

NAVIGATOR

Paralegal Change of Status Research

2012-2014

Law Society of Upper Canada

May 2015

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Background and Research Methodology

A. Background

In 2008, the Retention of Women in Private Practice Working Group of The Law Society of Upper Canada (“the Law Society”) conducted a series of consultations to better understand movements within the legal profession in Ontario among women.

The Final Consultation Report of the Working Group put forth a series of recommendations to promote the advancement of women in the private practice of law.

In order to better understand and begin benchmarking movements and changes within the paralegal profession among women, The Law Society commissioned Navigator to undertake an analysis of paralegals who had filed a change of status.

Three waves of research data (2012-2014) have been collected and combined in order to inform the Society about gender-related trends paralegals in addition to informing the development of initiatives to support and retain women and men in the paralegal profession.

B. Research Methodology

This report presents results from a survey conducted online among a sample of paralegal members who changed status in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Paralegal members are required to inform the Law Society immediately when their work or practice status changes. At the end of each month, a file of those who provided The Law Society with a change of status notification was produced. The file was then “cleaned”, removing duplicate records and those records for which an email address was not supplied. Once the cleaning process was complete, the remaining paralegal members were sent email invitations requesting participation in the Paralegal Change of Status Survey.

In 2014, 1516 paralegal members filed a change of status with the Law Society. This is higher than the previous two years: 1,088 filed a change of status in 2012 and 1,273 did so in 2013.

In 2014 the number of paralegal members of the Law Society was 6,071. Based on the 1516 paralegal change of status records that were submitted, it suggest that approximately 15%-20% of paralegal members submitted a change of status in the past year (1,516 records – an estimated 15%-18% duplicate records ÷ 6071 paralegal members).

Among the paralegal members who filed a change of status in 2014 (minus duplicates), 1,410 had provided the Law Society with an active email address. This represents an increase over 2012 (974) and 2013 (797).

A total of 410 paralegals completed the online survey in 2014. In 2012 and 2013, the numbers were 252 and 274, respectively.

The response rates for the three waves of this study have been strong – 32% in 2012, 28% in 2013 and 27% in 2014.

Overview of Survey Population, Survey Sample and Response Rates

	2012	2013	2014
Paralegal Change of Status Population: Number of records sent by The Law Society to The Strategic Counsel	1,088	1,273	1,516
Survey Population: Number of email invitations sent after removing duplicate email addresses and those with no email addresses	797	974	1410
Survey Sample: Number of members who completed the questionnaire	252	274	410
Response rate: Survey Sample ÷ Survey Population	32%	28%	27%

C. Areas of Investigation

The survey instrument was designed to obtain information from each change of status survey respondent about:

- Their previous status (i.e., their status prior to filing a change of status); and
- Their current status (i.e., their status after filing a change of status).

Respondents were asked a number of detailed questions related to their previous and current positions including:

- Practice or work setting;
- Main areas of practice;
- Benefits and policies provided in the workplace;
- The importance of specific reasons in driving a change of status; and,
- Attitudes concerning their workplace environment.

D. Key to Reading Statistical Significance

In order to show significant differences between groups, the following symbols are used. Unless otherwise noted, all differences reported are significant at the 95% confidence interval.

- ↑ = Significantly greater proportion relative to the previous status or position results OR the group(s) being compared
- ↓ = Significantly lower proportion relative to the previous status or position OR the group(s) being compared

E. Caution Regarding Sample Sizes

The sample sizes for some of the groups examined in this research are quite small. When this is the case, it is noted in the report. While only significant changes are reported, these results should nonetheless be considered directional.

Executive Summary

A. Background

Over the three year period from 2012 to 2014, 3877 change of status notifications were submitted to the Law Society by paralegal members. The average each year is 1292 submissions annually.

Focus of Analysis in 2012-2014 Report

Among the total sample of members who responded, 5% and 3%, respectively, filed a change of status notice because they were leaving for or returning from parental leave. As the primary objective of this research is to examine changes of status related to practice setting, the data for members whose change of status relates to parental leave has been excluded from most of the analysis in this report.

A small proportion of respondents report that they are moving into retirement (3% in 2012-2014). This group has also been excluded from much of the analysis as they show a very weak tendency (1%) of returning to practice.

B. Respondent Characteristics

Overall, those changing status are disproportionately women.

Women represent fully two-thirds (67%) of the survey sample.

- This proportion is slightly higher than the representation of women in Law Society's paralegal base of members in 2014 (60%).

Age characteristics of survey respondents are consistent with those of the paralegal membership

Overall, the age characteristics of survey respondents appear to be similar to that of the Law Society's overall paralegal membership.

Almost half (49%) of survey respondents in 2012-2014 are under 40 years of age compared to 47% of Law Society paralegal members (based on 2013 Law Society paralegal statistics).

While about half of the respondent group is under 40 years, it is noteworthy that female respondents are relatively younger (59% are under 40 years of age) compared to male respondents (32%).

Survey respondents are less likely to self-identify as belonging to a "racialized equity-seeking" group as defined by the Law Society.

- Based on 2013 Law Society statistics, 33% of its paralegal members self-identify as "racialized". Among survey respondents, the proportion is only 17%.

C. Work Setting – Previous Versus Current Status Among the Total Sample

The majority of respondents do not hold a position in a paralegal or law firm.

Just less than one-half (47%) of survey respondents were practising as paralegals either in a paralegal firm or law prior to changing status.

The proportion in a paralegal or law firm does not change significantly after a change of status (43%).

As such, after a change in status, the majority (57%) of survey respondents report they are not working in a paralegal or law firm.

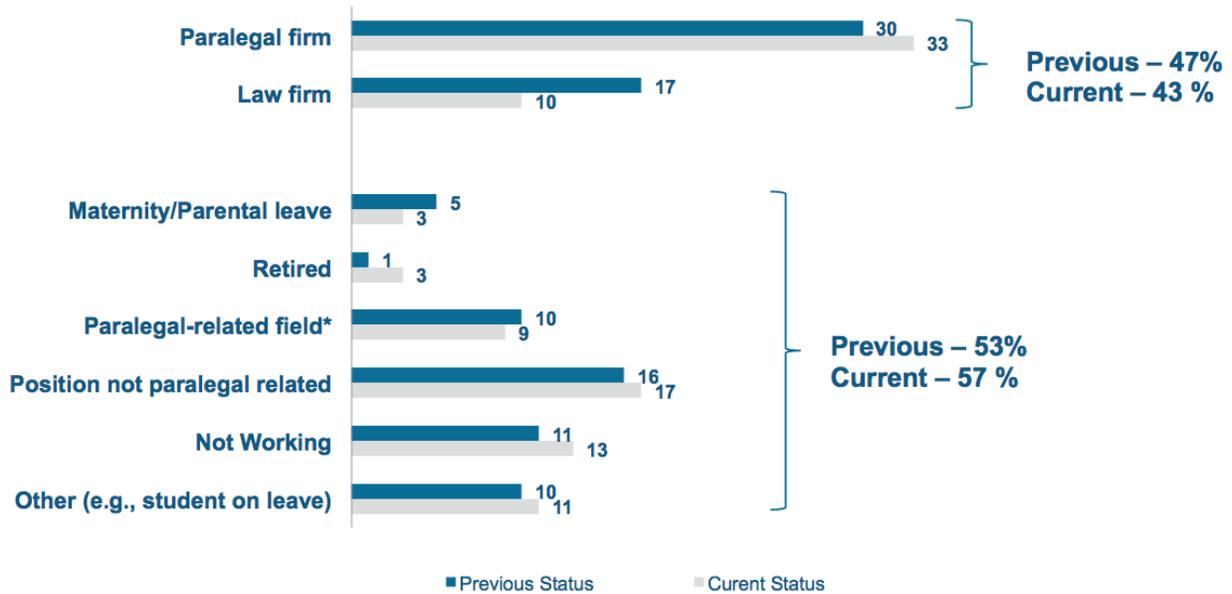
There is a decline in those holding a paralegal position in a law office after their change of status.

A high level overview of the characteristics of those who have changed status shows that in their prior status or position:

- 30% were working as paralegals in a paralegal firm setting;
- 17% were working as paralegals in a law firm setting;
- 53% were in a position or work setting other than those mentioned above.

The proportion in practice in a paralegal firm setting does not change significantly after the change of status (33%). However, there is a significant decrease in the proportion reporting that they conduct paralegal work in a law firm (down 7 points to 10% from previous to current position).

Incidence of Those in Paralegal Practice in Paralegal Firms and Law Firms Previous and Current Positions Among Total Sample



* (e.g. with prosecutor, legal assistant, law clerk)

There is an increase in the proportion who are in sole practice as a paralegal and a decline in those holding positions in paralegal firms with two or more paralegals.

Overall, those who have changed status were as likely to report that prior to their change they practised as a sole paralegal (15%) as they were to report practising in a paralegal firm of 2 or more paralegals (15%).

After a change of status, the trend is toward a position in sole paralegal practice. The proportion in this setting has risen 9 points to reach 24%. Practice in a paralegal firm of 2 or more paralegals declines 6 points with the result that less than one-in-ten (9%) report they are practising in a multi-paralegal firm after a change.

**Incidence of Those in Paralegal Firm in Previous and Current Position
Among Total Sample**

	All Survey Respondents 2012-2014	
	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %
IN PARALEGAL FIRM	30	33
In sole practice as paralegal	15	24↑
In a paralegal firm with 2 or more paralegals	15	9↓

There are declines in the proportions of those who are undertaking paralegal work both in sole practitioner legal firms and multi-lawyer law practices.

Those undertaking paralegal work in a law firm in their previous position were more likely to be in a law firm of two or more lawyers (11%) than a sole legal practice (6%). While this trend continues after a change of status, those in a firm of two more lawyers declines to 8% and only 2% report practising within a sole practitioner lawyer after the change.

**Incidence of Those in Law Firm in Previous and Current Position
Among Total Sample of Paralegal Change of Status Respondents**

	All Survey Respondents 2012-2014	
	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %
IN LAW FIRM	17	10↓
With a lawyer in sole practice	6	2↓
In a law firm of 2 or more lawyers	11	8↓

The composition of those paralegals who are practising within paralegal firm or law firms is dynamic.

While significant proportions of respondents have remained in the same type of setting or status after a change, there are also many respondents who have moved from practice in a paralegal or law firm to other types of positions, or have moved into paralegal or law firms from other types of settings.

The 43% of those who are undertaking paralegal work within a paralegal or law firm in their current position is almost equally made up of those who were practising in one of these settings prior to a change (21%) and those whose status/position was NOT in a paralegal or law firm prior to a change (22%).

Those moving into and returning from parental leave represent a small group of change of status submissions. Yet, for most, maternity/parental leave does not immediately appear to be a trigger for a change.

Just 8% of all respondents report that that they are either returning from maternity/parental leave (5%) or moving into maternity/parental leave (3%). Those groups are comprised almost completely of women (96%).

An examination of the women returning from maternity leave (n=41) suggests that the majority (61%) return to their original position. This result should be considered to be directional only due to the very small sample size. The sample size mitigates any further analysis among this group.

Note: The remainder of the analysis undertaken in the report focuses on those whose change of status was not due to maternity/parental leave OR retirement.

Women are leaving practice within paralegal or law firm whereas men are increasing their representation within these settings (excluding those whose change is due to maternity/parental leave or retirement).

A comparison of the previous and current practice settings of women and men shows that, prior to a change of status, similar proportions were practising in a paralegal or law firm (48% and 49%, respectively).

After a change, however, women are less likely (40%) than men (55%) to be practising in one of these two settings.

Thus, the majority of women who submit a change of status unrelated to parental leave or retirement are not working in a paralegal or law firm after their change of status (60%).

	EXCLUDING THOSE WHOSE CHANGE RELATED TO MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE OR RETIREMENT (2012-2014 results combined)			
	Women (n=513)		Men (n=280)	
	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %
NET: Position in paralegal or law firm	48	40↓	49	55↑
NET: Not practising in a paralegal or law firm	52	60↑	51	45

The decline in the representation of women in a paralegal or law firm setting is a result of a decline in the proportion of women working in a law firm setting.

Women were more likely to conduct paralegal work in a law firm in their previous position than were men (20% and 13%, respectively). Both genders experienced a decline in their representation within a law firm setting after a status change (down 7 points among women; down 8 points among men). Despite this decline, women remain more likely to have a current position with a law firm (13%) than do men (5%).

The decline in a law firm practice setting among men is offset by a strong increase in the proportion who are practising in a paralegal firm after a change in status (up 14 points to reach 50% after a change of status).

