

# Statistical Snapshot of Paralegals in Ontario

from the Paralegal Annual Report (PAR) 2017

## RESPONSE RATES

The Law Society of Ontario has been collecting self-identification data in the Paralegal Annual Report since 2009. The structure of the survey at the time permitted the paralegal to opt to pass over the question and provide no response. This option has been modified so that, while a paralegal can still decline to self-identify, the person must now so indicate by expressly entering this response.

## EQUITY SURVEY: PARALEGAL RESPONSE RATE BY QUESTION, 2017\*

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

Indigenous	92.9%	Identify as Francophone	92.3%
Racialization	84.3%	Able to Practice in French	88.6%
Sexual orientation	85.8%	Have a Disability	88.3%
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>8,081</b>		

\*There is no missing data for gender, which is obtained from administrative records

## Contents

Table 1: **Indigenous and Racialized Paralegals** | 2

Table 2: **Racialization by Age** | 4

Table 3: **Gender, Sexual Orientation, Francophone Identity, Ability to Practice in French and Disability by Age** | 5

Table 4: **Type of Licence, Size of Law Firm and Region by Racialization** | 6

Table 5: **Type of License by Gender by Age, and Region by Gender** | 8

Table 1: Indigenous and Racialized Ontario Paralegals, 2017, ompared to the 2016 Ontario Population

Group	Paralegals		Ontario Population		
			Everyone	Persons in the Labour Force, Ages 25-69	University Graduates in the Labour Force, Ages 25-69
	Number	Percent, excluding missing	Percent		
<b>Indigenous</b>					
First Nations	66	1.0	1.84	1.40	0.54
Inuk	3	0.0	0.03	0.02	0.01
Metis	52	0.8	0.94	0.89	0.49
Other and Multiple Indigenous			0.10	0.07	0.04
<b>Total Indigenous</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.91</b>	<b>2.38</b>	<b>1.08</b>
<b>Racialized</b>					
Arab	110	1.6	1.56	1.12	1.89
Black	461	6.8	4.67	4.18	3.04
Chinese	411	6.0	5.59	5.49	9.14
Filipino	121	1.8	2.34	2.77	3.45
Japanese	8	0.1	0.19	0.18	0.29
Korean	56	0.8	0.63	0.60	1.04
Latino	250	3.7	1.42	1.59	1.29
South Asian	675	9.9	8.68	8.41	13.33
Southeast Asian	84	1.2	0.93	0.89	0.66
West Asian	175	2.6	1.10	1.03	1.61
Other Visible Minority			0.71	0.70	0.45
More than one Racialized Group	62	0.9	0.88	0.61	0.75
Racialized and White	93	1.4			
<b>Total Racialized</b>	<b>2,506</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>28.70</b>	<b>27.57</b>	<b>36.94</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>4,188</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>68.39</b>	<b>70.05</b>	<b>61.99</b>
Not Indigenous, Declined Racialization Question	571				
Declined Indigenous and Racialization Questions	695				
<b>Total</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Number</b>	<b>8,081</b>	<b>6,815</b>	<b>12,998,640</b>	<b>5,810,371</b>	<b>1,962,679</b>

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report, 2016 Canadian Census public use microdata file; analysis by Michael Ornstein

Table 1: **Representation of Indigenous and Racialized Persons** among Ontario Paralegals, 2017, compared to the Ontario Population

1. 1.8% of paralegals are Indigenous, compared to 2.9% of the 2016 Ontario population, 2.4% of labour force participants age 25-69 and 1.1% of university graduates in the labour force age 25 or more. Including paralegals who answered the question about indigeneity but not racialization gives a better and reduced estimate of 1.41% Indigenous paralegals. Further assuming that all paralegals who refused to answer both questions, about indigeneity and racialization, are non-Indigenous, the estimate drops still further to 1.24%.
2. 36.8% of Ontario paralegals are racialized, compared to 29.3% of the 2016 Ontario population, 28.0% of labour force participants age 25-69 and 37.6% of university graduates in the labour force age 25-69. Assuming that the paralegals who do not answer the question about racialization are not racialized, the overall estimate drops to 31.0% racialized, though there is no good reason to think this is entirely correct.
3. The Black, Latino and West Asian communities include considerably more paralegals than their representation in the population. South Asian accounting for the largest percentage of any non-White group, 9.9% of all paralegals, followed by Black paralegals, 6.8%, and Chinese paralegals, 6.0%.
4. Some groups have small numbers of paralegals. There are just 8 Japanese paralegals, 56 Korean, 84 Southeast Asian and 66 First Nations.

