



## **2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey Report**

### **Section 3 Paralegal Billing Rates**

**March 2008**

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**NALA**  
**2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey Report**

**Section 3**  
**Legal Assistant Billing Rates**

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**Section 3.  
Billing Rates**

This section provides the findings of the NALA Utilization and Compensation Survey related to legal assistant billing rates. In consideration of this, or any data relating to economics keep in mind that mean values are presented. At best, these values only approximate real world situations. Data describing billing vary by many factors, most notably experience, geographic location, and size of firm. Therefore, the numbers are most useful for charting professional trends and changes rather than for direct comparison to any specific situation or person.

In this report, the data describing billing rates and compensation is presented in relation to geographic location, educational backgrounds, size of firm, experience and years with current employer. The following table provides information about the relationships of these factors to billing rates. To understand this table, the highest possible relationship expressed in terms of a correlation coefficient is .99, indicating that a relationship between two factors is almost indistinguishable. Likewise, a correlation coefficient of .00 indicates that two factors are not related. A test of statistical significance was not conducted on these correlations. The relationships are not strong, the strongest relationship shown was firm size to billing rates.

**Table 3.1  
Correlations to Billing Rates  
of Factors Relating to Respondents Demographics**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Correlation to Billing Rates</b>
<b>Population of City</b>	0.048
<b>Years on Current Job</b>	0.121
<b>Years of Experience</b>	0.172
<b>Size of Firm - Number of Attorneys</b>	0.203
<b>Size of Firm - Number of Legal Assistants</b>	0.143
<b>CLA/CP Credential</b>	-0.094
<b>Advanced Certified Paralegal Credential</b>	0.058

The following several tables present the findings related to billing rates without explanation. Data describing findings of previous surveys is included.

**Table 3.2  
Billing Rate by Professional Activity**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Responses</b>
NALA Member	\$102	503
Non-Member	\$100	282
CLA/CP Credential	\$104	548
Not Certified	\$98	258
ACP Credential	\$105	121
Not Specialty Certified	\$101	703

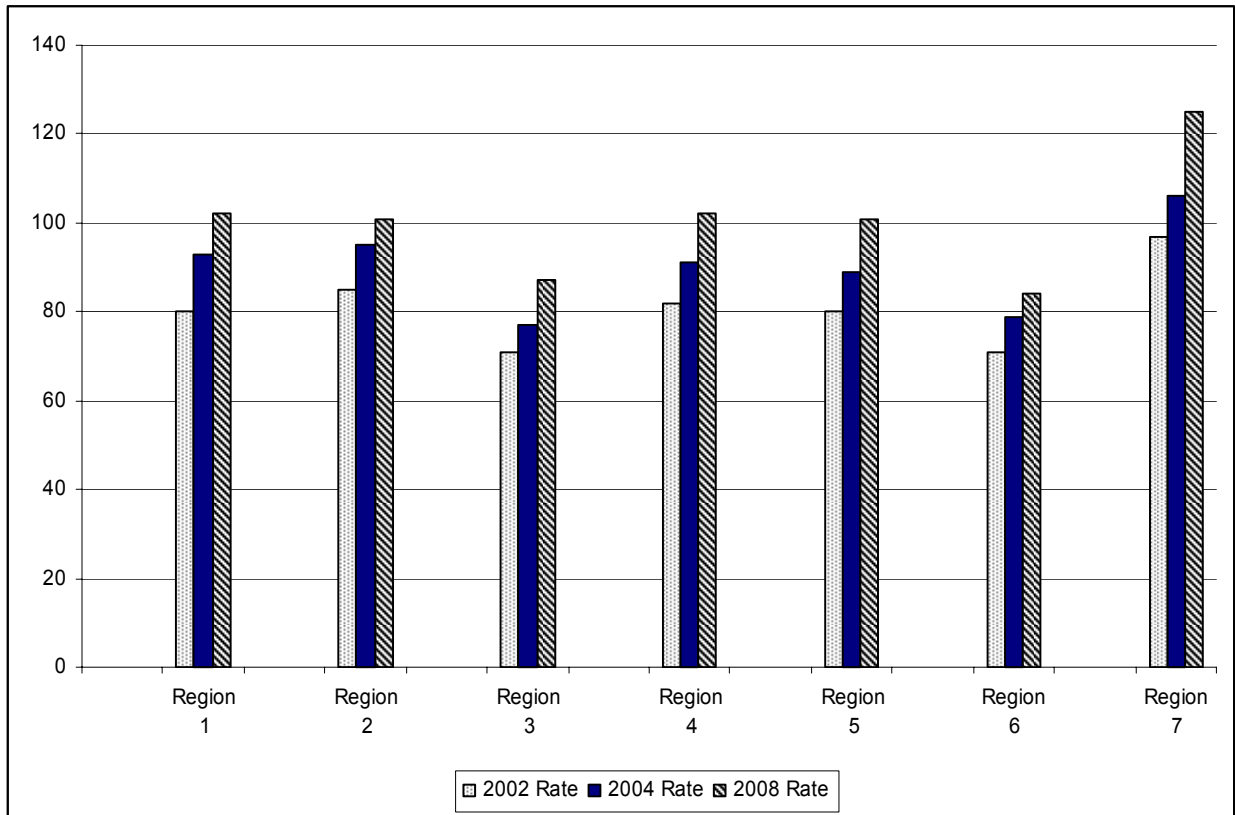
**Table 3.3**  
**Current Billing Rates**  
**General Findings Years 2008-1997**

