

Real Estate Lawyer

The lawyer who closes house sales. Steady, high-volume work at a flat fee per file, and almost no courtroom.

TYPICAL PAY

\$110,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$80k to \$180k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

7 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Small firms, solo practices, bank and developer legal teams

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Strong marks in English and math. No specific requirements.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 3 to 4 years
Any subject. Business or economics helps. Write the LSAT (law school admission test).
- 3 Law school (JD, juris doctor)** 3 years
Take property law, real estate transactions, mortgages and any drafting course.
- 4 Licensing** About 1 year
Article at a firm that does real estate. In Ontario: two licensing exams plus 8 to 10 months of articling, or the Law Practice Program.
- 5 First years** 1 to 3 years
Learn closings under a senior lawyer and experienced law clerks. Most mistakes happen in year one.

Pros and cons

- + Regular daytime hours, rare in law
- + Clients are usually happy: they are buying a home
- + Easy to run your own practice
- Repetitive: the 200th closing looks like the 2nd
- Income drops when the housing market stalls
- One error can cost more than a year of fees; insurance claims are common in this area

Optional boosts

Commercial real estate. Condominium and development law. Lender work. Running your own shop.

Good to know

Ontario reserves closings for lawyers

In Ontario only a lawyer can act on a real estate closing. In BC a notary public can do it, and in Quebec notaries handle most home sales. Same country, three different systems.

Toronto charges land transfer tax twice

Buyers in Toronto pay the Ontario land transfer tax and a separate city tax on top. Your lawyer calculates and collects both on closing day.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Lawyers and Quebec notaries, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Law Society of Ontario: Becoming a lawyer

Federation of Law Societies of Canada

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/real-estate-lawyer>



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