Table 2: Racialization by Age for Ontario Paralegals, 2017

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or more	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or more
	Number					Percent, excluding missing				
<b>Indigenous</b>										
First Nations and Inuk	15	16	14	19	5	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.6	0.8
Métis	10	16	13	9	4	0.5	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.6
<b>Total Indigenous</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Racialized</b>										
Arab	42	27	24	16	1	2.2	1.5	1.9	1.4	0.2
Black	100	131	105	93	32	5.2	7.4	8.2	7.9	4.9
Chinese	89	113	120	65	24	4.6	6.4	9.4	5.5	3.7
Filipino	32	41	23	20	5	1.7	2.3	1.8	1.7	0.8
Japanese	1	3	2	2	0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0
Korean	19	19	8	9	1	1.0	1.1	0.6	0.8	0.2
Latino	54	85	53	48	10	2.8	4.8	4.1	4.1	1.5
South Asian	216	166	127	104	62	11.2	9.4	9.9	8.8	9.4
Southeast Asian	27	26	16	13	2	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.1	0.3
West Asian	39	63	38	24	11	2.0	3.6	3.0	2.0	1.7
More than one Racialized Group	24	23	10	4	1	1.2	1.3	0.8	0.3	0.2
Racialized and White	40	29	6	8	10	2.1	1.6	0.5	0.7	1.5
<b>Total Racialized</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>41.6</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>24.2</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>1,225</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>63.4</b>	<b>57.1</b>	<b>56.3</b>	<b>63.2</b>	<b>74.4</b>
Not Indigenous, Declined Racialization Question	169	160	97	95	50					
Declined Indigenous and Racialization Questions	127	213	149	119	87					
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,229</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1,392</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

1. While 74.4% of paralegals age 60 or more are White, declining to 63.2% for paralegals age 50-59 and about 57% for ages 30-49; before shifting back to 63.4% white for the youngest, 20-29 age group.
2. Indigenous paralegals are small in number and their age distribution suggests no trend in their share of the profession over the last 40 years.
3. Amid a decline in the percentage of paralegals who are racialized, about 41% for ages 30-49, compared to 35.3 percent for ages 20-29, comparing age groups there is continuing growth in the proportion of paralegals who identify as Arabs and South Asian, with a decline in all other racialized groups. There is a substantially lower proportion of Black paralegals under 30, than between 30 and 39, down from 7.4% to 5.2%, and for Chinese paralegals the parallel decrease is from 9.4% for ages 40-49 to just 4.6% for ages 20-29.

TABLE 3: Gender, Sexual Orientation, Francophone Identity, Ability to Practice in French and Disability by Age *for Ontario Paralegals, 2017*

	Total	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or more	Total	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 or more
	Number						Percent, excluding missing					
<b>Gender</b>												
Women	5,196	1,754	1,545	918	749	230	64.3	78.7	72.2	60.2	53.8	29.0
Men	2,885	475	595	608	643	564	35.7	21.3	27.8	39.8	46.2	71.0
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>												
LGBT2Q	226	90	64	39	26	7	3.3	4.6	3.5	3.0	2.2	1.0
Not LGBT2Q	6,701	1,854	1,750	1,262	1,171	664	96.7	95.4	96.5	97.0	97.8	99.0
Declined to Answer	1,154	285	326	225	195	123						
<b>Identify as Francophone</b>												
Yes	216	59	44	41	56	16	2.9	2.8	2.2	2.9	4.4	2.2
No	7,243	2,041	1,926	1,353	1,216	707	97.1	97.2	97.8	97.1	95.6	97.8
Declined to Answer	622	129	170	132	120	71						
<b>Able to Practice in French</b>												
Can Counsel and Represent	212	47	46	42	57	20	3.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	4.4	2.7
Can Counsel But Not Represent	99	19	25	22	18	15	1.4	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.4	2.1
Cannot	6,847	1,834	1,782	1,323	1,213	695	95.7	96.5	96.2	95.4	94.2	95.2
Declined to Answer	923	329	287	139	104	64						
<b>Have a Disability</b>												
Yes	444	73	90	98	116	67	6.2	3.6	4.8	7.4	9.7	10.0
No	6,690	1,982	1,792	1,228	1,086	602	93.8	96.4	95.2	92.6	90.3	90.0
Declined to Answer	947	174	258	200	190	125						
<b>All Paralegals</b>	<b>8,081</b>	<b>2,229</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>1,526</b>	<b>1,392</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