Value	2008 Responses	2008 Percent	2004 Percent	2002 Percent	2000 Percent	1997 Percent
Less than \$30	18	2%	2%	2%	7%	3%
\$31 - \$35	4	1%	0	1%	1%	2%
\$36 - \$40	4	1%	0	1%	2%	3%
\$41 - \$45	6	1%	1%	3%	3%	7%
\$46 - \$50	19	2%	4%	6%	9%	14%
\$51 - \$55	5	1%	2%	3%	4%	6%
\$56 - \$60	30	4%	4%	7%	9%	13%
\$61 - \$65	33	4%	8%	9%	11%	12%
\$66 - \$70	26	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%
\$71 - \$75	111	13%	17%	15%	15%	13%
\$76 - \$80	42	5%	6%	7%	6%	5%
\$81 - \$85	41	5%	8%	7%	6%	5%
\$86 - \$90	58	7%	6%	6%	4%	3%
Greater than \$90	448	53%	38%	29%	18%	7%

**Table 3.4**  
**Billing Rate by Region 2008-1997 Data**

Region	2008 Rate	2004 Rate	2002 Rate	2000 Rate	1997 Rate
Region 1	\$102	\$93	\$80	\$73	\$62
Region 2	\$101	\$95	\$85	\$64	\$68
Region 3	\$87	\$77	\$71	\$61	\$57
Region 4	\$102	\$91	\$82	\$71	\$66
Region 5	\$101	\$89	\$80	\$66	\$62
Region 6	\$84	\$79	\$71	\$52	\$61
Region 7	\$125	\$106	\$97	\$83	\$72

**Chart 3.1 (3.4)**  
**Billing Rate by Region – 2002,2004 and 2008 Compared**



**Table 3.5**  
**Hourly Billing Rates by Size of Firm 2008-1997**

Firm Size	2008 Average Rate	2008 Responses	2004 Average Rate	2002 Average Rate	2000 Average Rate	1997 Average Rate
Sole	\$97	91	\$84	\$71	\$60	\$60
2-5 Attorneys	\$97	220	\$85	\$76	\$60	\$62
6 - 10	\$97	141	\$81	\$77	\$58	\$61
11 - 15	\$98	90	\$84	\$78	\$70	\$63

Firm Size	2008 Average Rate	2008 Responses	2004 Average Rate	2002 Average Rate	2000 Average Rate	1997 Average Rate
16 - 20	\$100	58	\$96	\$80	\$64	\$64
21 - 30	\$104	68	\$101	\$84	\$74	\$62
31 - 35	\$107	28	\$86	\$83	\$73	\$71
36 - 40	\$88	30	\$91	\$86	\$76	\$68
41 - 45	\$128	13	\$108	\$91	\$71	\$64
46 - 50	\$100	14	\$92	\$82	\$86	\$69
51 - 55	\$111	9	\$90	\$91	\$76	\$68
56 - 60	\$124	13	\$93	\$101	\$75	\$66
61 - 65	\$123	8	\$113	\$83	\$74	\$68
66 - 70	\$125	11	\$105	\$84	\$80	\$66
71 - 75	\$122	5	\$120	\$78	\$66	\$74
76 - 80	\$106	6	\$110	\$97	\$87	\$74
81 - 85	\$117	3	\$126	\$110	\$98	\$78
86 - 90	\$136	4	\$129	\$93	\$81	\$77
91 - 95	\$115	1		\$83	\$91	\$70
96 - 100	\$173	2	\$112	\$92	\$79	\$77
More than 100	\$123	30	\$121	\$109	\$95	\$79

