The Important Role of Different Paralegals in the Legal Field

According to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, a paralegal is a professional who performs much of the legal work that requires knowledge of legal concepts and which is usually assigned by an attorney. In other words, most of the work which paralegals do is similar to that of lawyers, with some limitations: they are not allowed to conduct trials or accept fees.

Paralegals form an important part of the legal industry and are responsible for handling a plethora of tasks and for providing support for the lawyers they work for. Under directions issued by an attorney, most paralegals look after minor legal issues. They help lawyers in different tasks like research of laws, judicial decisions, articles, treaties, and other legal documents that are pivotal to the current legal cases. They may even have to coordinate in the filing of financial records and case documents.

Most paralegals work in law firms, legal departments within corporations, and government offices. Job duties and responsibilities of paralegals mainly depend on the type of organization with which they are associated. Specialized paralegals are mostly needed in government organizations while smaller firms and organizations recruit paralegals to do a variety of tasks. Hence there is no such thing as a typical day in the life of a paralegal because of their varied job profiles and tasks.

Legal assistants to an attorney who specializes in health law may help locate federal regulations, statutes (federal and state), and pertinent periodical articles regarding healthcare issues. They have to prepare asset reports and locate information on a daily basis. Employment opportunities for paralegals are in many different practice areas of law including real estate, probate, litigation, corporate, and employment law.

If one wants to learn the nuts and bolts of the legal profession and understand the vitality of legal research, then the profession of a paralegal will suit them just fine. The paralegal profession is the ground floor to a successful legal career and includes many professionals who have not ventured to law school. There are various tasks which both paralegals and lawyers do, but paralegals do not practice law and are prohibited from dispensing legal advice, accepting legal fees, or conducting trials.

Paralegals help lawyers to prepare cases for trial and try to uncover all the facts of the case. They conduct relevant research which might aid the lawyers for whom they work to get the decision in their favor. Much of the paralegal’s work involves writing reports and drafting legal documents for litigation. Paralegals who work in other areas, such as patent and copyright, real estate, and corporate law, assist in drafting contracts, mortgages, estate planning, and separation agreements.

Paralegals working in government agencies have the responsibility of maintaining reference files and analyzing research material for internal use. Those who work in community legal services help people who live in obscurity and search of legal aid. In short, paralegals spend much of their time in preparing and filing documents and researching legal stuff like affidavits, previous court cases, and helping in depositions.
The pay rates of paralegals vary to a great extent depending on the type of employer, practice area, billing rates, location, level of education, and experience. The US Department of Labor has projected a bright employment outlook for paralegals, because employers are increasingly trying to hire paralegals and legal assistants to cut on costs for tasks which are usually carried out by lawyers. There are very interesting prospects for paralegals in the near future as well as good advancement opportunities.