1. In 2017, 64.3% of all paralegals were women, a figure that will definitely increase in coming years. The striking feminization is apparent from a comparison of the age groups. From just 29.0% women paralegals in the group for age 60 or more, women account for 53.8% of paralegals age 50 to 59, 60.2% for ages 40-49, 72.2% for ages 30-39 and 78.7% for paralegals under 30.
2. 3.3% of paralegals identify as LBG2Q, with higher percentages among younger paralegals – 4.6% of paralegals age 20-29, 3.0% for ages 40-49, 1.0% for age 60 or more.

TABLE 4a: Type of Licence by Racialization\* for Ontario Paralegals, 2017

	Sole Practitioner	Law Firm Partner	Law Firm Associate	Law Firm Employee	Legal Clinic	In House	Government	Education	Other Employment	Retired or Not Working	Total	Number
	<i>Percent</i>											
<b>Indigenous</b>												
First Nations and Inuk	27	3	2	2	9	5	9	0	28	16	100	64
Métis	36	2	2	4	2	6	6	0	22	20	100	50
<b>Indigenous Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Racialized</b>												
Arab	24	1	2	3	1	2	6	2	33	26	100	103
Black	22	0	1	5	1	5	8	1	31	25	100	437
Chinese	26	2	1	11	1	2	5	1	30	21	100	389
Filipino	20	3	2	5	1	8	6	0	30	25	100	112
Japanese	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	50	13	100	8
Korean	17	4	2	8	0	2	6	0	43	19	100	53
Latino	21	2	2	11	4	5	8	1	27	19		240
South Asian	23	2	2	7	0	2	4	0	31	27		646
Southeast Asian	14	3	1	13	1	1	3	0	29	35	100	79
West Asian	28	1	2	11	1	2	3	1	21	31	100	160
More than one Racialized Group	13	2	0	5	5	2	7	7	34	25	100	56
Racialized and White	11	0	2	18	4	8	11	1	27	17	100	89
<b>Racialized Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,486</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,974</b>
Not Indigenous, Declined Racialization Question	21	3	1	7	1	6	7	1	32	21	100	541
Declined Indigenous and Racialization Questions	25	4	2	11	1	4	8	0	22	23	100	679
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,680</b>

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

\*excludes new licensees

TABLE 4b: Region by Racialization\*\* for Ontario Paralegals, 2017

	South West	Central South	Toronto	Durham, Halton, Peel, York	Central North	North	Ottawa	East	Total	Number
	<i>Percent</i>									
<b>Indigenous</b>										
First Nations and Inuk	17	6	26	25	14	4	1	6	100	69
Métis	13	6	23	13	13	17	8	6	100	52
<b>Indigenous Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>Racialized</b>										
Arab	15	5	37	26	1	0	14	2	100	110
Black	2	5	53	32	2	0	5	0	100	459
Chinese	1	0	58	37	0	0	2	0	100	406
Filipino	2	2	62	31	1	0	1	0	100	121
Japanese	0	0	75	13	13	0	0	0	100	8
Korean	0	0	68	29	0	0	4	0	100	56
Latino	5	8	54	29	1	0	3	0	100	250
South Asian	0	3	36	58	1	0	1	0	100	672
Southeast Asian	4	10	42	42	1	0	2	0	100	84
West Asian	1	5	57	33	1	1	2	1	100	173
More than one Racialized Group	3	3	57	34	0	0	2	0	100	61
Racialized and White	2	4	54	27	3	3	3	2	100	92
<b>Racialized Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,613</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,168</b>
Not Indigenous, Declined Racialization Question	7	5	40	39	4	1	3	1	100	563
Declined Indigenous and Racialization Questions	5	7	40	37	5	1	3	2	100	692
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8,036</b>