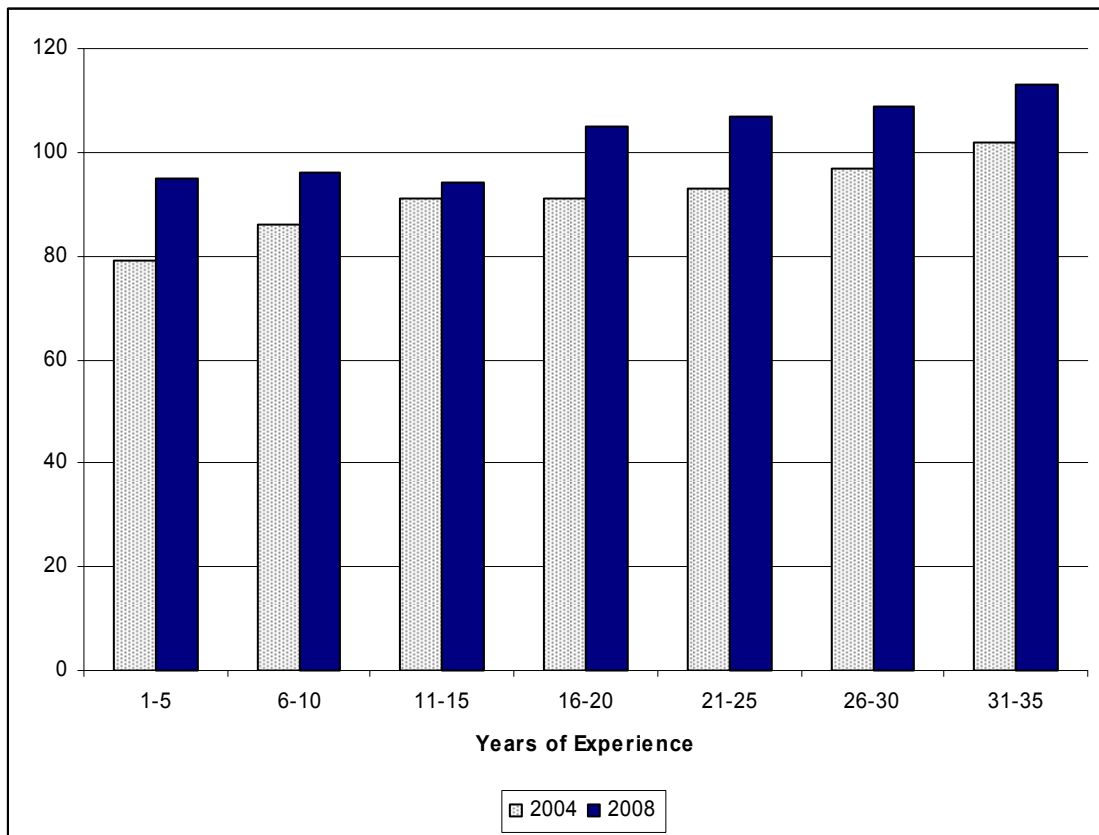
**Table 3.6**  
**Current Hourly Billing Rate by Total of Years of Experience**

Years	Average Rate	Responses	Summary
1	\$83	13	
2	\$98	22	
3	\$94	31	
4	\$93	23	

<b>Years</b>	<b>Average Rate</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Summary</b>
5	\$99	33	1-5 Years \$95
6	\$94	21	
7	\$100	24	
8	\$94	26	
9	\$94	24	
10	\$99	32	6-10 Years \$96
11	\$92	19	
12	\$93	32	
13	\$95	25	
14	\$104	20	
15	\$90	35	11-15 Years \$94
16	\$98	24	
17	\$100	29	
18	\$114	36	
19	\$94	21	
20	\$108	53	16-20 Years \$105
21	\$103	14	
22	\$108	17	
23	\$115	19	
24	\$121	26	
25	\$97	46	21-25 Years \$107
26	\$124	16	
27	\$100	23	
28	\$123	13	
29	\$74	4	
30	\$107	35	26-30 Years \$109
31	\$111	6	

Years	Average Rate	Responses	Summary
32	\$111	12	
33	\$125	12	
34	\$124	5	
35	\$104	13	31-35 Years \$113
36	\$133	3	
37	\$105	4	
38	\$112	6	
39	\$120	1	36-40 years \$109

