

A large, blurred photograph of a crowd of people walking through a modern, brightly lit building with large glass windows. The image is taken from a low angle, looking down a long hallway or atrium. The people are in motion, creating a sense of a busy, professional environment. The lighting is warm and golden, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The background shows the architectural details of the building, including glass panels and structural elements.

# 2024 Survey of Canadian Legal Career Professionals

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# Introduction

In summer 2024, with guidance from NALP's Canadian Section and its Data Collection Working Group, NALP administered its biennial *Survey of Canadian Legal Career Professionals in Law Firms and Employer Organizations*. The survey was sent to all of NALP's Canadian legal employer members, who were encouraged to share the survey with other professionals with similar roles in their firms. The survey, analogous to the survey that has been administered in the United States for many years, sought information about salaries, bonuses, and respondent and firm demographics. A total of 45 individuals responded to the survey, and nearly all (98%) worked at a law firm.

Respondents represent firms ranging in size from 23-900 lawyers located in Canada, and from 1-10 Canadian offices. The median firm size was 315 lawyers, and the average was 374. Overall, about 55% of respondents were working in a firm of 350 or fewer lawyers and 45% were working in a firm of more than 350 lawyers. In terms of number of offices, the median was five offices, and the average was four. A breakdown of respondents by city and the scope of their responsibilities are provided in the tables below.

City	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Toronto	17	37.8%
Vancouver	10	22.2
Calgary	7	15.6
Montreal	7	15.6
Edmonton	4	8.9

Scope of Responsibility	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Global	3	6.7%
National	17	37.8
Regional	8	17.8
Single Office	17	37.8

Most respondents reported that their job involves a mix of recruiting; professional development; diversity, equity, and inclusion; career coaching; and lawyer personnel duties. One-fifth could be categorized as largely professional development (broadly defined to also include diversity, equity and inclusion and career counseling), and about 16% could be defined as primarily working in a recruiting role (inclusive of entry-level and lateral recruiting). Analyses based on these job responsibility categorizations are provided where possible. There were not enough respondents working primarily in career coaching or diversity, equity, and inclusion to provide separate analyses for these classifications.

In terms of position hierarchy, most respondents reported that they were either a department head (31%) or a first-level professional below the department head (60%) in their department/administrative unit. Just 9% of respondents reported that they were a second or third-level professional below a department head, which precluded any analyses on these positions.

A summary of job titles is provided in the table below. The small number of chiefs, managers, and coordinators prohibited any additional analyses on these job titles.

Job Title	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Chief	3	6.7%
Director	33	73.3
Manager	5	11.1
Coordinator	4	8.9

Note: The “Director” category includes a small number of associate and assistant directors. The “Manager” category includes senior managers, and the “Coordinator” category includes advisors and specialists.

About 77% of respondents have an LLB, LLM, and/or JD degree. Overall, 60% indicated that an advanced degree was required for their job, and all of those respondents specified that an LLB or JD was the required degree.

Nearly all (98%) respondents reported that their employer pays their membership dues for at least one professional association, and 93% indicated that their employer financially supports NALP membership. Most respondents (62%) reported their provincial law society dues are covered by their employer. Memberships with the Canadian Bar Association (38%), provincial or national career development organizations, including the Professional Development Consortium (27%), and provincial or national human resources organizations (9%) were less commonly reported. No respondents reported dues paid for the ADR Institute of Canada or The Law Office Management Association (TLOMA).

# Findings on Salaries & Bonuses

Tables 1-4 report salary, raise, and bonus information for legal career professionals. All salary and bonus figures are reported in Canadian dollars as of June 1, 2024. These analyses exclude part-time professionals. Where fewer than five salaries, raises, and/or bonuses were reported for a particular category, findings are omitted.

Table 1 reports salaries and raises for chiefs and directors, collectively. Subgroupings are also provided by job function, scope of responsibility, firm size, and city, where possible. A similar table was not possible for managers and coordinators due to the small number of respondents with these job titles. Table 2 reports similar information by position level. There were not enough responses to support analyses for second or third-level professionals.

Table 3 provides a summary of bonus information for chiefs and directors, and Table 4 includes the same information by position level. Bonus analyses exclude surveys where no bonus information was reported.