By contrast, women do not see a rise in their representation within paralegal firms. After a change in status, the proportion of women practising in a paralegal firm does not change significantly.

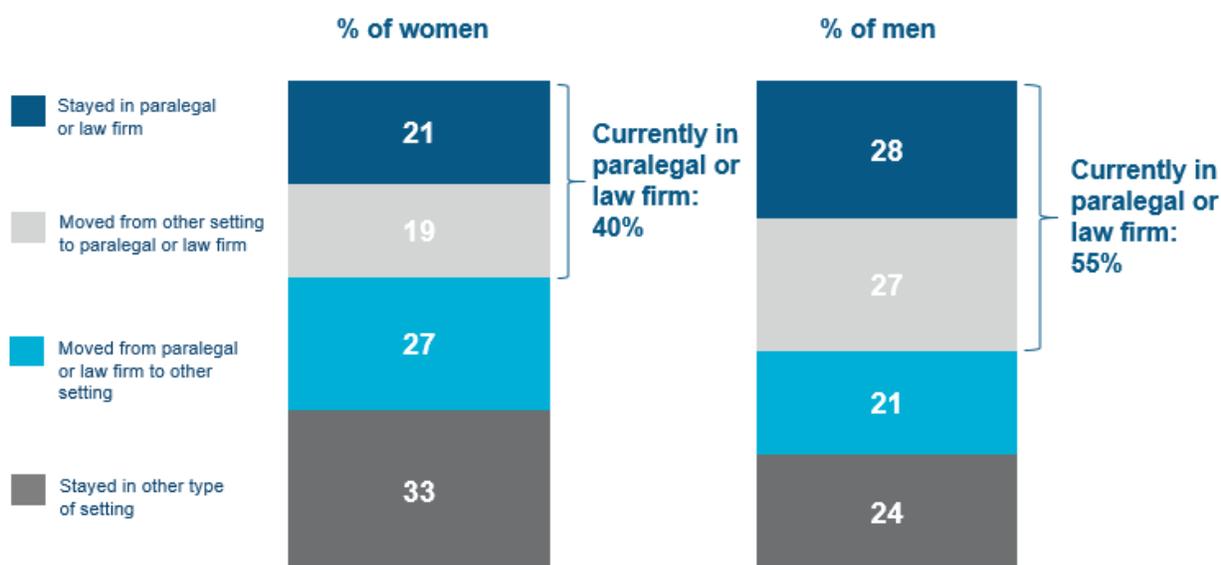
As a result, the gap between women and men practising in a paralegal firm increases after a change of status. Nearly twice the proportion of men (50%) report that their current position is at a paralegal firm compared with women (27%).

	EXCLUDING THOSE WHOSE CHANGE RELATED TO MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE OR RETIREMENT (2012-2014 results combined)			
	Women (n=513)		Men (n=280)	
	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %
In a paralegal firm	28	27	36	50↑
In a legal firm	20	13↓	13	5↓

The following chart provides a holistic picture of the movement across the different types of status. It clearly illustrates that in the end, a greater proportion of women (33%) than men (24%) in a position or status outside of a paralegal or law firm both prior to and after their change of status.

By contrast, men are more likely to have remained in a paralegal or law firm setting after a change in status (28%), or to have moved into this setting as a result of that change (27%), than are women (21% and 19%, respectively).

Movement Between Practice in Paralegal or Law Firm and Other Types of Settings



In analysing factors that are driving a change of status, much of the analysis focuses on those who are moving in or out of a position in a paralegal or law firm:

- Those who have left a paralegal or law firm setting to move to another setting/status;
- Those who have remained in a paralegal or law firm; and,
- Those who have moved into a paralegal or law firm setting from another setting/status.

Overall, the gender composition of those who have moved from a paralegal or law firm to another setting/status and those who have stayed within a paralegal or law firm settings differs significantly:

- Women are more likely to be represented among the group moving out of a paralegal or law firm setting to another setting or status (70%) than men (30%).
- By comparison, the group which has remained in practice within a paralegal or law firm has a smaller representation of women (58%). Over four-in-ten of this group are men (42%).
- Men are most likely to be represented among the group that has moved into a paralegal or law firm setting from another setting/status (44%).

D. Benefits and Employment Policies as Potential Influencers of a Change of Status

An investigation into which benefits or employment policies were available to respondents in their previous position compared with those that are available in their new position has been undertaken to explore whether these benefits/policies are potential drivers of a change of status. An increase in the incidence of these benefits/policies from previous to current position may suggest that they, in some measure, played a role in the decision to change positions. While an analysis of this nature cannot determine a direct relationship, these incidences do provide a perspective as to the types of workplace benefits/policies that are valued by paralegals.

1. Differences based on an originating position within a paralegal or law firm

Examining solely those who started out in a paralegal or law firm, the results suggest there are differences in the availability of specific benefits/policies to those who remained in one of these settings, as compared with those who moved to another setting or status (not in a paralegal or law firm).

Among those remaining in a paralegal or law firm setting, access to enhanced professional development opportunities and more flexible full-time work increased from previous to current position. This suggests that these characteristics may play a contributing role in the decision to continue practising within one of these settings.

Among those who have moved from practice in a paralegal or law firm to another setting, the incidence of access to a variety of benefits (including financial and health benefits, flexible work benefits, parental benefits and other offering and policies) increases significantly from previous to current status. This suggests that those who moved to a position outside of paralegal or law firms were seeking a more comprehensive suite of benefits than they felt they were receiving in their previous setting.

2. Differences based on gender (among those who moved into or out of practice within a paralegal or law firm)

A direct comparison of women and men who have moved in or out of a paralegal or law firm setting does suggest some gender-based differences in what may be driving the direction of a change of status.

A number of benefits/policies may have more influence on a change of status among women because women are more likely than men to report increased availability of these benefits/policies in their current position relative to their previous position. These benefits are:

- A pension plan (up 8 points to 20%)
- Part-time work (up 10 points to 27%)
- Leave of absence or sabbatical (up 13 points to 25%)
- Continuing professional development (up 11 points to 50%)
- Harassment and discrimination policy (up 10 points to 42%)
- Accommodation for special needs policy (up 11 points to 30%)
- Formal mentoring policy (up 6 points to 20%)

Among men, there is only a single benefit for which the incidence of availability increases from previous to current position: flexible full-time work hours (up 15 points to reach 44% among those who have it in their current position). Women also report that this benefit is available in their current versus previous position (up 16 points to 46%).

This suggests that women are more likely to be seeking positions that offer a broad array of benefits/policies, whereas the drivers for men seeking a change of status may not reside strictly in the realm of benefits or employment policies, but perhaps in another set of factors.

E. Stated Importance of Specific Issues in Driving Change of Status

Respondents were also asked directly to indicate the extent to which certain factors were important to their decision to change status. In total, 18 factors were explored, including practice opportunity-related factors (e.g., use of skills, availability of mentorship programs), culture or work-management options that contribute to work-life balance (e.g., flexible hours, availability of part-time hours or leaves), and benefits-related offerings (e.g., pensions).

On a prompted basis, the factor most likely to be driving a change in status is that the new position allows respondents to use their talents and paralegal skills (57% deem it to be an important in their decision to make a change).

A second tier of factors based on relative importance includes the perception that the new position allows balance between career and family (50%), that the pay is better (49%), that there is freedom to decide what one wants to do in one's job (49%) and that the current position provides flexible full-time work hours (46%).

1. Differences based on movement into or out of practice within a paralegal or law firm

When the ranking of top drivers are directly compared, key differences in the importance of factors driving a decision to change status between those who remain in and those who leave practice in a paralegal or law firm become evident.

As the table below illustrates, those who have moved out of a position in a paralegal or law firm to another setting or status place the greatest emphasis on remuneration and benefits, job security and opportunities for promotion as factors contributing to their change of status. By contrast, those who have remained within a paralegal or law firm setting are more likely to identify the ability to use their paralegal skills as a key driver, along with factors that relate to control and flexibility over work hours and scheduling.

Both groups place strong emphasis on a position that allows a balance of career and family.

Ranking Based on Importance Among Those Whose Originating Position was Practising in a Paralegal or Law Firm

Moved from paralegal or law firm to other position/ status			Moved from paralegal or law firm to paralegal or law firm		
RANKING BASED ON IMPORTANCE		% IMPORTANT	RANKING BASED ON IMPORTANCE		% IMPORTANT
1	The pay is better	52	1	The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	62
2	Job security is good	47	2	The job allows me to balance career and family	54
3	The job allows me to balance career and family	40	3	My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	48
	The opportunities for promotion are excellent				
4	The benefits are better	39	4	I control the scheduling	46

2. Differences based on Gender

Both women and men place relatively high importance on the ability to use their paralegal skills and the opportunity to balance career and family in their decision to make a status change. However, the other top ranked issues considered important in driving a change differ between men and women.

Men place greater importance on controlling the nature and scheduling of work within their new setting.

Women are more likely to consider remuneration and job security as important factors.

Ranking Based on Importance Among Women And Men

Among Those Who Have Moved Out of Into a Paralegal of Law Firm					
WOMEN (n=315)			MEN (n=201)		
	RANKING BASED ON IMPORTANCE	% IMPORTANT		RANKING BASED ON IMPORTANCE	% IMPORTANT
1	The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	59	1	The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	53
2	The pay is better	55	2	I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	51
3	The job allows me to balance career and family	54	3	I control the scheduling	45
4	Job security is good	50	4	The job allows me to balance career and family	44

Beyond the issues noted above, women are significantly more likely than men to identify financial and other types of benefits (including pension and paid maternity/parental leave) as important in driving their change of status.

F. Conclusions

Women represent a greater proportion of member paralegals than do men. Further, among those who have submitted a change of status, women are even more strongly represented.

Women are more likely to be moving out of practice in a paralegal or law firm than are men. They appear to be leaving to a greater extent than are men in order to find work environments that offer not only a greater ability to balance their career and family, but also provide them with job stability and benefits, both financial and other (e.g., remuneration, pension, paid parental leave).

Men who are changing status are more likely to be moving into a paralegal or law firm or staying within these two settings. Further, there seems to be a trend among men to be moving into sole paralegal practice. While men are similar to women in that they are seeking positions that allow them to use their paralegal skills and to balance career and family, the key driving factors in their change of status appear more strongly associated with greater control over work content, environment and scheduling.

Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents

The section illustrates the demographic characteristics of those who have participated in the Paralegal Change of Status survey in the past three years. These respondent characteristics are contrasted with the characteristics of the paralegal member base as determined by the Law Society in 2013 (or 2014 when available).

Gender of Members Compared with Survey Respondents

- The paralegal membership of Law Society in 2014 was composed of 58% women and 42% men.
- By comparison, women are much more strongly represented among those who have made a change of status submission from 2012 to 2014. Among the survey sample base, 67% are women.

**Gender of Law Society Paralegal Members
Compared to Change of Status Survey Respondents**

		All Paralegal Survey Respondents 2012-2014	
		Law Society Membership Statistics (2014)	Survey Respondents
n=		6711	894
		%	%
	Women	58	67
	Men	42	33

Age of Members Compared with Survey Respondents

The ages of those who completed the change of status survey are similar to those paralegal members overall according to the Law Society's 2013 member statistics. Fully one-quarter (25%) of respondents are under the age of 30. Almost half (48%) are between the ages of 30 and 49.

On average, women who have changed status from 2012-2014 are younger than men who have changed their status (38 years of age compared to 47 years). Women who have submitted a change of status are almost three times more likely than men who have made a change of status to be under the age of 30 (32% and 12%, respectively).

**Age of Law Society Paralegal Members
Compared to Change of Status Survey Respondents**

	Law Society Membership Statistics 2013	Survey Respondents	Men	Women
n=	5428	894	298	596
	%	%	%	%
<30 years of age	24	25	12	32
30-39 years	23	24	20	27
40 to 49 years	22	24	26	24
50 to 65 years	} 30	23	35	17
Over 65 years		3	7	1
AVERAGE AGE	NOT AVAILABLE	41	47	38

Year of Paralegal License and Length of Time as Paralegal

About one-quarter of respondents (27%) report that they were licensed as a paralegal in Ontario in 2007 or 2008. The largest group (40%) of respondents were licensed in 2009-2011.

Over one-in-ten respondents (13%) report that they have not yet practised as a paralegal. Nearly three-quarters (61%) of respondents have been working as a paralegal in Ontario for less than five years. Close to one-in-ten have worked for 5 to 9 years, 10 to 19 years, or 20 or more years (11%, 8%, and 7%, respectively).

