



2020

Survey of **Canadian** Legal Career Professionals

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Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
<hr/>	
FINDINGS ON SALARIES & BONUSES	4
<hr/>	
Table 1. Salaries and Percent Raises as of June 1, 2020	5
Table 2. Bonuses as of June 1, 2020	6
<hr/>	
ADDITIONAL FINDINGS	7
<hr/>	
Table 3. Respondent Demographics — Years of Experience	8
Table 4. Other Duties	9

Introduction

In Spring 2020, with guidance from NALP's Canadian Section and its Data Collection Working Group, NALP administered its biennial Survey of Canadian Legal Career Professionals. The survey was sent to all Canadian legal employer NALP members. The survey, analogous to the survey that has been administered in the United States for many years, sought information about salaries, bonuses, and respondent demographics, including education and industry experience for individuals, and lawyer headcount and location for the law firms at which the individuals work. A total of 64 individuals responded to the survey.

Respondents represent firms ranging in size from 42 to 900 lawyers, and from 1 to 10 offices. The median and average number of lawyers are 500 and 448 lawyers, respectively. [One respondent did not provide this information.] The average and median number of offices is five. [One respondent did not provide this information.] Over two-thirds of respondents are from Toronto or Vancouver (47% and 20%, respectively); about 16% are from Montreal. Responses were also received from Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, and Ottawa.

About one-third each of respondents reported that their scope of responsibility is for a single office or for regional offices. About 27% are responsible for all offices nationwide. Global responsibility is uncommon among respondents. Most respondents reported that their job involves a mix of recruiting; professional development; diversity, equity, and inclusion;

and lawyer personnel duties. About one-quarter could be categorized as largely recruiting, and analyses based on this categorization are provided where possible. Although some respondents could be categorized as largely working on professional development, there were not enough to support analyses.

About 78% of respondents have an LLB/JD degree or an LLM in addition to the LLB. A paralegal certificate in addition is rare. Almost 61% of respondents indicated that an advanced degree was required for their job; and additional 25% indicated that an advanced degree was preferred. The advanced degree required or preferred was overwhelmingly an LLB/JD.

Nearly all (95%) of respondents reported that their employer pays NALP membership dues. Almost two-thirds (61%) reported that their provincial bar association dues are paid. Just 15% each reported dues paid for membership in human resources or career development organizations, with the latter including respondents who reported membership in the Professional Development Consortium. Other organizations described include the New York State Bar Association, International Coaching Federation, the New South Wales Bar Association, the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA), and the Association for Continuing Legal Education (ACLEA). No respondents reported due paid for the ADR Institute of Canada or the Law Office Management Association (TLOMA).

Findings on Salaries & Bonuses

Table 1 reports salaries and raises as of June 1, 2020. All salary and bonus figures are reported in Canadian dollars. Salary analyses exclude part-time salaries. Where fewer than five salaries or bonuses were reported for a particular category, no findings are reported. Table 2 reports bonuses as of June 1, 2020. Bonus analyses exclude surveys where no bonus information was reported. All these findings are by position — i.e., department head, first-level below department head — findings within these groups by location or type of work are provided where response numbers were sufficient. Some survey respondents declined to provide compensation information.

Table 1. Salaries and Percent Raises as of June 1, 2020

	Median	Average	Half of Salaries Fell in the Range	# of Salaries Reported	Median % Raise from June 2019
Department Heads-All	\$175,000	\$189,728	\$150,000-215,000	23	3.7%
Location Toronto	218,625	229,725	175,000-270,000	10	8.5
Location Vancouver	140,000	144,000	*	5	**
First-Level Professional Below Department Heads — All	152,500	153,153	117,500-179,000	28	2.5
Job responsibilities primarily recruiting	135,000	136,883	120,000-161,000	10	4.0
Location Montreal	143,500	138,333	*	6	5.0
Location Toronto	146,500	152,988	115,000-180,000	14	2.3
Second and Third-Level Professional Below Department Heads — All	108,938	115,495	81,300-154,070	10	1.7

*Only the average and median are shown since fewer than eight salaries were reported. The number of raise percentages reported in any category may be less than the number of salaries reported.