Chart 3.2  
Hourly Billing Rate by Years of Experience 2008 and 2004



**Table 3.7**  
**Hourly Billing Rate by**  
**Years with Current Employer**

<b>Years</b>	<b>2008 Average Rate</b>	<b>2008 Responses</b>	<b>2004 Average Rate</b>	<b>2002 Average Rate</b>	<b>2008 Summary</b>
1	\$98	139	\$86	\$77	
2	\$105	101	\$85	\$83	
3	\$104	84	\$86	\$85	
4	\$104	67	\$96	\$83	
5	\$94	56	\$91	\$80	1-5 Years \$101
6	\$101	34	\$91	\$80	
7	\$97	45	\$93	\$82	
8	\$106	32	\$90	\$84	
9	\$110	33	\$95	\$84	
10	\$114	39	\$88	\$80	6-10 Years \$105
11	\$99	20	\$93	\$76	
12	\$88	28	\$88	\$83	
13	\$102	17	\$84	\$84	
14	\$95	9	\$98	\$77	
15	\$102	15	\$92	\$81	11-15 Years \$96
16	\$104	11	\$86	\$91	
17	\$89	19	\$86	\$81	
18	\$99	12	\$96	\$81	
19	\$116	8	\$100	\$91	
20	\$97	11	\$102	\$69	16-20 Years \$99
21	\$135	7	\$85	\$86	
22	\$97	5	\$86	\$86	
23	\$97	7	\$86	\$93	
24	\$120	4	\$113	\$82	

Years	2008 Average Rate	2008 Responses	2004 Average Rate	2002 Average Rate	2008 Summary
25	\$107	6	\$102	\$81	21-25 Years \$111
26	\$115	2	\$75	\$110	
27	\$103	3	\$102	\$105	
28	\$108	3	\$140	\$85	
29	\$105	2	\$90	\$85	
30	\$92	5	\$71	\$92	26-30 Years \$102

**Table 3.8**  
**Billing Rate by Type of Paralegal Program Completed**

Legal Assistant Program	2008 Average Rate	2008 Responses	2004 Average Rate	2002 Average Rate	2000 Average Rate	2000 Average Rate
Undergraduate Certificate	\$109	103	\$91	\$81	\$67	\$67
Post Baccalaureate Certificate	\$106	100	\$99	\$87	\$70	\$70
Associate Degree	\$99	260	\$85	\$79	\$68	\$68
Bachelor' Degree	\$96	67	\$91	\$79	\$65	\$65
Other	\$105	116	\$90	\$84	\$64	\$64
None	\$100	181	\$92	\$83	\$70	\$70

**The Participants**

The data is based on analysis of the responses to the 2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey report which was collected by a web based survey from October 15, 2007-February 15, 2008. There were 1434 responses received and utilized for this report. 5% of the population are males; 95% are females. The average age of survey participants is 45. 66% of the participants are members of NALA; 67% have received the Certified Legal Assistant/ Certified Paralegal credential.

Respondents are from a diverse geographical area. Forty-eight states, the Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia are represented by the population. Among the regions of the United States, the Southeast region was represented by 42% of the respondents; Southwest region was represented by 20%; Far West was represented by 11%; Plains States was represented by 14%; Great Lakes was represented by 5%; Rocky Mountain states were represented by 4%; and New England/Mid East was represented by 4% of the respondents. The average population of the cities represented is 544,897. The regions and states are defined in the table below.

The respondents have about 18 years of legal experience; 8 years with the same employer. Most (64%) of respondents work for a private law firm, and, of those, 61% work in firms of 1-10 attorneys; 18% of the respondents work for corporations. With reference to educational backgrounds, 42 of respondents have a bachelor's degree; 36 have an associate's degree.

The 2008 National Utilization and Compensation Survey presents information concerning the work environment, duties and responsibilities, billing rates and compensation levels of legal assistants. Conducted bi-annually since 1986, the survey analysis includes a review of current findings in comparison with findings of previous surveys. Economic data is presented in terms of such factors as size of city, size of firm, educational backgrounds, years of experience, and specialty area of practice.

Region			Number	Percentage
<b>Region 1 - New England/Mid East</b>			57	4%
Connecticut Maine Massachusetts	Maryland New Hampshire New Jersey	New York Pennsylvania Rhode Island		
<b>Region 2 - Great Lakes</b>			64	5
Illinois Indiana	Michigan Ohio	Wisconsin		
<b>Region 3 - Plains States</b>			197	14
Iowa Kansas	Minnesota Missouri	Nebraska North Dakota South Dakota		
<b>Region 4 - Southeast</b>			605	42%
Alabama Arkansas Florida Georgia	Kentucky Louisiana Mississippi North Carolina	South Carolina Tennessee Virginia West Virginia		
<b>Region 5 - Southwest</b>			289	20
Arizona New Mexico	Oklahoma	Texas		
<b>Region 6 - Rocky Mountains</b>			58	4
Colorado Idaho	Montana Utah	Wyoming		
<b>Region 7 - Far West</b>			157	11%
Alaska California	Hawaii Nevada	Oregon Washington		

-End of Section 3 of 4-