Year of Paralegal License and Length of Time as Paralegal: Law Society Paralegal Members Compared to Change of Status Survey Respondents

	Law Society Membership Statistics 2014	Survey Respondents
n=	558	894
	%	%
YEAR OF PARALEGAL LICENSE		
2007-2008	n/a	27
2009-2011	36	40
2012-2014	64	33
LENGTH OF TIME AS PARALEGAL		
Have not yet practiced (0 years)	71	13
Less than 5 years		61
5 to 9 years	29	11
10 to 19 years		8
20+ years		7

Membership in Equity-Seeking Communities

The 2013 Law Society paralegal membership data indicates that 2% of its paralegal members were from Aboriginal communities and 33% were racialized.

While the proportion who self-identify as belonging to an Aboriginal community within the Change of Status respondent group is consistent with the Law Society's membership statistics, the proportion who self-identify as racialized is significantly lower.

- Only 17% of respondents self-identify as a member of a racialized equity-seeking community.

Membership in an Equity-Seeking Community

	Law Society Paralegal Membership Statistics (2013)	All Survey Respondents (2012-2014)
n=	4456	894
	%	%
RACIALIZED EQUITY-SEEKING*	33*	17*
Arab	1	n/a
African Canadian/Black	7	6
Chinese	5	3
East Asian	1	1
Latin Hispanic	4	1
South Asian	9	5
South East Asian	2	2
Other	4	4
NON-RACIALIZED EQUITY-SEEKING	n/a	14*
Aboriginal communities	2	2
Francophone	n/a	2
Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual	2	2
Person with disabilities	5	6
Other*	n/a	5
DO NOT IDENTIFY WITH EQUITY-SEEKING COMMUNITY	65**	69

* Note: Multiple mentions accepted.

** Note: In Law Society paralegal member statistics, this group is defined as "white".

Change of Status Q.4: Please check any of the following characteristics with which you self-identify.

Change of Status Q.5: If you have self-identified as being Aboriginal or racialized/person of colour, please specify how you identify yourself.

Change of Status – Overall Trends

A. Previous Position versus Current Position – A Decline in Practice Within Law Firms

The analysis provides an overview of the type of position held by respondents prior to their change of status and the type of position they currently hold. Results are presented to illustrate the degree to which there has been movement to or from paralegal practice in a paralegal firm, paralegal practice in a law firm, or a setting or situation in which an individual is not currently practising as a paralegal (“non-paralegal”). This latter category includes working in a corporate, government or educational position, other types of employment, retirement, maternity/parental leave, and unemployment.

Over a three year period (2012-2014), almost one-half of those who submitted a change of status report that they worked in a paralegal firm or law firm prior to the change (i.e., previous position).

- Almost twice the proportion report they were working in a paralegal firm (30%) as report working in a law firm (17%).

That ratio changes significantly after the change of status. The proportion working in a paralegal firm (33%) is three times that of the group working in a law firm (10%). This is due to the overall decline in the proportion of those working in a law firm (down 7 points from previous to current position).

Incidence of Those in Paralegal Practice in Paralegal Firms and Law Firms in Previous and Current Positions Among Total Sample

	Paralegal Practice In PARALEGAL Firm: <u>PREVIOUS</u> Position	Paralegal Practice In PARALEGAL Firm: <u>CURRENT</u> Position	GAP
COMBINED 2012-2014 (n=894)	30	33	+3
	Paralegal Practice In LAW Firm: <u>PREVIOUS</u> Position	Paralegal Practice In LAW Firm: <u>CURRENT</u> Position	GAP
COMBINED 2012-2014 (n=894)	17	10	- 7

B. A Large Group of Paralegal Licensees are Not Practising in a Paralegal or Law Firm

The majority of those who submitted a change of status report from 2012-2014 report that they are not currently practising as a paralegal in a paralegal or law firm.

- One-in-ten (9%) indicate that they are currently working in a field in which they are using their paralegal skills (e.g., with the prosecutor, as a legal assistant or law clerk).
- Over one-in-ten (13%) currently hold a position outside a paralegal or law firm setting (e.g., are working in a corporation, in government, or in an educational setting) and report that they are not practicing as a paralegal in that position. A small proportion (4%) reporting working in one of these settings as a paralegal.
- Over one-in-ten (13%) are not currently working for pay.

Noted previously, one-third of respondents (33%) report that they are currently working as a paralegal within a paralegal firm. Another 10% are working as paralegals within a law firm.

Incidence of Those in Paralegal Practice in Previous and Current Positions Among Total Sample

	All Survey Respondents 2012-2014 (n= 894)	
	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %
PARALEGAL PRACTICE IN PARALEGAL FIRM	30	33
PARALEGAL PRACTICE IN LAW FIRM	17	10↓
NOT PRACTISING OR NOT PRACTISING IN PARALEGAL/LAW FIRM	53	57
Maternity/parental leave	5	3
Retired	1	3↑
Position in paralegal-related field (e.g., prosecutor, legal assistant, law clerk, opening firm)	10	9
Position not in paralegal-related field (e.g., corporate, government, education)	16	17
Not working (e.g., not working for pay, unemployed)	11	13
Other (e.g., student, never worked as paralegal, on leave)	10	11

C. An Increase in Paralegals Practising As Sole Practitioners and Overall Decrease in Practice Within Law Firms

The incidence of those who are in sole paralegal practice increases after a change of status. Only 15% of respondents report that they were in sole practice in their previous position. After a change in status, fully 24% are in sole practice, a 9-point increase.

There is a decline in the proportion who report that they are in a paralegal firm with two or more paralegals (down 7 points from 16% in their previous position to 9% in their current position).

Further, there has also been a decline in the incidence of those holding a position in a law firm. Only 10% of respondents report that their current position is in a law firm, compared to 17% in a previous position.

The decrease is evident across both sole practitioner law firms (single lawyer) and law firms with two or more lawyers.

- There is a 4-point decline in paralegals who report working in a law firm with a sole practitioner in their previous position (6%) compared to their current position (2%).
- Similarly, there is a 3-point decline in paralegals who report working in a multi-lawyer law firm in their previous position (11%) compared to their current position (8%).

Incidence of Those in Paralegal or Law Firm in Previous and Current Position Among Total Sample

	All Survey Respondents 2012-2014 (n= 894)	
	PREVIOUS %	CURRENT %
IN PARALEGAL FIRM	30	33
In sole practice as paralegal	15	24↑
In a paralegal firm with 2 or more paralegals	15	9↓
IN LAW FIRM	17	10↓
With a lawyer in sole practice	6	2↓
In a law firm of 2 or more lawyers	11	8↓

D. Less than One-in-Ten of Those Changing Status are Moving into or Returning from Maternity/Parental Leave

An average of 8% of respondents over three years (2012, 2013 or 2014) report that they were either returning from or going into a period of parental leave:

- 5% report that their change of status involves a return from maternity/parental leave;
- 3% report that they are moving into maternity/parental leave.

Women comprise the vast majority of the group whose change of status involves moving into or returning from maternity/parental leave. Over one-in-ten women (68 of all 596 female survey respondents) compared to only one percent of men (3 of all 298 male survey respondents) report parental leave is a factor in their change of status.

Change of Status Related to Parental Leave

	All Survey Respondents 2012-2014	
	WOMEN	MEN
	n=596	n=298
	%	%
Changed status and parental leave was a factor	11	1
Changed status and parental leave was not a factor	89	99

Those who indicated they are returning from a parental/maternity leave were asked a set of detailed questions to determine if they had returned to their previous position or status after their leave or whether they had changed their position/status upon their return from leave. ***Due to the small sample size of these respondents, any analysis of this group should be considered directional only.***

Among the group of women returning from a maternity leave (n=41), a majority (61%) returned to their previous position or status after their leave.

The sample of women who have changed their position/status after returning from maternity leave is too small to allow further analysis (n=16).

E. The Group Undertaking Paralegal Work in a Paralegal Firm or Law Firm Appears to be Fluid

The results discussed to this point do not provide a clear picture of the movement to and from paralegal practice within paralegal and law firms. While significant proportions of Change of Status survey respondents have remained in the same type of position, there are also many respondents who have moved from practice in a paralegal or law firm to other types of positions, or have moved into paralegal or law firms from other types of positions after their change of status.

The 43% who report that they are practising in a paralegal firm or law firm after a change of status is composed of:

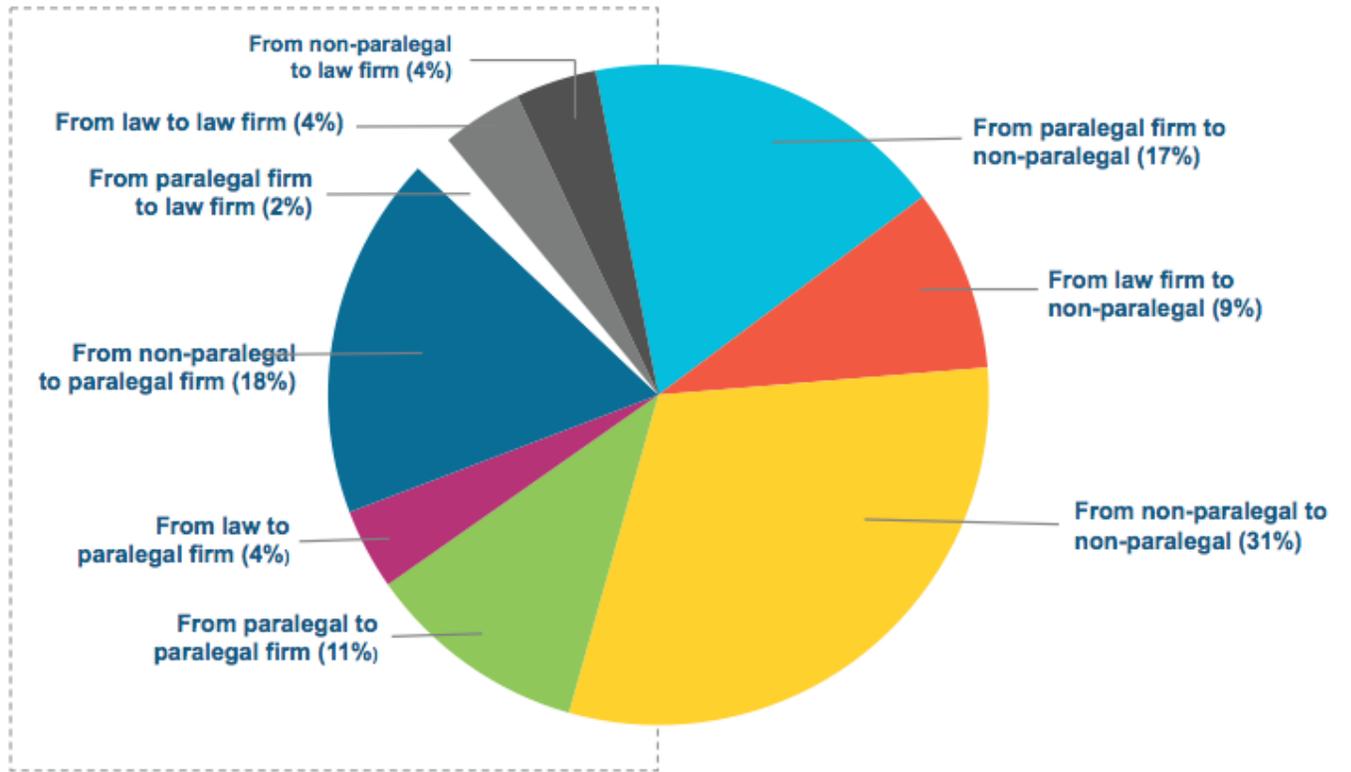
- 11% who were in a paralegal firm and stayed in a paralegal firm after their change;
 - 4% who began in a law firm and moved to a paralegal firm;
 - 2% who began in a paralegal firm and moved to a law firm; and,
 - 4% who began in a law firm and stayed in a law firm;
 - 18% who were not practising in a paralegal or law firm and transitioned to a paralegal firm;
 - 4% who were not practising in a paralegal or law firm and transitioned to a law firm.
-
- The list items are grouped with brackets on the right side. The first four items (11%, 4%, 2%, and 4%) are grouped together with a bracket labeled '21%'. The last two items (18% and 4%) are grouped together with a bracket labeled '22%'. The total percentage shown is 43%.

Thus, 21% of all respondents who were practising in a paralegal or law firm prior to their change of status remained in one of these two types of practice settings. The remainder (22%) moved into a paralegal or law firm from another type of position or status.

