

Legal Assistant

The organized person every lawyer depends on. A year of college, then steady office work in any city.

TYPICAL PAY

\$57,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$39k to \$87k

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, government, courts

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 English, keyboarding and business courses. Many programs test your typing speed.
- 2 Legal assistant program** 8 months to 2 years
 A college certificate or diploma in legal administration. Vancouver Community College runs a 25-week certificate; Ontario and Alberta colleges run 1 and 2-year diplomas. You learn court forms, legal terms, billing and document software.
- 3 Placement** 2 to 6 weeks
 Most programs end with a few weeks in a real law office. Many students are hired from it.
- 4 First job** After graduation
 Junior assistant supporting one or two lawyers. Firms train you on their systems.

Pros and cons

- + Short, cheap training
- + Regular office hours in most jobs
- + Work in any city
- Pay is modest at small firms
- Deadline stress from other people's cases
- Some lawyers are hard to work for

Good to know

80 words a minute

Alberta's career guide says employers prefer legal assistants who type about 80 words a minute. The average adult types roughly 40.

Law clerks have organized since 1968

The Institute of Law Clerks of Ontario has run courses and supported law clerks since 1968, and now has more than 1,200 members. Many started as legal assistants.

Optional boosts

Litigation. Corporate and securities. Real estate. Law clerk.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Legal assistants, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Job Bank: Legal assistants, requirements

Vancouver Community College: Legal Administrative Assistant certificate

Institute of Law Clerks 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/legal-assistant>



Scan for the full clicker