



## Legal Staffers Sound Off

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Do you have a question about working in the legal profession? About LawCrossing? No matter the topic, + send us an e-mail and we'll be glad to answer it for you!

**I've had many miserable experiences working as a paralegal for large law firms. I am leaning towards making a switch. Can you tell me whether the environment for legal staff is any different in small- to medium-sized firms, as opposed to larger (200+ attorneys) firms?**

*Adam F., Legal Researcher/Translator*

There are some differences, but the rule of thumb often is that the pay is better at a big firm but the quality of life is better at a small firm. This may generally be the case, but not always so. For example, larger firms host larger egos, tasks are fairly well divided, and everyone does their piece. So if you are a certified paralegal you'll be doing fairly substantive legal work. Whereas at a small firm, even if you are a paralegal, you might be the only legal support person and may have to answer phones or maintain the files. Alternatively, at a small firm, if you are a general support staff person, you may be given more involved legal tasks based on ability and experience rather than a degree.

**Law Firm Records Clerk or Office Services Clerk. Which one do you think pays more? I just want to know whether to apply to firms or other companies**

*Lisa P., Recent Graduate*

I would think they pay about the same. It depends more on the size of the entity, be it a firm or a business, and the geographic location.

**What are the duties/responsibilities of accounting/payroll positions. Are these types of positions in high demand? I'm relatively**

**new in the job market, and I want to know what to get into.**

*Carrie M., Student*

Depending on the company, you'd be working with all incoming and outgoing checks and invoices, including payroll and/or billing for attorneys and other expenses. The job tends to require an accounting degree or a C.P.A. in most law firms, but experience can be substituted in small firms.

**I have a B.A. in business administration and have 10 years' experience as an insurance claims adjuster. I'm thinking of switching to an accounting position. Should I get certified?**

*Wilbur E., Veteran Worker*

Yes, it's always better to be certified in a field like accounting, however, since you have significant experience dealing with financial issues associated with insurance, you may be able to find work in the insurance field, but in a slightly different capacity.

**I have interviewed with a couple of companies and am expecting an offer soon. Problem is, I don't know what the average or median salary is for a Marketing Manager. Can you help? I don't want to accept an offer without having some idea of what I should be getting**

*Maria G., Marketing Whiz*

The range is between \$50,000 to 60,000 on average, based mostly on geography and the size of the company. Salaries as low as \$40,000 and more than \$80,000 make up the total range.