

Paralegal

In Ontario, a licensed legal professional who argues in small claims court, traffic court and tribunals. Elsewhere, a support role.

TYPICAL PAY

\$69,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$45k to \$109k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

**Paralegal firms, law firms,
government offices, tribunals**

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 Any stream. English marks matter for admission.
- 2 Accredited paralegal program** 2 years
 A 2-year college diploma, or a 4-year degree, at a program approved by the Law Society of Ontario. Includes a field placement of about 120 hours.
- 3 Licensing exam** A few months
 One multiple-choice exam set by the Law Society of Ontario, plus a good character check.
- 4 Licensed** Ongoing
 You can open a practice or take a job. Annual fees and continuing education keep the licence.
- 5 Outside Ontario** 1 to 2 years
 A 1 or 2-year paralegal or legal assistant diploma, then work under a lawyer. No licence exists.

Pros and cons

- + In court within a couple of years of finishing high school
- + Cheap, fast training compared to law school
- + Your own business is realistic
- Pay is modest for licensed legal work
- The licence only means something in Ontario
- Some lawyers look down on paralegals

Good to know

Ontario was first

In 2007 Ontario became the first place in Canada to regulate paralegals as licensed, independent legal professionals. There are now more than 8,000 of them.

You can fight a \$50,000 lawsuit with a paralegal

Ontario Small Claims Court handles claims up to \$50,000, raised from \$35,000 in October 2025. Many people hire a paralegal instead of a lawyer because the fee is lower and the paralegal does this every day.

Optional boosts

Your own practice. Provincial or municipal prosecutor. Immigration consultant. Family law.

Where these numbers come from

Law Society of Ontario: Paralegal licensing

Law Society of Ontario

Job Bank: Paralegals, wages (updated Nov 2025)

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/paralegal>



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