As the graph on the following page illustrates, there is a substantial proportion of respondents (53%) who are not practising in a paralegal or law firm after a change of status. This group is composed of:

- 17% who held a position in a paralegal firm and moved to a position outside of a paralegal or law firm;
- 9% who held a position in a law firm and moved to a position outside of a paralegal or law firm; and,
- 31% who were not practising in a paralegal or law firm and remained outside of these two practice settings.

Overview of Incidence of Those in Paralegal Practice in Previous and Current Positions



Characteristics of Status Change

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

A. Status Characteristics of Sample in Which Parental Leave and Retirement are Not Factors

The remainder of the analysis provided in this report is undertaken among survey respondents excluding those who have changed status for maternity/parental leave or retirement.

The table below provides a detailed overview of the type of position held by these respondents prior to their change of status and the type of position they currently hold. It illustrates the same trends that were evident among the total sample of respondents:

Among those whose change excludes one related to maternity/parental leave or retirement, no significant change in the proportion of those who practise in a paralegal firm is found.

However, there is a significant decline in the proportions of those working in a law firm after a change of status:

- A decline of 7 points among the total sample (from 17% previous position to 10% current position);
- A decline of 6 points among the group excluding retirees and those whose change involved maternity/parental leave (from 17% previous position to 11% current position).

The proportion who are not currently practising in a paralegal or law firm is directionally greater (51% in previous position and 55% in current position).

**Practice Type or Work Setting – Previous Versus Current Position
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave and Retired)**

	All Survey Respondents 2012-2014	
	PREVIOUS (n=793)	CURRENT (n=793)
	%	%
TOTAL IN PARALEGAL FIRM	31	35
NET: SOLE PRACTITIONER PARALEGAL FIRM	16	26↑
Sole paralegal practice in Toronto	8	13↑
Sole paralegal practice outside Toronto	8	13↑
NET: PARALEGAL FIRM WITH 2+ PARALEGALS	15	9↓
Paralegal practice with 2 paralegals in Toronto	4	1↓
Paralegal with 3 or more paralegals practice in Toronto	3	2
Paralegal practice with 2 paralegals outside Toronto	5	3↓
Paralegal practice with 3 or more paralegals outside Toronto	3	3
TOTAL: IN LAW FIRM	17	11↓
NET: SOLE PRACTITIONER FIRM	6	2↓
Sole lawyer practice in Toronto	3	1↓
Sole lawyer practice outside Toronto	3	1↓
NET: LAW FIRM WITH 2+ LAWYERS	12	8↓
Lawyer firm with 2 or more lawyers in Toronto	7	5
Lawyer firm with 2 or more lawyers outside Toronto	5	3↓
TOTAL: NOT PRACTISING IN PARALEGAL/LAW FIRM	51	55
Position in paralegal-related field (e.g., position with prosecutor, legal assistant, law clerk)	11	10
Employed outside paralegal or law firm (i.e., position in private corporation, educational institution or government)	17	18
Not working for pay/ unemployed	13	15
Other (e.g., student, never worked, on leave)	11	12

Q.6 Your previous status or position means the position you were in immediately prior to notifying the Law Society. Your current status or position means the position you are in now. From among the following, please indicate your practice or work setting while you were in your previous status category or position as well as your current practice or work setting.

Base: All respondents excluding those whose change is due to maternity/parental leave or those who have retired

B. Overall Change of Status Characteristics Based on Gender

A comparison of the previous and current practice settings of women and men shows that, prior to a change of status, similar proportions were practising in a paralegal or law firm (48% and 49%, respectively). After a change, however, women are less likely than men to be practising in one of these two settings (40% and 55%, respectively).

Women were less likely to have held a position in a paralegal firm prior to their change in status (28%) than were men (36%), but were more likely to have practised in a law firm (20%) than men (13%).

After a change in status, the proportion of men practising in a paralegal firm increases substantially (up 14 points). The proportion of women practising in a paralegal firm does not change significantly.

Thus, the gap between women and men practising in a paralegal firm increases after a change of status. Nearly twice the proportion of men (50%) report that their current position is at a paralegal firm compared with women (27%).

Among both women and men, the proportion holding a position in a law firm after a status change drops significantly (down 7 points among women; down 8 points among men). However, women remain more likely to have a current position with a law firm (13%) than do men (5%).

Previous and Current Positions of Change of Status Respondents

TOTAL SAMPLE (2012-2014 results combined)	Women (n=596)		Men (n=298)	
	Previous	Current	Previous	Current
In a paralegal firm	27	26	38	47↑
In a legal firm	19	13↓	12	5↓
Not practising in a paralegal or law firm (including maternity/parental leave and retired)	54	61↑	50	48
EXCLUDING THOSE WHOSE CHANGE RELATED TO MATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE OR RETIREMENT (2012-2014 results combined)	Women (n=513)		Men (n=280)	
	Previous	Current	Previous	Current
In a paralegal firm	28	27	36	50↑
In a legal firm	20	13↓	13	5↓
Not practising in a paralegal or law firm	52	60↑	51	45

Q.6 Your previous status or position means the position you were in immediately prior to notifying the Law Society. Your current status or position means the position you are in now. From among the following, please indicate your practice or work setting while you were in your previous status category or position as well as your current practice or work setting.

C. Practice Type into Which Women and Men Have Transitioned

The research provides other insights into gender differences among those who have made a change of status submission.

Women who practised in a paralegal firm in their previous status were as likely to have been in sole practice (14%) as they were to have held a position in a firm of 2 or more paralegals (14%). This was also the case for men, with no statistically significant difference in the proportion in sole practice (20%) compared to practice in a paralegal firm of 2 or more paralegals (16%).

After their change of status, both women and men are more likely to hold positions in sole practice than they are to be practising in a firm of 2 or more paralegals, although the proportion of women in sole practice is considerably lower (20%) than the proportion of men (38%).

Finally, while there are no significant gaps between men and women in the characteristics of their previous position outside of paralegal practice in a paralegal or law firm, differences emerge after a status change:

- In particular, women are more likely than men (11% and 6%, respectively) to report that although they are not currently practising within a paralegal or law firm, they are practising in a position with a prosecutor, legal assistant or law clerk or holding a legal assistant position.
- Further, women are more likely (20%) than men (15%) to hold a position which is not paralegal-related (e.g., a corporate position, one in government or education).
- About one-in-ten women report that they are not working for pay (16%) in their current position, a slightly greater proportion than is found among men (12%).

**Previous Versus Current Position Among Women and Men in 2012-2014
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

	WOMEN		MEN	
	Previous Status	Current Status	Previous Status	Current Status
	n=513	n=513	n=280	n=280
NET: PARALEGAL FIRM (BOTH OUTSIDE AND IN TORONTO)	28	27	36	50
Sole paralegal firm	14	20	20	38
Paralegal firm with 2 or more paralegals	14	7	16	12
NET: LAW FIRM (BOTH OUTSIDE AND IN TORONTO)	20	13	13	5
Law firm with sole lawyer	6	3	5	1
Law firm with 2 or more lawyers	14	10	8	4
NOT PRACTISING IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	52	60	51	45
Position as paralegal in other type of setting (e.g., prosecutor, legal assistant, law clerk, opening firm)	12	11	8	6
Employed outside paralegal or law firm (i.e., position in private corporation, educational institution or government)	17	20	16	15
Not working (not working for pay, unemployed)	13	16	13	12
Other (e.g., student, never worked, on leave)	10	13	13	12

Q.6 Your previous status or position means the position you were in immediately prior to notifying the Law Society. Your current status or position means the position you are in now. From among the following, please indicate your practice or work setting while you were in your previous status category or position as well as your current practice or work setting.

Base: Those who have changed status in 2012-2014, excluding those whose change was due to parental leave

Characteristics of Those Whose Change of Status Originated in a Paralegal or Law firm (Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

What are the characteristics of those who have changed status with an originating position in practice as a paralegal either within a paralegal firm or law firm?

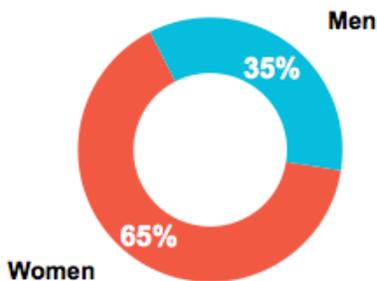
The representation of women among those who submitted a change of status with an originating position in paralegal practice (within a paralegal or law firm) is greater (64%) than the representation of women in the Law Society's current paralegal membership (58%).

However, the proportion who are in paralegal practice after a change of status declines to 57%, down 7 points.

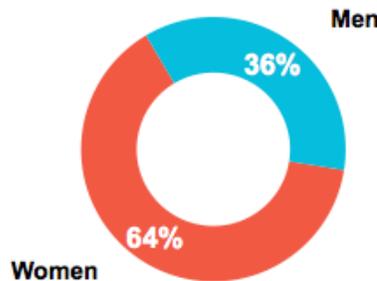
Representation of Men and Women in Total Sample, and Based on Previous and Current Position

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

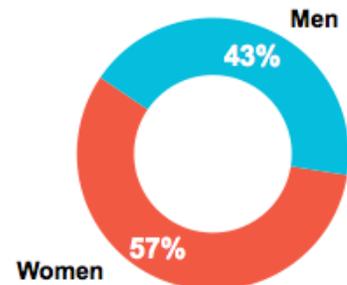
Representation of Men and Women in Change of Status Sample 2012-2014



Representation of Women and Men: Practised as Paralegal in Previous Position 2012-2014



Representation of Women and Men: Practise as Paralegal in Current Position 2012-2014



Among those whose previous practice setting was a paralegal firm, about one-half (47%) have remained in paralegal practice either in a paralegal firm (40%) or in a law firm (7%).

However, just over one-half of these respondents are no longer practising within a paralegal firm – with the largest proportions moving into a corporate, government or education position (19%) or finding themselves not working for pay or unemployed (13%).

There are significant differences between men and women who have made a change of status originating in a paralegal firm. Men are significantly more likely to report that they have remained in practice within a paralegal firm or that they have moved to law firm after their change of status (58%) than are women (38%).

By contrast, women are more likely than men to report that they are currently employed in a position as paralegal in a setting other than a paralegal or law firm (6% and 2%, respectively). Women (24%) are also twice as likely as men (12%) to have moved into a position in corporate, educational or government setting. Finally, among those whose previous position involved practice in a paralegal firm, women are more likely to report that they are currently unemployed or not working for pay (15%) than men (10%).

**Destination of a Change of Status among Those Whose Previous Status
WAS IN A PARALEGAL FIRM**
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

CURRENT POSITION	THOSE WHOSE PREVIOUS POSITION WAS IN PARALEGAL FIRM		
	ALL RESPONDENTS 2012-2014	WOMEN 2012-2014	MEN 2012-2014
n=	246	144	102
	%	%	%
NET: IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	47	38	58↑
Stayed in Paralegal firm	40	28	56
Went into Law firm	7	10	2
NOT PRACTISING IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	53	62	48
Position as paralegal in other type of setting (e.g., prosecutor, legal assistant, law clerk, opening firm)	4	6	2↓
Employed outside paralegal or law firm (i.e., position in private corporation, educational institution or government)	19	24	12↓
Not working for pay/unemployed	13	15	10↓
Other	17	17	18

Among women whose practice setting was in a law firm, over one-half have continued with their paralegal practice either within a law firm (27%) or in a paralegal firm (24%).

The sample of men whose previous status involved paralegal practice in a law firm is too small to provide generalizable results.

**Destination of a Change of Status among Those Whose Previous Status
WAS IN A LAW FIRM**

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

CURRENT POSITION	THOSE WHOSE PREVIOUS POSITION WAS IN LAW FIRM		
	ALL RESPONDENTS 2012-2014	WOMEN 2012-2014	MEN 2012-2014
n=	138	103	35
	%	%	%
NET: CURRENT POSITION IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	51	51	
Went into Paralegal firm	26	24	Base too small
Stayed in Law firm	25	27	Base too small
NET: CURRENT POSITION NOT IN PARALEGAL PRACTICE	49	49	
Employed in related position	8	9	Base too small
Employed outside paralegal or law firm (i.e., education, corporate position, government)	9	8	Base too small
Not working for pay/unemployed	25	27	Base too small
Other	7	6	Base too small

Examining the activity of solely women, those whose previous status involved paralegal practice in a law firm are more likely to remain in practice within a paralegal or law firm after a change of status than are women whose originating status was in a paralegal firm.

