

## **2009 New York State Paralegal Salary Survey**

The 2009 Salary Survey was provided to ESAPA members across New York State and a total of 259 began the survey with 225 or 86.9% completing it.

The percentage of respondents working in law firms is 80% with the remaining 20% divided up as follows: 9% corporations, 5% courts or government agencies, 1% freelance, and 5% "other" including hospitals and insurance companies.

Of the respondents working in law firms 30% are employed by firms having 1 to 5 attorneys followed by 18% who work in firms of 100+ attorneys. The majority (97.9%) are designated as employees rather than independent contractors, 59% are non-exempt or hourly employees and 41% are exempt or salaried employees, 75.2% receive an evaluation once a year and 75.2% receive a raise once per year as a general rule. Of those receiving a raise, 21% receive \$1751 or more, 19% receive \$1001 to \$1250, and 14% each receive \$751- \$1000 or \$1251 - \$1500.

Those who use the title paralegal were 83.3%, those who use legal assistant were 5.7%, with 11% indicating "other" which included Legislative Specialist and Medicaid Planning Rep.

Regarding years of experience, the survey results showed that more than a third had 16 or more years of experience. The responses in the 1 to 5 year experience were 24.4% overall indicate a large number of paralegals entering the field for the first time.

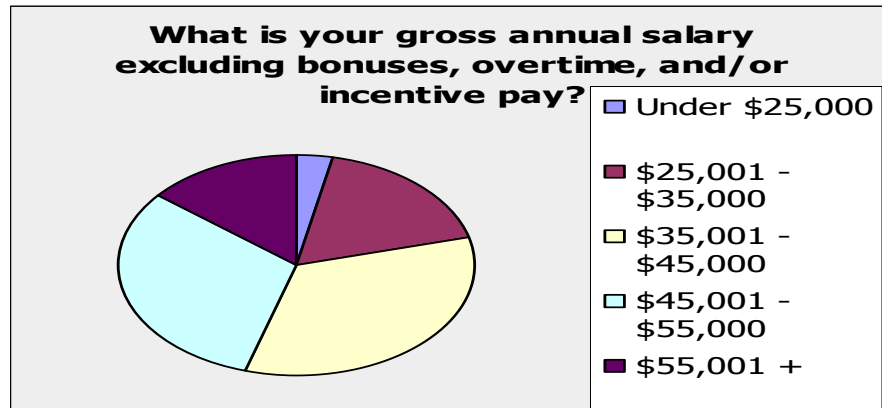
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>
1-5	24.4%
6-10	21.1%
11-15	18.3%
16+	36.2%

Nearly 40% of those responding bill for their time with the remaining 60% evenly split between not billing for their time at all or billing for their time without a required quota. The average quota for billable hours was 1290 hours per year.

Almost three quarters (72%) work 31 to 40 hours a week with 22% working more than 40 hours. The remaining 6% work 21 to 30 hours or under 20 hours per week.

Those receiving a bonus based on merit or other specific criteria were 32%, another 32% received a holiday bonus not specific to title, 25% received no bonus, 10% indicated that all legal staff received a bonus annually, and 1% indicated "other" which included a special bonus based on the settlement of a large case or a labor contract signing bonus.

The survey results for annual salaries showed that 34% of the 234 people who answered the question earned between \$35,001 and \$45,000 as shown by the chart below. This was followed closely by 32% who made \$45,001 to \$55,000. These results indicate that over 60% earn between \$35,000 and \$55,000 annually.



The combined percentage for those obtaining an Associates Degree was 33.8%. The combined percentage of those obtaining a Bachelors Degree was 43.5%. However, as the table below indicates, the majority of those obtaining those degrees are in other than paralegal programs.

High School/G.E.D.	8.8%
Paralegal Certificate	8.0%
Associates Degree - Paralegal Program	19.9%
Associates Degree - other than Paralegal Program	13.9%
Bachelor's Degree - Paralegal Program	9.6%
Bachelor's Degree - other than Paralegal Program	33.9%
Master's Degree	6.0%

Benefits provided by employers are reported to average 18 vacation days, 10 sick days, 9 paid holidays, 4 personal days and 7 days of other unspecified leave time. The majority (60%) can participate in a profit sharing or pension plan, 88% can participate in 401k program with 60% of the employers providing contributions of a specific percentage less than 100%, and 23% of employers match contributions. Only 20% of employers offer full health benefits, 71% of the paralegals who responded pay a portion of their health benefits and 9% have no employer health benefits at all. Of those receiving employer health benefits 49% include vision and dental, 34% include neither, with 8.5% respectively receiving only vision or only dental benefits. Many employers contribute to their employees' attendance at CLEs or dues for participation in professional associations but do not contribute to professional certifications such as RP®