Table 1. **Salaries and Percent Raises as of June 1, 2024 for Chiefs and Directors**

	Median	Average	Half of Salaries Fell in the Range	# of Salaries Reported	Median % Raise from June 2023
All Chiefs and Directors	\$200,000	\$210,732	\$186,300-221,000	34	4.4%
<b>By General Job Function</b>					
Combination of Recruiting, Professional Development, and Other Responsibilities	200,000	214,568	185,650-223,000	24	4.5
Professional Development	213,500	204,464	—	7	4.4
<b>By Scope of Responsibility</b>					
National	214,000	226,346	200,000-220,000	13	5.0
Regional	185,000	177,893	—	7	4.8
Single Office	220,000	215,439	190,000-236,808	11	4.0
<b>By Firm Size (# of lawyers in Canada)</b>					
350 or Fewer	196,625	206,144	180,000-220,000	18	5.0
More than 350	213,500	215,287	186,300-221,000	15	3.5
<b>By City</b>					
Calgary	220,000	220,800	—	5	4.0
Montreal	195,650	201,550	—	6	3.7
Toronto	200,000	225,468	190,000-236,808	13	4.5
Vancouver	185,000	186,167	—	6	7.5

Notes: Only the median and average are shown if fewer than ten salaries were reported. A few respondents reported a salary, but not a raise. As a result, the number of raises used in calculating the last column (Median % Raise from June 2023) may be slightly lower than the number of reported salaries. The vast majority of respondents (31) had director titles, including a few assistant or associate directors. Nearly all respondents reported to a Managing Partner, COO, CEO, Chief Talent Officer, or Chief People Officer. Most respondents reported spending time in a combination of recruiting, professional development, and other functions, and thus could not be categorized as primarily working in one area. Those who are categorized as professional development generally spend at least 55% of their time on professional development activities, which are defined here to also include DEI initiatives, career coaching, and alumni relations. There were not enough respondents to provide similar information for legal career professionals in manager or coordinator roles.

Table 2. **Salaries and Percent Raises as of June 1, 2024 by Position Level**

	Median	Average	Half of Salaries Fell in the Range	# of Salaries Reported	Median % Raise from June 2023
<b>Department Heads – All</b>	\$220,000	\$234,658	\$195,000-250,000	13	4.5%
Job Function: Combination of Recruiting, Professional Development, and Other Responsibilities	220,000	239,892	195,000-272,000	11	4.5
Scope of Responsibility: National	220,000	252,250	—	6	4.8
Firm Size: 350 or Fewer Lawyers	220,000	225,187	195,000-250,000	11	4.5
Location: Toronto	234,404	259,176	—	6	4.5
<b>First-level Professional Below Department Head – All</b>	192,500	183,205	170,000-214,000	26	4.0
<b>By Job Function</b>					
Combination of Recruiting, Professional Development, and Other Responsibilities	195,000	193,388	185,000-205,000	15	5.0
Professional Development	220,000	203,900	—	5	NA
Recruiting	131,500	140,500	—	6	3.8
<b>By Scope of Responsibility</b>					
National	202,500	188,875	—	8	4.5
Regional	152,000	150,000	—	5	4.2
Single office	197,500	189,503	190,000-220,000	10	5.0
<b>By Firm Size (# of lawyers in Canada)</b>					
350 or Fewer	175,000	167,281	—	9	8.0
More than 350	200,000	189,550	185,000-220,000	16	3.5
<b>By Location</b>					
Calgary	214,000	191,400	—	5	3.5
Montreal	186,300	187,460	—	5	3.6
Toronto	190,000	183,114	—	9	5.0
Vancouver	185,000	170,167	—	6	6.3

Notes: Only the median and average are shown if fewer than ten salaries were reported. A few respondents reported a salary, but not a raise. As a result, the number of raises used in calculating the last column (Median % Raise from June 2023) may be slightly lower than the number of reported salaries. Nearly all respondents who reported being the department head report to the managing partner, COO, CEO, or Chief People Officer. Most respondents represented on this chart had the term "Director" in their title. A few are a "Chief." Respondents who reported being the first professional below the department head showed more variation in titles and lines of reporting. Titles included Director, Associate Director, Assistant Director, Senior Manager, Manager, and Advisor. Most report to a Managing Partner, Chief, Senior Director, Director, or Head of Human Resources. There were not enough responses for second or third level professionals to include in this report. Most respondents reported spending time in a combination of recruiting, professional development, and other functions, and thus could not be categorized as primarily working in one area. Those who are categorized as professional development or recruiting generally spend at least 55% of their time on those respective activities.

NA: Indicates that fewer than five salary increases were reported.

Table 3. **Bonuses as of June 1, 2024 for Chiefs and Directors**

	Median	Average	Half of Bonuses Fell in the Range	# of Bonuses Reported
All Chiefs and Directors	\$18,358	\$20,904	\$12,000-28,000	30
<b>By General Job Function</b>				
Combination of Recruiting, Professional Development, and Other Responsibilities	21,000	22,425	13,500-29,000	20
Professional Development	20,000	20,071	—	7
<b>By Scope of Responsibility</b>				
National	13,500	18,567	10,000-28,500	12
Regional	15,000	15,203	—	6
Single Office	23,750	26,010	17,000-30,000	10
<b>By Firm Size (# of lawyers in Canada)</b>				
350 or Fewer	16,000	22,853	15,000-30,000	17
More than 350	19,716	18,355	10,000-25,000	13
<b>By City</b>				
Calgary	12,000	11,480	—	5
Toronto	23,750	25,722	19,716-30,400	10
Vancouver	16,000	17,786	—	7

Notes: 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 3% reported that they received no bonus. Only the average and median are shown if fewer than ten bonus figures were reported. Bonuses are most frequently based on merit (90%), and/or firm profitability (57%). Seniority and year-end bonuses were rarely reported.