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

\*\*excludes paralegals whose address is outside Ontario

1. Paralegals are most likely to work in what the LSO classifies as “other employment” – 28 percent are in this category, compared to sole practitioners, 21%, and “retired or not working” 20%. 10% of paralegals are employees of law firms.
2. Sole practitioners account for 31 of Indigenous paralegals, 23% of racialized paralegals and 20% of White paralegals.
3. Because of their small numbers, we cannot compare the employment of the different racialized groups with confidence.
4. By a wide margin, the largest number of paralegals is in Toronto, 39% of the total, and in the combined category for the Durham, Halton, Peel and York areas surrounding Toronto another 32%. 7% of paralegals are in Ontario’s Southwest, 8% in the Central South and 6% in the Central North. Just 2% of paralegals are in the North, 4% in Ottawa and 2% in the East.
5. 48% of racialized paralegals are in Toronto and 39% are in Durham, Halton, Peel and York, leaving only 13% in the rest of the province. In contrast, only 45% of Indigenous paralegals are in these two largest areas and they are over-represented everywhere else. The North accounts for 10% of Indigenous paralegals, compared to 3% of White paralegals and 1% of racialized paralegals.

TABLE 5a: Type of Licence by Gender by Age\* for Ontario Paralegals, 2017

	Sole Practitioner	Law Firm Partner	Law Firm Associate	Law Firm Employee	Legal Clinic	In House	Government	Education	Other Employment	Retired or Not Working	Total	Number
	<i>Percent</i>											
<b>Women</b>												
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,903</b>
20-29	3.6	0.4	2.2	9.5	0.6	2.6	7.6	0.5	53.6	19.4	100.0	1,574
30-39	10.8	1.0	2.1	12.6	1.4	4.4	9.2	0.9	32.5	25.1	100.0	1,495
40-49	21.8	3.1	2.3	10.1	2.7	5.6	8.8	1.4	24.5	19.8	100.0	885
50-59	23.5	1.7	1.1	11.1	3.9	6.5	10.5	1.9	18.5	21.3	100.0	723
60 or more	23.5	2.2	2.7	9.3	6.6	6.2	9.3	1.3	11.1	27.9	100.0	226
<b>Men</b>												
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,777</b>
20-29	14.2	2.3	4.4	10.9	0.2	1.9	7.9	0.2	34.2	23.7	100.0	430
30-39	28.3	2.5	3.9	13.5	0.5	5.6	8.4	0.4	20.4	16.5	100.0	569
40-49	37.2	4.2	3.4	10.9	0.7	7.1	5.4	0.7	16.1	14.3	100.0	589
50-59	41.2	4.6	2.4	8.1	0.3	7.1	5.7	0.5	13.8	16.3	100.0	631
60 or more	53.6	5.2	2.0	7.0	1.1	9.5	3.8	0.5	6.6	10.8	100.0	558

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

\*excludes new licensees

TABLE 5b: Region by Gender\*\* for Ontario Paralegals, 2017

	South West	Central South	Toronto	Durham, Halton, Peel, York	Central North	North	Ottawa	East	Total	Number
	<i>Percent</i>									
<b>Women</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,169</b>
<b>Men</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>37.7</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,867</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8,036</b>

Source: 2017 Paralegal Annual Report; analysis by Michael Ornstein

\*\*excludes paralegals whose address is outside Ontario

1. Men are much more likely to be sole practitioners, by a margin of 36.0% to 13.0% for women. Every age group has a similar difference is found in each age group, although it is greatest for the 20-29 age group, with 14.2% sole practitioners for men and just 3.6% for women. In contrast, the category for "other employment" includes 34.8% of all women paralegals, just 17.4% of men. Gender differences for the other categories are smaller.
2. There is very little difference in the geographical distribution of male and female paralegals, especially compared to the very large differentials attributable to racialization seen in Table 4.