**Destination of a Change of Status among Women Whose Previous Status
WAS IN A PARALEGAL FIRM OR LAW FIRM**
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

CURRENT POSITION	WOMEN	
	PREVIOUS STATUS IN PARALEGAL FIRM	PREVIOUS STATUS IN LAW FIRM
n=	144	103
	%	%
NET: IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	38	51↑
Went into Paralegal firm	28	24
Stayed in Law firm	10	27↑
NET: NOT IN PARALEGAL PRACTICE	62	49↓

Overall, men who have made a change of status from an originating position where they were NOT practising in a paralegal firm or law firm are more likely to move into these settings after a change of status (52%) than are women whose originating position was not in a paralegal or law firm (33%).

The greatest proportion of men who were not in practice within a paralegal or law firm, but changed status to practice within these settings, are now practising within a paralegal firm (47%). Only 5% are practising in a law firm. This represents a ratio of almost 10:1 who have moved to a paralegal firm versus a law firm.

Contrast this with the women who have moved into one of these two settings. The ratio of those moving into a paralegal firm compared to a law firm is about 3 to 1 (24% and 9%, respectively).

**Destination of a Change of Status among Those Whose Previous Status was
NOT IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM
 (Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

CURRENT POSITION	THOSE WHOSE PREVIOUS POSITION/STATUS WAS <u>NOT</u> IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM		
	ALL RESPONDENTS 2012-2014	WOMEN 2012-2014	MEN 2012-2014
n=	345	227	118
	%	%	%
NET: IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	40	33	52↑
Went to Paralegal firm	32	24	47
Went into Law firm	8	9	5
NET: NOT IN PARALEGAL PRACTICE	60	67	48↓
Employed in related position	15	16	11
Employed outside paralegal or law firm (i.e., education, corporate position, government)	21	22	19
Not working for pay/unemployed	14	15	12
Other	11	14	6↓

For the most part, the demographic profile of those who filed a change of status notification and had an originating status either in a paralegal or law firm is consistent with the total sample (including those whose status change was associated with maternity/parental leave or retirement) in terms of age, year of paralegal license, and length of time as a paralegal¹. When the characteristics of women and men are compared, however, some significant differences emerge.

Women whose originating position was in a paralegal firm or law firm are:

- Disproportionately younger (52% are under the age of 40) than men who were in the same setting (31%);
- Less likely to have been in practice as a paralegal for five or more years (24%) than men (39%).

Demographic Characteristics of Those Whose Originating Position was in Paralegal Practice

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	ALL RESPONDENTS	TOTAL WHOSE PREVIOUS STATUS WAS IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	WOMEN WHOSE PREVIOUS STATUS WAS IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	MEN WHOSE PREVIOUS STATUS WAS IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM
n=	793	384	247	137
	%	%	%	%
AGE				
<30 years of age	25	23	30	9↓
30-39 years	23	22	22	22
40 to 49 years	26	28	29	26
50 to 65 years	24	25	19	36↑
Over 65 years	2	3	<1	7
YEAR OF PARALEGAL LICENSE				
2007-2008	23	28	24	36↑
2009-2011	42	44	47	37↓
2012-2014	35	28	29	27
LENGTH OF TIME AS PARALEGAL				
0 years – have not practiced as paralegal	13	4	7	1
Less than 5 years ago	64	67	69	59↓
5 to 9 years ago	10	13	13	12
10 to 19 years ago	8	10	7	15↑
20 or more years ago	6	7	4	12↑

Those who have remained in paralegal practice after their change in status, whether it is in a paralegal or law firm, differ demographically from those who moved out of a paralegal or law firm to another setting.

Those who have remained in paralegal practice in a paralegal or law firm are less likely to be female (58%) than are those who moved out of this type of paralegal practice (70%).

Those who have left practice in a paralegal or law firm are disproportionately younger. Fully 51% are less than 40 years of age whereas only 38% of those who remained in this type of practice are under 40 years of age.

**Previous Versus Current Position Among Those Whose Originating Position
(Previous Position) was Practising As Paralegal in Paralegal or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

		THOSE WHOSE PREVIOUS POSITION WAS PRACTISING AS PARALEGAL IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM		
		Total – All those whose previous position was practising as a paralegal	Moved from a position in a paralegal or law firm to a position in a paralegal or law Firm	Moved from a position in a paralegal or law firm to a position NOT in a paralegal or law firm
	n=	384	186	197
GENDER				
	Men	36	42↑	30
	Women	64	58	70↑
AGE				
	<30 years of age	23	20	25
	30-39 years	22	18	26
	40 to 49 years	28	27	28
	50 to 65 years	25	33	18
	Over 65 years	3	3	3
YEAR OF PARALEGAL LICENSE				
	Last 4 years (2011-2014)	48	44	53
	More than 4 years ago (2007-2010)	52	57	47
LENGTH OF TIME AS PARALEGAL				
	Less than 5 years ago	71	64	77↑
	5 to 9 years ago	13	13	12
	10 to 19 years ago	10	12	8
	20 or more years ago	7	11↑	4

Areas of Paralegal Work

(Excluding Those Whose Change is due to Maternity/parental Leave or Retirement)

In seeking to better understand what is driving paralegals, in particular women, to leave practice in paralegal or law firms, principal area of paralegal work is examined among those who have moved within paralegal practice in comparison to those who have left practice in paralegal or law firms.

The table on the following page clearly illustrates that there are no significant differences in the principal areas of paralegal work that is practised between previous position and current position.

Among those who have remained in practice within a paralegal or law firm after a change of status:

- The greatest proportions in both previous and current position report their principal area of practice is either in the area of Ontario Courts of Justice Provincial Offences Act matters (23% in previous position/24% in current position or Small Claims Court matters (22% in previous position/ 24% in current position).
- Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule matters (SABs) in an area of practice that 16% of this group identify as their primary area of practice in the previous position, and 17% identify as primary in their current position.
- About one-in-ten report that their primary area of paralegal work is in Workers' Compensation, both in the previous and current positions.

Less than 10% identify any other single area of paralegal work as their principal area of practice.

Those whose originating position was in a paralegal or law firm setting and then transitioned to another setting are similar to those who remained in a paralegal or law in terms of the principal area of paralegal work that they practiced. They were, however, significantly more likely (30%) than those who remained in a paralegal or law firm (24%) to cite that their principal area of practice in their previous position was in Ontario Court of Justice Provincial Offences Act matters.

Principal Area of Paralegal Work: Previous versus Current Position
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

(% who report that the area of paralegal work noted is their principal area upon which they focused)

	PREVIOUS POSITION: PRINCIPAL AREA OF PARALEGAL WORK 2012-2014		CURRENT POSITION: PRINCIPAL AREA OF PARALEGAL WORK 2012-2014	
	Previous and current position both in paralegal or law firm	Previous position in paralegal or law firm/ Current position <u>not</u> in paralegal or law firm	Previous and current position both in paralegal or law firm	Previous position in paralegal or law firm/ Current position <u>not</u> in paralegal or law firm
n=	186	197	186	197
	%	%	%	%
Ontario Court of Justice Provincial Offences Act matters	23	30↑	24	n/a
Ontario Court of Justice - Summary Conviction offences	5	3	2	n/a
Worker's Compensation	10	5	11	n/a
Small Claims Court matters	22	24	24	n/a
Property Tax Assessment	4	2	3	n/a
Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule matters (SABS)	16	15	17	n/a
Human Rights	1	1	1	n/a
Landlord and Tenant	6	7	5	n/a
Other Tribunals	4	5	4	n/a
Other	9	10	9	n/a

Q.7 Please indicate the three principal areas of paralegal work upon which you focused while you were in your previous status category or position and also the principal areas in which you are focused in your current status category or position.

Unaided Reasons for a Change in Status

(Excluding Those Whose Change is due to Maternity/parental Leave or Retirement)

One of the key objectives of the research is to explore what factors may be leading paralegals to change their status. The research explored this issue through both unaided and aided questions.

To obtain an unaided perspective, respondents were asked to describe, in their own words, the key factors that influenced their decision to change their status or position.

Overall, the reasons given are varied, and no single issue or set of issues dominate. There are significant differences in the reasons provided between those who maintained practice within a paralegal or law firm and those moving to another setting or status. Some gender differences are also evident.

The reasons most frequently cited for a change of status are related to opportunity-related factors provided in a new position (34%). These reasons are mentioned to a greater degree among those who have moved from a non-paralegal practice setting to a paralegal practice setting (44%), compared to those who have made a transition in the reverse direction, from a paralegal practice setting to not practising as a paralegal (28%). One-third (34%) of those who stayed in practice in a paralegal or law firm note reasons of this nature.

The set of reasons mentioned second most frequently by those who moved from a practice in a paralegal or law setting to another type of setting relate to a position ending (e.g., being laid off or termination of employment), or factors that act as a barrier to practice (e.g., health problems). This set of reasons is provided by about one-quarter of this group of respondents (24%). These issues play less of a role among those who have moved within a paralegal or law firm setting (17%) and those who moved from a non-paralegal setting to practice at a paralegal or law firm (17%).

What fundamentally distinguishes those who have transitioned from practice in a paralegal or law firm to another setting from those who have remained in paralegal or law firm is the extent to which they identify better financial or other types of benefits were a key motivator driving their change of status. Those who moved out of a paralegal firm to another setting identify these reasons more than any other (30%) as driving their decision to change their status. The other two groups were much less likely to mention these reasons (18% among those who stayed within a paralegal or law firm setting and 17% of those who transitioned in one of these two settings).

What distinguishes those who have transitioned into practice at a paralegal or law setting from another setting/ status is the extent to which they cite the prospect of starting up a new firm as the basis for their change of status.

- Among those who moved from a setting other than a paralegal or law firm into one of these settings, 22% mention reasons related to starting a new firm as reason for their change of status. It is noteworthy that half of this group (11%) identify that the prospect of opening a new firm was a result of not being able to find paralegal work elsewhere.
- By contrast, starting a new firm is mentioned by only 8% of those who remained in a paralegal or law firm practice and 4% of those who moved from a paralegal or law firm to another setting.

There is only one significant difference between women and men in the reasons identified as key factors influencing a change of status. Women are more likely than men to identify opportunities in the new position as influencing their decision to change (38% among women compared with 28% among men). Within this set of reasons, a greater proportion of women identify job security (7% among women and 2% among men) and better work environment or location (7% among women and 3% among men).

Main Reasons for a Change of Status
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	TOTAL 2012- 2014	WOMEN	MEN	Moved from Paralegal or law firm to other setting	Stayed within Paralegal firm/law firm	Moved from other setting to paralegal or law firm
n=	790	511	279	197	186	171
	%	%	%	%	%	%
OPPORTUNITIES IN NEW POSITION (NET)	34	38↑	28	28	34	44↑
Better opportunities/new challenges/ better quality of work	7	7	6	4	6	8
Better able to use my skills/ subject matter for work/ Change in practice area/ different type of work	6	6	5	3	5	11
Better opportunity for advancement/ opportunity for advancement/ promotion	4	3	5	4	4	2
Independence/ greater control in work	3	3	4	2	5	6
Job security / stability	5	7↑	2	8	5	4
Better work environment/better location	6	7↑	3	6	9	5
To gain experience	4	5	3	1	3	8
Better position/ position I wanted/ more job satisfaction	3	3	2	2	1	3
Better mentorship	1	1	1	2	2	-
To give back to community/ greater public service opportunity	2	1	3	1	1	4
Was able to work as paralegal	2	2	1	1	2	5
Offered a teaching position/ enjoy teaching	1	1	-	1	-	1
POSITION/CONTRACT ENDED OR REQUIRED TO LEAVE POSITION (NET)	22	23	20	24	17	17
Laid off/ termination of employment/ previous structure terminated	8	9	7	12	7	5
Contract ended / Contract not renewed	2	3	2	2	-	2
Age/ Practiced long enough/ semi-retired	1	1	1	1	3	1
Company went down/ firm closure	2	2	1	4	2	-
Health problems/ health problems of family members	3	2	3	4	-	4
Went back to original position from secondment/ back to original position	1	1	1	-	1	-
Was previously unemployed	2	2	2	1	-	4
Change in ownership/ change in firm structure	2	1	3	2	3	1

Relocation	1	2	<1	2	1	1
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Continued...