Table 4. **Salaries and Percent Raises as of June 1, 2024 by Position Level**

	Median	Average	Half of Bonuses Fell in the Range	# of Bonuses Reported
<b>Department Heads — All</b>	\$25,000	\$25,091	\$15,000-30,000	11
Job Function: Combination of Recruiting, Professional Development, and Other Responsibilities	25,000	25,667	—	9
Scope of Responsibility: National	27,000	25,200	—	5
Firm Size: 350 or Fewer Lawyers	20,000	24,600	15,000-30,000	10
<b>First-level Professional Below Department Head — All</b>	17,000	17,672	10,000-25,000	21
<b>By Job Function</b>				
Combination of Recruiting, Professional Development, and Other Responsibilities	22,000	29,346	15,000-25,000	13
<b>By Scope of Responsibility</b>				
National	10,000	13,829	—	7
Single Office	21,000	21,513	—	8
<b>By Firm Size (# of lawyers in Canada)</b>				
350 or Fewer	16,000	19,643	—	7
More than 350	18,358	16,687	10,000-22,500	14
<b>By Location</b>				
Calgary	8,400	11,680	—	5
Toronto	19,716	23,888	—	7
Vancouver	15,000	13,500	—	5

Notes: 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 5% reported that they received no bonus. Only the average and median are shown if fewer than ten bonus figures were reported. Bonuses are most frequently based on merit (89%), and/or firm profitability (53%). Seniority and year-end bonuses were rarely reported.

# Additional Findings

Table 5 provides a summary of years of experience by position level. Overall, the median number of NALP-related years of experience was eight and the average was just over nine. For years in current role, the median was three and the average was five. Figures were higher for department heads. Table 6 provides information on additional job responsibilities, beyond respondents' primary job duties.

Information on remote work is provided in Table 7. Most respondents (59%) indicated flexibility in the number of days per week that they are working remotely. It was rare to be working entirely in-person (9%), and no respondents indicated that they were working 100% remotely.

Table 5. Respondent Demographics – Years of Experience

Years of Experience	All Respondents	Department Heads	First-level Professionals Below Department Head
<b>Years in NALP-related Positions</b>			
Median # of years	8.0	11.0	6.0
Average # of years	9.3	12.2	8.1
Middle range of years	3.5-14.0	5.0-18.0	2.0-14.0
Number reporting	43	14	27
<b>Years in Current Job</b>			
Median # of years	3.0	5.5	3.0
Average # of years	5.0	6.3	4.6
Middle range of years	2.0-6.0	3.0-8.5	2.0-5.0
Number reporting	43	14	27

Note: Only a few of respondents (12%) reported having worked at a law school in a NALP-related position. About 37% of respondents reported having worked with a previous employer in a NALP-related position(s). Among those who did, the median number of years of prior NALP-related experience was seven. About one-third of respondents have worked in a related job such as human resources or at a search firm. Among respondents with an LL.B./JD or LL.M. (34 respondents), all reported having spent time in private practice. Overall, the median number of years in practice was seven and the average was eight.

Table 6. **Other Job Duties**

Job Duties	Percentage of Respondents
Well-being/wellness initiatives	60.0%
Organize social events other than those for summer program	51.1
Practice management	44.4
Other professional and/or administrative staff hiring/supervision/evaluation	26.7
Alumni initiatives	13.3
Marketing/business development/public relations	13.3
Office/facilities management	13.3
Pro bono coordination	13.3
Benefits or payroll for professional and/or administrative staff	6.7
Knowledge management	6.7
Paralegal hiring/supervision/evaluation	6.7
Other tasks	4.0

Note: Percentages are based on all 45 respondents. The percentage reported indicates the percentage of respondents who reported spending at least some of their time on these job responsibilities.

Table 7. Remote Work (in number of days per week)

How many days per week do you work remotely	Percentage of Respondents
None	9.1%
1 day	6.8
2 day	13.6
3 days	6.8
4 days	4.5
5 days	0.0
The number of days varies	59.1

Note: Percentages are based on 44 respondents. Most respondents indicated some amount of flexibility in the number of days they work remotely per week, depending on factors such as workplace events, time of year, job functions, or workload. A few respondents mentioned specific days (e.g., Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays) that they are typically expected to be in the office, but most indicated that their in-office days are flexible.



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