

Law Clerk

The person who actually runs the file. A 1 or 2 year diploma, no licence, and lawyers who cannot function without you.

TYPICAL PAY

\$55,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$45k to \$75k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Law firms, corporate legal departments, courts, government

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Any stream. English marks and typing speed matter.
- 2 College diploma** 1 to 2 years
Law clerk (2 years) or legal administrative assistant (1 year). Litigation, real estate, corporate, family and wills procedures, plus legal software.
- 3 Placement** 4 to 8 weeks
Most programs end with a few weeks in a law office. It is your first reference.
- 4 First job** 1 to 2 years
Junior clerk or assistant. You learn one practice area and the firm's systems.
- 5 Optional certification** 1 to 3 years part-time
In Ontario, the Institute of Law Clerks of Ontario runs a voluntary certification. Some firms want it for senior roles.

Pros and cons

- + Fast, cheap training, often hired straight from placement
- + Regular hours and paid overtime
- + You learn how the law really works from the inside
- Pay plateaus unless you specialize or move to a big firm
- The lawyer gets the credit, the clerk gets the deadlines
- Repetitive document work

Good to know

Ontario clerks have their own institute

The Institute of Law Clerks of Ontario has run a voluntary certification for decades. Senior clerks put the designation after their name, and some firms ask for it.

A closing can run on the clerk

In many Ontario real estate firms the law clerk does nearly the whole closing: title search, documents, funds. The lawyer reviews, signs and takes responsibility.

Optional boosts

Corporate. Real estate. Litigation. Estates.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Legal administrative assistants, wages (updated Nov 2025)
Institute of Law Clerks of Ontario
Law Society of Ontario

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/law-clerk>



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