Main Reasons for a Change of Status (Cont'd)
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	TOTAL 2012- 2014	WOMEN	MEN	Moved from Paralegal or law firm to other setting	Stayed within Paralegal firm/law firm	Moved from other setting to paralegal or law firm
n=	790	511	279	197	186	171
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Parental leave/ returned after parental leave	1	2	-	1	2	-
End of articling/Unemployed after articling/ could not find job after articling	1	1	<1	1	-	1
Back to school/continuing education	2	2	1	3	-	-
REMUNERATION/BENEFITS (NET)	22	23	19	30↑	18	17
Better remuneration/ pay/ stable income/ needed income	10	11	7	13	12	7
Financial reasons/ income	6	6	6	11	3	5
Benefits/ better benefits/pension	4	5	3	3	4	3
Expense/ Fees/ Overhead costs	4	4	5	6	2	2
WORKLIFE BALANCE (NET)	12	13	9	16	11	10
Work/life balance - work/family balance	3	3	3	5	3	2
Better hours/ control over hours/ better control of schedule/ flexible work schedule	4	4	3	2	5	4
Reduction in stress/ burn out at job	3	4	3	6	2	1
Child care/ child care requirements/ want to spend more time with children or family	1	2	-	1	-	2
Reduction in workload/ workload	2	2	1	3	2	1
Spousal requirements/ spouse's career needs	<1	-	<1	1	-	-
STARTING NEW FIRM OR PROMOTION (NET)	8	8	10	4	8	22↑
Starting new firm/ started new sole practice	3	3	4	1	3	11
Could not find work so started a practice	5	4	6	3	5	12
Promotion/ progressing legal career	<1	<1	<1	-	-	1
NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF PREVIOUS JOB (NET)	13	12	14	19	19	5
Dissolving partnership/ Partners/ Partner retiring	2	2	3	1	8	-

Didn't like job/didn't like firm/ bad fit	3	4	2	5	4	1
Can't afford to practice/ can't make enough money in practice/ poor income	4	4	4	9	2	2

Continued...

Main Reasons for a Change of Status (Cont'd)
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	TOTAL 2012- 2014	WOMEN	MEN	Moved from Paralegal or law firm to other setting	Stayed within Paralegal firm/law firm	Moved from other setting to paralegal or law firm
n=	790	511	279	197	186	171
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Time to leave type of practice/ didn't like type of practice	1	1	1	2	1	1
Type of work/ did not like type of work	1	1	1	2	1	1
Dispute at previous job/ conflict at previous job	2	3	2	3	5	1
DISCRIMINATION/ HARASSMENT (NET)	2	2	<1	3	2	2
Discrimination/ harassment	2	2	<1	3	2	2
Equity issues/ treatment of women/ treatment of women with children	<1	1	-	1	1	-
OTHER REASONS	19	17	23↑	20	11	22
Could not find work as paralegal/unable to do paralegal work	5	6	4	6	2	8
Found a job/ needed a job/ received offer of employment	2	1	2	1	-	4
Did not want to do paralegal work/ no longer want to work as a paralegal	2	2	2	1	-	1
Return to paralegal practice/ want to work as paralegal	2	2	2	1	1	3
Could not afford to start up firm	<1	-	<1	-	-	-
Can't find clients/not enough clients	3	2	3	7	2	1
Other	5	4	8↑	4	5	6
Disability/ WSIB	1	1	1	2	1	1
NO CHANGE/NOT APPLICABLE (NET)						
No perceived change in status (e.g. name change only, error, change of address)	4	3	4	2	4	3
Not applicable	1	1	1	-	2	1
None/ No reason	<1	-	1	-	1	-
Not stated	<1	<1	<1	1	1	-

Q.15: What were the key factors that influenced your decision to change your status or position?

Change of Status Characteristics Based on Equity-Seeking Status

In this report, those defined as members of a “racialized” equity-seeking community are those who selected the “racialized/person of colour (visible minority)” response option to the following question or who specifically referred to their race in the description they provided to the “Other – please specify” response category.

Please check any of the following characteristics with which you self-identify. (Please select all that apply)

- Aboriginal
- Francophone
- Transgender/Transsexual
- Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual
- Racialized/person of colour (visible minority)
- Person with disabilities
- A creed or religion that you believe is subject to prejudice or disadvantage
- Other (Please specify) _____
- I do not self-identify with any of these personal characteristics

Those referred to as members of a non-racialized equity-seeking community selected one of the categories on the above list other than “racialized/person of colour (visible minority)” or “I do not self-identify with any of these personal characteristics”.

Slightly more than two-thirds of respondents do not self-identify with an equity-seeking community. About one-in-six self-identify as belonging to a racialized equity-seeking community, and a slightly smaller proportion self-identify as belonging to another equity-seeking community.

Self-Identified Membership in Equity-Seeking Communities (Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

All Survey Respondents 2012-2014
n=793
%

Do not self-identify with an equity-seeking community	68
Self-identify as member of a “racialized” equity-seeking community	17
Self-identify as member of a non-racialized equity-seeking community	15

The racialized equity seeking group distinguishes itself from the other two groups in that they are more likely to hold a position within a paralegal firm or law firm in their current status than they were in their previous status (up 13 points to reach 40%).

Since all three groups have seen an increase in the proportion who are practising within a sole paralegal firm after a change of status, this means that the differences between the groups lie in their practice within multi-paralegal firms and law firms.

For the non-equity seeking group, there have been declines in both the incidence of those who are practising in a multi-paralegal firm after a change (down to 9% after a decline of 8 points) and a decline in the incidence of those doing paralegal work within a law firm (down to 11% after a decline of 8 points).

For the non-racialized equity seeking group, there have been a decline in the proportion who are practising in a law firm after their change of status (down to 7% after a decline of 10 points).

For the racialized equity seeking group, there have been no such declines, either in practice within a multi-paralegal firm nor a law firm.

The non-racialized equity-seeking group distinguishes itself from the other two in that they are the only group which is more likely to indicate they are “not working” after a change of status, with the proportion doubling from 9% to 20%.

Practice Type or Work Setting – Previous Versus Current Position (2012-2014)
Based on Equity Seeking Status
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	PREVIOUS POSITION/STATUS			CURRENT POSITION/STATUS		
	Non-Equity Seeking	Racialized Equity	Non-Racialized Equity	Non-Equity Seeking	Racialized Equity	Non-Racialized Equity
↓ Indicates a significant decline from previous to current position ↑ Indicates a significant increase from previous to current position						
n=	537	135	121	537	135	121
	%	%	%	%	%	%
NET: PARALEGAL FIRM (BOTH OUTSIDE AND IN TORONTO)	32	27	31	33	40↑	36
Sole paralegal firm	15	22	15	24↑	33↑	29↑
Paralegal firm with 2 or more paralegals	17	4	17	9↓	7	7
NET: LAW FIRM (BOTH OUTSIDE AND IN TORONTO)	19	15	14	11↓	10	7↓
Law firm with sole lawyer	7	3	5	3↓	1	1
Law firm with 2 or more lawyers	12	12	9	8↓	10	7
NET: NOT PRACTISING AS PARALEGAL	49	58	54	56↑	50	55
Position in paralegal-related field (e.g., prosecutor, legal assistant, law clerk, opening firm)	12	7	10	11	8	5
Position not in paralegal-related field (e.g., corporate, government, education)	15	16	22	20↑	13	17
Not working (e.g., not working for pay, unemployed)	12	21	9	14	13	20↑
Other (e.g., student, never worked, on leave)	10	14	13	11	16	14

Q.6 Your previous status or position means the position you were in immediately prior to notifying the Law Society. Your current status or position means the position you are in now. From among the following, please indicate your practice or work setting while you were in your previous status category or position as well as your current practice or work setting.

Benefits and Operating Policies Available in Previous and Current Positions

(Excluding Those Whose Change is due to Maternity/parental Leave or Retirement)

Employers often offer a variety of benefits and employment policies in order to attract employees. Examples of these benefits and policies include:

- Health-related (e.g., medical, dental, long-term disability, sick leave);
- Financial benefits (e.g., pension plans);
- Flexible work arrangements (e.g., job sharing, part-time work, flexible work hours);
- Parental benefits (e.g., paid or unpaid parental leave, childcare benefits);
- Career advancement options (e.g., continuing professional development, formal mentoring policy); and,
- Harassment or equity policies (e.g., harassment/discrimination policy, accommodation for special needs policy).

Respondents who moved from a position in paralegal practice (in a paralegal firm or law firm) to another position (whether it be in paralegal practice or outside of paralegal practice) were asked to indicate whether the benefits or employment policies noted above were offered by their previous employer/firm and whether their current position offers them.

An increase in the incidence of these benefits/policies from previous to current position may suggest that they, in some measure, play a role in the decision to change positions. While it cannot be determined if they “drive” the decision to change, these incidences do provide a perspective as to the types of workplace benefits/policies that are valued by paralegals.

There are two categories of benefits or policies that those who have made a change are most likely to report they have access to in their current position.

- Continuing professional development (48% report it is offered in their current position)
- Flexible full-time work hours (45%)

A second tier in terms of benefits or policies available to respondents in their current position are:

- Harassment and discrimination policy (39%)
- Medical insurance (31%)
- A dental plan (31%)
- Sick leave (29%)

There are a number of benefits/policies for which the incidence is low both in previous and current position. They fall almost exclusively into the parental benefits category. Twelve percent

or less of respondents indicate that their position – previous or current – has offered them unpaid maternity or parental leave, paid maternity or parental leave, child care benefits, or day care facilities.

The table on the following page illustrates that there have been significant increases in the incidence of those reporting access to specific benefits or policies from previous to current status across a number of categories: financial benefits, flexible work options, leave options and other offerings or policies.

However, an examination of solely those whose change of status originated in position within a paralegal or law firm suggests that these benefits and policies are greater drivers for those transitioning to other types of settings than it is for those who are remaining within these settings.

Among those leaving paralegal and law firms and transitioning to another type of setting or status, the incidence of certain benefits/policies being offered rises significantly from previous to current position. The greatest proportional increases are evident for:

- Financial and health-related benefits
 - Pension plans (up 27 points to reach 34%)
 - Medical insurance (up 18 points to reach 45%)
 - A dental plan (up 17 points to reach 44%)
 - Long-term disability (up 17 points to reach 34%)
- Leave options
 - Sick leave (up 17 points to reach 40%)
 - Leave of absence or sabbatical (up 17 points to reach 26%)
- Other offerings/policies
 - Harassment and discrimination policy (up 21 points to reach 50%)
 - Accommodation for special needs policy (up 21 points to reach 38%)

When these increases are contrasted with the group that has remained in paralegal practice within a paralegal or law firm, the differences are stark. There are only two benefits or policies on which there have been significant increases in availability after a change of status:

- Flexible full-time work hours (up 15 points to reach 48%)
- Continuing professional development (up 12 points to reach 55%)

These findings suggest that those who have moved from paralegal practice in a paralegal or law firm to another setting may be seeking a more comprehensive suite of benefits in their new position.

By contrast, those remaining in a paralegal or law setting appear to may be more focused on a transition that affords them greater professional development opportunities and more flexible full-time work hours.

**Incidence of Benefit or Policy Offered in Previous Versus Current Position
Among Those Who Have Moved Out Of, or Moved Into a Paralegal Firm or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

↓ Indicates a significant decline from previous to current position ↑ Indicates a significant increase from previous to current position	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION	ORIGINATING (PREVIOUS) POSITION IN PARALEGAL FIRM OR LAW FIRM	Moved from a position in Paralegal or Law firm to ther position or status	Moved from a position in Paralegal or Law firm to Position in Paralegal or Law firm
n=	521	516	384	159	186
	%	%	%	%	%
Financial and Health-Related Benefits/Plans					
Medical Insurance	31	31	27	45↑	30
A dental plan	31	31	27	44↑	29
Long-term disability	19	21	17	34↑	19
A pension plan	12	17↑	7	34↑	10
Flexible Work Options					
Flexible full-time work hours	29	45↑	33	41↑	48↑
Part-time work	16	23↑	15	28↑	16
Job sharing	10	13	9	14	16
Parental Benefits					
Paid maternity leave	9	12	8	20↑	12
Paid parental leave	8	10	6	20↑	8
Unpaid maternity leave	9	9	9	11	8
Unpaid parental leave	8	9	7	11	7
Child care benefits	5	6	3	10↑	5
Day care facilities	2	2	1	4↑	1
Leave Options					
Sick leave	26	29	23	40↑	27
Leave of absence or sabbatical	11	20↑	9	26↑	17
Other Offerings/Policies					
Continuing professional development	39	48↑	43	37	55↑
Harassment and discrimination policy	33	39↑	29	50↑	34
Accommodation for special needs policy	20	27↑	17	38↑	22
Formal mentoring policy	16	19	14	21	18

A direct comparison of women and men who have moved in or out of a paralegal or law firm setting does suggest some gender-based differences in what may be driving a change of status.