**Fewer than five raise percentages were reported.

Note: Nearly all respondents who reported being the department head report to the managing partner, COO, CEO, or Chief Human or Professional Resources/Talent Officer. For the most part their titles include the term ‘Director.’ Respondents who reported being the first professional below the department head showed more variation in titles and lines of reporting. Titles included Senior Director, Director, Assistant Director, Manager, and Administrator. Most report to a Director or Chief. Respondents who reported being the second or third professional below the department head provided titles including Coordinator, Assistant Director, or Manager, and reporting to a Director, or Senior Director.

Most respondents reported spending time on both recruiting and professional development activities, and so could not be categorized as primarily working in one area. Those who are categorized as recruiting generally spend at least 55-60% of their time on law student and lateral recruiting combined.

Table 2. Bonuses as of June 1, 2020

	Median	Average	Half of Bonuses Fell in the Range	# of Bonuses Reported
Department Heads — All	\$20,000	\$18,233	\$5,000-25,000	15
Location Toronto	20,000	18,500	6,000-25,000	11
First-Level Professional Below Department Heads — All	15,365	20,445	6,000-20,000	14
Job Responsibilities Primarily Recruiting	10,000	9,946	*	5
Location Toronto	10,000	17,286	*	7
Second and Third-Level Professional Below Department Heads — All	2,000	9,736	*	7

Note: Figures are based on respondents who reported a valid non-zero bonus. Overall, amongst all respondents reporting a valid bonus figure, which can include zero, about 22% reported that they received no bonus.

Bonuses are most frequently based on merit (92%) and/or firm profitability (58%).

Seniority and year-end/holiday were reported by just a few respondents.

*Only the average and median are shown since fewer than eight bonus figures were reported.



Additional Findings

Table 3. Respondent Demographics – Years of Experience

	All Respondents	Department Heads	First-level Professionals Below Department Head	Second-level Professionals Below Department Head
Median # of years in NALP-related positions	6.0	7.5	5.8	5.0
Average # of years in NALP-related positions	7.1	8.0	6.8	5.8
Middle range of years reported	1.5 – 12.0	1.5 – 14.0	2.0 – 10.0	1.0 – 8.0
Median # of years in current job	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.3
Average # of years in current job	3.8	3.2	4.3	3.7
Middle range of years reported	1.0 – 4.8	1.0 – 4.5	1.1 – 6.0	1.0 – 4.0
Number of respondents	64*	26	28*	10

*The number reporting total years of NALP-related experience is two fewer than shown here.

Note: Only a handful of respondents — just 8% — reported having worked at a law school in a NALP-related position. Just 40% of respondents reported having worked with a previous employer in a NALP-related position(s). Among those who did, the median number of years was five. About 30% of respondents have worked in a related job such as human resources or at a search firm.

Among respondents with a LLB/JD (50 respondents with a LLB/JD), all reported having spent time in private practice. Overall, the median number of years is five; the average is 6.5 years. For department heads the respective figures were 4 and 6.5 years; for professionals at the first level below the department head, the figures were 5.8 and 7.0, respectively.

Table 4. Other Duties

	Percent
Organize social events other than for summer program	45.3%
Practice management	29.7
Paralegal hiring/supervision/evaluation	18.8
Marketing/business development/public relations	17.2
Alumni initiatives	14.1
Other non-lawyer personnel hiring/supervision/evaluation	14.1
Other tasks	14.1
Office/facilities management	12.5
Pro bono coordination	10.9
Knowledge management	9.4
Benefits or payroll administration for non-lawyer personnel	1.6

Note: Percentages are based on all 64 respondents. The top two other duties noted are the same across all levels of professionals. Other duties described include: corporate social responsibility, communications, project and operations/departmental management, engagement and belonging programming and initiatives, insurance, law clerk and staff professional development, team leadership, strategic planning, and well-being program for all firm members.

