal programs in the Inland Empire/Desert Region

22.0302 – Legal Assistant/Paralegal	Other Educational Institutions Annual Average Certificates or Other Credit Awards (2013-16)
Platt College-Ontario	
Associate Degree	9
Platt College-Riverside	
Associate Degree	13
Sage College	
Associate Degree	10
Award 1 < 2 academic yrs	15
Total annual average other awards	47

Source: IPEDS

Sources

California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
CTE LaunchBoard

Center of Excellence TOP to SOC Crosswalk
Chancellor’s Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI)

Labor Insight/Jobs (Burning Glass)

MIT Living Wage Calculator

O*Net Online

Taxonomy of Programs, 6th edition

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Appendix A: Occupation definitions, five-year projections, and earnings for paralegal occupations

Occupation Definitions (SOC code), Education and Training Requirement, Community College Education Attainment

Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)

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.

Sample job titles: Certified Paralegal, Immigration Paralegal, Law Clerk, Legal Analyst, Legal Assistant, Legal Clerk, Paralegal, Paralegal Specialist, Real Estate Paralegal, Summer Law Associate

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Associate degree

Training Requirement: None

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 44%

Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers (23-2093)

Search real estate records, examine titles, or summarize pertinent legal or insurance documents or details for a variety of purposes. May compile lists of mortgages, contracts, and other instruments pertaining to titles by searching public and private records for law firms, real estate agencies, or title insurance companies.

Sample job titles: Abstracter, Abstractor, Commercial Title Examiner, Searcher, Title Abstractor, Title Agent, Title Department Manager, Title Examiner, Title Officer, Title Searcher

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent

Training Requirement: One to twelve months on-the-job training

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary Coursework: 39%



Legal Support Workers, All Other (23-2099)

All legal support workers not listed separately.

Sample job titles: Advocate, Brief Writer, Case Briefer, Closer, Contract Clerk, Escrow Closer, Escrow Officer, Friend of the Court, Juror, Law Examiner, Law Researcher, Legal Administrator, Legal Research Analyst, Legal Technician, Legislative Aide, Legislative Assistant, Life Care Planner, Patent Examiner, Patent Searcher, Tariff Expert, Trial Examiner

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: Associate degree

Training Requirement: None

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary

Coursework: 39%

Legal Secretaries (43-6012)

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.

Sample job titles: Confidential Secretary, Judicial Administrative Assistant, Legal Administrative Secretary, Legal Assistant, Legal Secretary, Litigation Assistant, Magistrate Assistant, Secretary

Entry-Level Educational Requirement: High school diploma or equivalent

Training Requirement: One to twelve months on-the-job training

Percentage of incumbent workers with a Community College Award or Some Postsecondary

Coursework: 47%



Table 1. 2017 to 2022 job growth, wages, typical education, training, and work experience required for the paralegal occupational group, Inland Empire/Desert Region

Occupation (SOC)	2017 Jobs	5-Yr Change	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings (New + Replacement Jobs)	Entry-level to Experienced Wage*	Median Wage*	Average Annual Earnings	Entry-Level Education & On-The-Job Training	Work Experience Required
Paralegals and Legal Assistants (23-2011)	1,960	237	12%	254	\$24.81 to \$38.56	\$31.97	\$68,700	Associate degree & none	None
Legal Secretaries (43-6012)	1,373	(29)	(2%)	146	\$16.92 to \$28.75	\$23.04	\$48,000	High school diploma or equivalent & 1 to 12 months	None
Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers (23-2093)	575	18	3%	51	\$21.15 to \$28.94	\$24.17	\$54,100	High school diploma or equivalent & 1 to 12 months	None
Legal Support Workers, All Other (23-2099)	401	29	7%	39	\$18.97 to \$29.11	\$24.14	\$50,600	Associate degree & none	None
Total	4,309	255	6%	490	-	-	-	-	-

Source: EMSI 2018.3

*Entry Hourly is 25th percentile wage, the median is 50th percentile wage, experienced is 75th percentile wage.