A number of benefits/policies may have more influence in a change of status among women because women are more likely than men to report increased availability of these benefits/policies from previous to current position:

- A pension plan (up 8 points to reach 20%)
- Part-time work (up 10 points to reach 27%)
- Leave of absence or sabbatical (up 13 points to reach 25%)
- Continuing professional development (up 11 points to reach 50%)
- Harassment and discrimination policy (up 10 points to reach 42%)
- Accommodation for special needs policy (up 11 points to reach 30%)
- Formal mentoring policy (up 6 points to reach 20%)

Among men, however, there is only a single benefit where the incidence of availability increases from previous to current position: flexible full-time work hours (up 15 points to reach 44% who have it in their current position). Women also report that this benefit is available through their current position (up 16 points to reach 46% who have it in their current position), more so than in their previous position

For the remainder of benefits/policies, there are no significant differences in the proportions saying they are available at their current position compared with their previous position among either men or women.

**Incidence of Benefits/ Policies at Previous Versus Current Position Total sample
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

(% who report that their previous/current position offers or offered the benefit/operating policy)

	TOTAL SAMPLE		WOMEN		MEN	
	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION
n=	521	516	321	315	200	201
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Financial and Health-Related Benefits/Plans						
Medical Insurance	31	31	32	35	29	26
A dental plan	31	31	32	35	29	25
Long-term disability	19	21	20	24	18	18
A pension plan	12	17↑	12	20↑	12	12
Flexible Work Options						
Flexible full-time work hours	29	45↑	30	46↑	29	44↑
Part-time work	16	23↑	17	27↑	15	17
Job sharing	10	13	12	17	7	9
Parental Benefits						
Paid maternity leave	9	12	11	14	7	8
Paid parental leave	8	10	8	11	7	8
Unpaid maternity leave	9	9	12	11	5	4
Unpaid parental leave	8	9	10	11	7	7
Child care benefits	5	6	4	7	6	4
Day care facilities	2	2	1	3	2	2
Leave Options						
Sick leave	26	29	27	33	24	22
Leave of absence or sabbatical	11	20↑	12	25↑	10	12
Other Offerings/Policies						
Continuing professional development	39	48↑	39	50↑	39	44
Harassment and discrimination policy	33	39↑	32	42↑	35	35
Accommodation for special needs policy	20	27↑	19	30↑	21	23
Formal mentoring policy	16	19	14	20↑	19	18

Q.14: For both your previous position and your current position, please indicate whether each of the following was/is offered to you. If you don't know or if it was/is not applicable to your situation you may indicate that.

**Incidence of Benefits/ Policies at Previous Versus Current Position
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

(% who report that their previous/current position offers or offered the benefit/operating policy)

	WOMEN		WOMEN WHO HAVE MOVED FROM PRACTICE IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM TO SOME OTHER SETTING/POSITION		WOMEN WHO HAVE REMAINED IN PRACTICE IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	
	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION	PREVIOUS POSITION	CURRENT POSITION
n=	321	315	138	111	108	108
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Financial and Health-Related Benefits/Plans						
Medical Insurance	32	35	27	44↑	32	36
A dental plan	32	35	28	43↑	32	36
Long-term disability	20	24	15	35↑	24	22
A pension plan	12	20↑	7	35↑	8	13
Flexible Work Options						
Flexible full-time work hours	30	46↑	34	40	35	49↑
Part-time work	17	27↑	16	30↑	16	19
Job sharing	12	17	12	15	10	22↑
Parental Benefits						
Paid maternity leave	11	14	10	22↑	9	15
Paid parental leave	8	11	9	20↑	5	9
Unpaid maternity leave	12	11	9	12	12	11
Unpaid parental leave	10	11	7	12	8	7
Child care benefits	4	7	4	12↑	2	7
Day care facilities	1	3	-	5	1	-
Leave Options						
Sick leave	27	33	21	41↑	32	32
Leave of absence or sabbatical	12	25↑	10	32↑	8	21↑
Other Offerings/Policies						
Continuing professional development	39	50↑	44	40	41	63↑
Harassment and discrimination policy	32	42↑	30	54↑	29	39
Accommodation for special needs policy	19	30↑	16	43↑	18	26
Formal mentoring policy	14	20↑	14	23↑	13	21

Q.14: For both your previous position and your current position, please indicate whether each of the following was/is offered to you. If you don't know or if it was/is not applicable to your situation you may indicate that.

Attributes of Previous and Current Position

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

A. Attributes of Previous and Current Position

One of the key objectives of the research is to better understand the factors that may be leading paralegals to make a change in status. One means of assessing this issue was through exploring some of the perceived benefits and values of their current versus their previous position among those who have changed status.

Respondents were asked a series of questions in order to assess this:

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your previous status or position and your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that you agree strongly and “5” means that you disagree strongly. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Previous Position	Strongly Agree					Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5			
The pay is good								
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job								
I control the scheduling								
The benefits are good								

An increase in the incidence of agreement or disagreement with one or more of these attributes when tracked from previous to current position may suggest that the attribute played some role in the decision to make a change in status. Again, while it cannot be determined whether these attributes “drive” the decision to change, the comparison provides some perspective as to the types of workplace benefits/conditions that are valued by paralegals.

There has been improvement across all the measures explored from previous to current position. However, the extent of improvement stands out on a number of attributes.

This factor that has increased to a greater extent than any measured here, thus positioning it alone in the top tier based on improvement, is opportunities for promotion. The proportions of respondents who agree with the statement “The opportunities for promotion are excellent” is up 34 points from 10% in their previous position to 44% in their current position.

The second tier of attributes that have improved following a change of status relate to measures across the following four categories:

- Practice opportunities
 - “I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job” (a 22-point increase from 37% in their previous position to 59% in their current position); and,
 - “The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills” (a 21-point increase from 52% in their previous position to 73% in their current position)
- Pay and Benefits
 - “Job security is good” (a 23-point increase from 21% in their previous position to 44% in their current position).
- Work-life balance and stress
 - “The job allows me to balance career and family” (a 24-point increase from 42% in their previous position to 66% in their current position).
- Job Satisfaction and fulfilment
 - “I feel real enjoyment in my work” (a 24-point increase from 53% in their previous position to 77% in their current position).

The remainder of the attributes tested have improved by 20 points or less from previous position to current position.

Attributes of Previous and Current Position
Among Those Who Have Moved Out Of, or Moved Into a Paralegal Firm or Law Firm
(Excludes Those Whose Change in Status is Related to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	TOTAL SAMPLE (Excludes "don't know responses")		
	Previous Status	Current Status	GAP
	n=521	n=516	
<i>% who agree with statement as it relates to status</i>	%	%	(+/-)
PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES			
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	52	73↑	+21
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	37	59↑	+22
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	10	44↑	+34
PAY AND BENEFITS			
The pay is good	24	40↑	+16
The benefits are good	22	40↑	+17
Job security is good	21	44↑	+23
WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND STRESS			
I control the scheduling	37	57↑	+20
The job allows me to balance career and family	42	66↑	+24
My workload is too heavy	36	22↑	-14
My job is very stressful	53	34↑	-19
JOB SATISFACTION AND FULFILMENT			
My work is important to society	64	77↑	+13
I feel real enjoyment in my work	53	77↑	+24
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS			
I have a good working relationship with female colleagues	77	88↑	+11
I have a good working relationship with male colleagues	78	86↑	+8
I have a good working relationship with support staff	77	87↑	+10

Q12: Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your previous status or position and your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where "1" means that you agree strongly and "5" means that you disagree strongly. If you don't know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

A comparison of women and men shows for both groups, there are significant improvements on most attributes from previous position to their current position as a result of a change.

However, as the table on the following page illustrates, the improvement for women from previous to current status on a number of attributes is significantly greater than for men suggesting that these factors may play a greater role in the decision to make a change for women:

- “The opportunities for promotion are excellent” - up 41 points for women/up 25 points for men.
- “The benefits are good” - up 20 points for women/up 13 points for men.
- “The job security is good” - up 27 points for women/up 18 points for men.
- “I feel real enjoyment in my work” - up 27 points for women/up 19 for men.
- “I have a good working relationship with female colleagues” - up 15 points for women/up 5 points for men.

**Attributes of Previous and Current Position Among Women and Men
Among Those Who Have Moved Out Of, Or Moved Into A Paralegal Firm Or Law Firm
(Excludes Those Whose Change in Status is Related to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

	WOMEN (Excludes "don't know responses")			MEN (Excludes "don't know responses")		
	Previous Status	Current Status	GAP	Previous Status	Current Status	GAP
	n=321	n=315		n=200	n=201	
<i>% who agree with statement as it relates to status</i>	%	%	(+/-)	%	%	(+/-)
PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES						
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	49	71↑	22	57	77↑	20
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	32	53↑	21	46	67↑	21
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	8	49↑	41	12	37↑	25
PAY AND BENEFITS						
The pay is good	23	41↑	18	24	38↑	14
The benefits are good	23	43↑	20	22	35↑	13
Job security is good	20	47↑	27	23	41↑	18
WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND STRESS						
I control the scheduling	34	53↑	19	43	64↑	21
The job allows me to balance career and family	44	68↑	24	38	62↑	24
My workload is too heavy	38	23	-15	33	20	-13
My job is very stressful	53	36	-17	52	31	-21
JOB SATISFACTION AND FULFILLMENT						
My work is important to society	66	81↑	15	62	72↑	10
I feel real enjoyment in my work	52	79↑	27	55	74↑	19
WORKING RELATIONSHIPS						
I have a good working relationship with female colleagues	73	88↑	15	84	89	5
I have a good working relationship with male colleagues	75	85↑	10	84	88	4
I have a good working relationship with support staff	74	89↑	15	83	84	1

Importance of Specific Issues in Driving Change of Status

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave of Retirement)

A. Approach to Exploring Drivers of Change of Status

Another means of determining what drives a change of status is to ask respondents directly the extent to which a number of factors were important reasons for their recent change of status. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of 18 factors in their decision to move from their previous status to their current status on a scale from 1 to 5 where a “5” means the issue was “very important” factor and a “1” means the issue was “not at all important”.

Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that it was not important at all and a “5” means that it was very important. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

	Not at all important		Very important			Don’t know	Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5		
The pay is better							
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job							
I control the scheduling							
The benefits are better							
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills							

B. Factors Identified Most Frequently as Driving a Change

The reason most often identified as driving a change of status is that a new position allows better use of talents and paralegal skills. A majority (57%) cite “The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills” as an important reason for their change of status, providing a rating of “4” or “5”.

There are a number of factors that fall into second tier of reasons that relate to job freedom and flexibility:

- “The job allows me to balance career and family” (mentioned by 50% of respondents as important);
- “The pay is better” (49%);
- “I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job” (49%); and,
- “My current position offers flexible full-time work hours” (46%).

There is a third tier of reasons is made up of:

- “I control the scheduling” (44%); and,
- “The job is less stressful” (43%).

The remainder of the factors tested are mentioned by less than 40% of respondents.

The table on the following page illustrates that more than six-in-ten respondents indicate that a number of factors listed are not applicable in their current position (i.e., their current status does not provide these benefits). As such, they clearly did not play an important role in the decision to change status.

The table on the following page illustrates that more than six-in-ten respondents identify that a number of factors as not applicable in their transition from their previous to their current position. As such, they clearly did not play an important role in the decision to change status.

**Importance of Specific Issues in Driving a Change of Status
Among Those Who Have Moved Out Of, or Moved Into a Paralegal Firm or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change in Status is Not Related to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

	2012-2014 RESULTS COMBINED			
	IMPORTANT (4 OR 5 ON SCALE)	NEUTRAL (3 ON SCALE)	NOT IMPORTANT (1 OR 2 ON SCALE)	NOT APPLICABLE OR DON'T KNOW
	%	%	%	%
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	57	7	10	26
The job allows me to balance career and family	50	16	8	26
The pay is better	49	9	12	30
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	49	12	13	27
My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	46	9	10	36
I control the scheduling	44	13	15	28
Job security is good	43	12	10	35
My job is less stressful	35	18	17	29
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	34	1	10	44
The benefits are better	31	9	13	47
My workload has decreased	23	17	24	36
My current position offers a leave of absence or sabbatical	21	6	11	62
There is a pension plan in my current position	20	4	9	66
There is a formal mentoring policy in my current position	19	6	10	65
My current position offers part-time work	16	8	18	59
There is paid maternity or parental leave	15	3	14	68
There is accommodation for special needs policy at my current position	15	6	11	69
There is job sharing in my current position	9	6	16	69

Q.13aa Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where "1" means that it was not important at all and a "5" means that it was very important. If you don't know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Base: Those who made a change of status excluding those whose change was due to maternity/ parental leave and retirement (n=705)

C. Most Importance of Factors Driving a Change of Status Among Those Whose Originating Position Was in a Paralegal or Law Firm

We also examined the relative importance of these factors among those who have continued practising as a paralegal in a paralegal or law firm compared to those who have moved out of the paralegal or law firm setting.

