



Feature

Legal Billing Clerk - a Great Place to Start in a Law Firm

This article discusses the legal staff position of a legal billing clerk. The responsibilities of the legal billing clerk are similar in a law firm to a billing clerk in a business or a corporation. This article will take a look at the education and skill requirements for the position.

Responsibilities of a Legal Billing Clerk

A legal billing clerk is important to a law firm because billing is done by the hour and is charged to the client a lawyer works for during the billing period. The legal billing clerk collects all the hours worked for each client every pay period so the client can be billed for the lawyer's time. The legal billing clerk also must create an invoice to be sent to the clients after calculating and posting the hours.

The legal billing clerk is responsible to verify questions that arise from the billing and verifying rates being charged to clients. The clerk may also need to provide legal clients with complete documentation for all charges billed upon request. After calculating and printing invoices for clients the legal billing clerk will also prepare the invoices to be mailed and many times perform collection responsibilities which include resolving any billing disputes and giving great customer service.

Education, Training, and Skills of the Legal Billing Clerks

Legal Billing clerks must be good with numbers. They should also be organized and detail-oriented. It is a great entry level position when employers provide on the job training. In this instance only a high school diploma is all that is necessary. The market is changing and some employers are hiring legal billing clerks with a few hours of college coursework in bookkeeping or accounting. Law firms may request 1 or 2 years of experience for some legal billing clerks in law firms so they will be familiar with legal terms and practices. Here are some additional skills the law firm might request:

- Maintain confidentiality when assigned sensitive projects with lawyers and their clients
- Skills with Microsoft Excel
- Excellent communication skills
- Be comfortable working in a fast paced environment

Job growth has slowed down for legal billing clerks because there have been advances in technologies and many processes are done by computers. Candidates with good accounting or payroll skills on the computer will find job opportunities. The legal billing clerk position is typically entry-level. Legal billing clerks can always be promoted to higher paying jobs in a law firm and then they leave vacancies for new people wishing to enter the legal staff field. Promotion is always available to individuals who are willing to work and study to learn new skills. It is very common for legal billing clerks to be promoted to supervisor or management positions in a law firm. Other clerks may decide to get more education in accounting or human resources and increase their pay potential.

Salary and Job Outlook

A legal billing clerk usually begins at a salary of about \$28K or \$29K annually. This is a median salary reported by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Pay can vary depending upon experience and education. Also, location can affect pay standards around the country.

The job outlook for legal billing clerks has a good outlook with slow to normal growth expected in light of the economy. Firms will always need someone to input billable hours and print invoices for mailing. Also, there is a very important customer service aspect for legal billing clerks. They have to be able to communicate the billing status whenever legal clients have questions.

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