Issues related to job freedom and flexibility appear to be particularly prominent drivers of a change of status within practice in a paralegal or law firm. Those who remained in paralegal or law firm are more likely than those who are no longer practising as a paralegal in a paralegal or law firm to cite the following as important issues driving their change of status:

- The job allows me to use my talents and legal skills (62% versus 29% of those who have moved to another status);
- The job allows me to balance career and family (54% and 40%, respectively);
- I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job (51% and 27%);
- My current position offers flexible full-time work hours (48% and 35%); and,
- I control the scheduling (46% and 22%).

The decision to leave the paralegal or law-firm setting, on the other hand, seems to be more driven by benefit-oriented factors. Those who are no longer practising in a paralegal or law firm are more likely to assign importance to two of the factors tested compared to those who remained in a paralegal or law firm:

- There is a pension plan in my current position (36% versus 12% of those who have stayed in a paralegal or law firm; and,
- There is paid maternity or parental leave (21% and 13%, respectively).

**Importance of Specific Issues in Driving a Change of Status
Among Those Whose Originating Position (Previous) Was in a Paralegal or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

(% who rate issue as a 4 or 5 on 5-point scale where 5 means “very important”)

	ORIGINATING POSITION (PREVIOUS) IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	2012-2014 RESULTS COMBINED			
		Moved from paralegal or law firm to other position/ status		Moved from paralegal or law firm to paralegal or law firm	
n=	345	159		186	
% IMPORTANT - (4 OR 5 ON SCALE)	%	Rank	%	Rank	%
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	47		29	1	62↑
The job allows me to balance career and family	48	3	40	2	54↑
The pay is better	48	1	52		44
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	40		27		51↑
My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	42		35	3	48↑
I control the scheduling	35		22	4	46↑
Job security is good	45	2	47		43
My job is less stressful	36		32		39
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	35	3	40		31
The benefits are better	33	4	39		29
My workload has decreased	24		25		22
My current position offers a leave of absence or sabbatical	22		24		20
There is a pension plan in my current position	23		36↑		12
There is a formal mentoring policy in my current position	18		18		17
My current position offers part-time work	12		15		9
There is paid maternity or parental leave	17		21↑		13
There is accommodation for special needs policy at my current position	15		16		14
There is job sharing in my current position	9		12		7

Q.13aa Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that it was not important at all and a “5” means that it was very important. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Base: Those who made a change of status excluding those whose change was due to maternity/ parental leave and retirement and have moved from an originating position in a paralegal or law firm (n=345)

D. Ranking – Most Importance of Factors Driving a Change of Status

The key differences between remaining in, and leaving practice in a paralegal or law firm become even more clear when the ranking of top drivers of a change of status are directly compared.

As the table below illustrates, those who have moved out of a position within a paralegal or law firm to one outside of these two settings place the greatest emphasis on remuneration and benefits, job security and opportunities for promotion as the main factors contributing to their change of status. By contrast, those who have remained within a paralegal or law firm setting are more likely to identify the ability to use their paralegal skills as a key driver, along with factors that relate to control and flexibility over work hours and scheduling.

Both groups place an emphasis on a position that allows a balance of career and family.

Ranking Based on Importance Among Those Whose Originating Position was Practising in a Paralegal or Law Firm

Moved from paralegal or law firm to other position/ status			Moved from paralegal or law firm to paralegal or law firm		
RANKING BASED ON IMPORTANCE		% IMPORTANT	RANKING BASED ON IMPORTANCE		% IMPORTANT
1	The pay is better	52	1	The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	62
2	Job security is good	47	2	The job allows me to balance career and family	54
3	The job allows me to balance career and family	40	3	My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	48
	The opportunities for promotion are excellent				
4	The benefits are better	39	4	I control the scheduling	46

Q.13aa Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that it was not important at all and a “5” means that it was very important. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Base: Those who made a change of status excluding those whose change was due to maternity/ parental leave and retirement and have moved from an originating position in a paralegal or law firm (n=345)

Importance of Issues in Driving a Move from a Position/Status NOT in a Paralegal or Law Firm to a Paralegal or Law Firm

We also compared those whose previous position was not in a paralegal or law firm but have moved into one of these two settings.

Those who have moved into a practising position in a paralegal or law firm from not working in this type of setting are much more likely than those who stayed within a paralegal/law firm setting to view the following as important issues driving their change of status:

- The job allows me to use my talents and legal skills (78% and 62%, respectively);
- I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job (67% and 51%);
- I control the scheduling (61% and 46%);
- My current position offers part-time work (25% and 9%).

Among those whose previous position was not in a paralegal or law firm, there are also differences in the importance of factors driving a transition to a paralegal firm versus a transition to a law firm.

- Those who have transitioned to paralegal firm differentiate themselves from those who have moved into law firms in the greater extent to which they view work schedule and control issues as important (i.e., “I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job”; “I control the scheduling”; “There is a formal mentoring policy in my current position”).
- While the sample size of those who have moved to a law firm is small, directional results suggest that this group appears to be driven to a greater extent by the prospect of better remuneration, opportunities for promotion, and access to benefits (including pensions, leave of absence/sabbatical and paid maternity or parental leave) than is the case for those who have moved into a paralegal firm.

**Importance of Specific Issues in Driving a Change of Status Among Those Whose
Originating Position (Previous) Was NOT in a Paralegal or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

(% who rate issue as a 4 or 5 on 5-point scale where 5 means “very important”)

% IMPORTANT - (4 OR 5 ON SCALE)	2012-2014 RESULTS COMBINED			
	Moved from position in PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM to PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	Moved from position NOT IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM to PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM	Moved from position NOT IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM to PARALEGAL firm	Moved from position NOT IN A PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM to LAW firm
	n=186 %	n=171 %	n=140 %	n=31* %
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	62	78↑	78	77
The job allows me to balance career and family	54	55	57	45
The pay is better	44	52	48	71↑
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	51	67↑	71↑	45
My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	48	53	54	48
I control the scheduling	46	61↑	65↑	45
Job security is good	43	40	37	55
My job is less stressful	39	33	34	29
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	31	33	27	61↑
The benefits are better	29	26	21	52↑
My workload has decreased	22	22	19	32
My current position offers a leave of absence or sabbatical	20	18	15	32
There is a pension plan in my current position	12	15	12	26
There is a formal mentoring policy in my current position	17	20	21	16
My current position offers part-time work	9	25↑	28↑	10
There is paid maternity or parental leave	13	11	7	29↑
There is accommodation for special needs policy at my current position	14	15	14	19
There is job sharing in my current position	7	11	11	10

Q.13aa Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that it was not important at all and a “5” means that it was very important. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Base: Those who made a change of status excluding those whose change was due to maternity/ parental leave and retirement
(*CAUTION: SMALL SAMPLE SIZE. RESULTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED DIRECTIONAL)

E. A Comparison of Men and Women Who Have Moved Into, or Out of Practice in a Paralegal or Law Firm

Comparing reasons for a change of status between women and men reveals that the most frequently mentioned reason is shared by both women and men. The greatest proportion of both women and men identify “*The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills*” as an important reason driving their change of status (59% and 53%, respectively).

However, for the remaining reasons, women and men differ significantly based on the extent to which these reasons are considered the reason important. At least one-half of women also mention the following issues as main reasons for their change in status:

- The pay is better (55%);
- The job allows me to balance career and family (54%); and,
- Job security is good (50%).

Each of these reasons are significantly less likely to be considered important by men (40%, 44%, and 33% for the three issues, respectively).

The ranking of issues considered most important in driving a change of status is different across gender. Men place greater importance on controlling the nature and scheduling of work within their new setting.

One-half of men (50%) identify “I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job” as an important factor in their change. This places it closely behind the top reason for a change among men - allowing use of their paralegal skills. Further, the ability to “control the scheduling” is identified by 45% as important, positioning it as the third ranked issue among men based on importance.

Women are more likely than men to identify financial and other types of benefits (including pension and paid maternity/parental leave) as important in driving their change of status.

Comparing reasons for a change of status between women and men reveals that the most frequently mentioned reason is shared by both women and men. However, for the remaining reasons, women and men differ significantly based on the extent to which these reasons are considered the reason important.

The greatest proportion of both women and men identify “*The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills*” as an important reason driving their change of status (59% and 53%, respectively).

**Importance of Specific Issues in Driving a Change of Status Among Those Who Have Moved Out Of, or Moved Into a Paralegal Firm or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change in Status is Not Related to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

**WOMEN COMPARED WITH MEN
(% who rate issue as a 4 or 5 on 5-point scale where 5 means “very important”)**

	2012-2014 RESULTS COMBINED		
	TOTAL RESPONDENTS	WOMEN	MEN
	n=		
% IMPORTANT - (4 OR 5 ON SCALE)			
	516	315	201
	%	%	%
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	57	59	53
The job allows me to balance career and family	50	54↑	44
The pay is better	49	55↑	40
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	49	47	51
My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	46	47	43
I control the scheduling	44	43	45
Job security is good	43	50↑	33
My job is less stressful	35	38	31
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	34	43↑	21
The benefits are better	31	36↑	23
My workload has decreased	23	25	19
My current position offers a leave of absence or sabbatical	21	25	13
There is a pension plan in my current position	20	25↑	13
There is a formal mentoring policy in my current position	19	22↑	13
My current position offers part-time work	16	18	12
There is paid maternity or parental leave	15	19↑	8
There is accommodation for special needs policy at my current position	15	15	14
My current position offers paid parental leave	13	16	9
There is job sharing in my current position	9	11	8

Q.13aa Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that it was not important at all and a “5” means that it was very important. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Base: Those who made a change of status excluding those whose change was due to maternity/ parental leave and retirement and have moved into, or moved out of a practice in a paralegal or law firm due to a change of status (n=516)

**Importance of Specific Issues in Driving a Change of Status
Among Those Whose Originating Position (Previous) Was in a Paralegal or Law Firm
(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)**

(% who rate issue as a 4 or 5 on 5-point scale where 5 means “very important”)

	WOMEN WHO HAVE MOVED FROM A POSITION IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM TO SOME OTHER SETTING/POSITION	WOMEN WHO HAVE MOVED FROM A POSITION IN PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM TO PARALEGAL OR LAW FIRM
n=	111	108
% IMPORTANT - (4 OR 5 ON SCALE)	%	%
The job allows me to use my talents and paralegal skills	35	69↑
The pay is better	56	54
The job allows me to balance career and family	41	62↑
Job security is good	52	58
I have the freedom to decide what I do in my job	31	52↑
My current position offers flexible full-time work hours	35	54↑
The opportunities for promotion are excellent	48	44
I control the scheduling	25	47↑
My job is less stressful	32	48↑
The benefits are better	42	38
My workload has decreased	27	27
My current position offers a leave of absence or sabbatical	27	27
There is a pension plan in my current position	41↑	18
There is a formal mentoring policy in my current position	22	22
There is paid maternity or parental leave	23	20
My current position offers part-time work	14	12
There is accommodation for special needs policy at my current position	17	15
There is job sharing in my current position	12	9

Q.13aa Please indicate how important each of the following were in your decision to move from your previous status or position to your current status or position. Please do this using a scale from 1 to 5, where “1” means that it was not important at all and a “5” means that it was very important. If you don’t know or you do not feel the statement is applicable to you, you may indicate that.

Base: Those who made a change of status excluding those whose change was due to maternity/ parental leave and retirement and have moved into, or moved out of a practice in a paralegal or law firm due to a change of status (n=516)

Likely Return to Working as a Licensed Paralegal

(Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave of Retirement)

A. Likelihood of Returning to Paralegal Practice

Over one-third (36%) of those who are not working as a paralegal or not working for pay in their current position indicate that they will be very likely to return to paralegal work. Another one-third report that they will be somewhat likely to return.

There are no significant differences between women and men in the likelihood of returning to working as a licensed paralegal.

Likelihood of Returning to Work as a Licensed Paralegal Among Those who Have Moved to Other Practice Settings (Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	TOTAL SAMPLE	WOMEN	MEN
	n=154	n=107	n=47
	%	%	%
NET Likely	71	70	75
Very likely	36	35	39
Somewhat likely	35	35	36
Not very likely	18	19	15
Not at all likely	11	11	10
NET Not Likely	19	30	25

Q.19 If your change of status or position involved a departure from working as a paralegal, how likely do you believe it is that you will return at some point to work as a licensed paralegal? Would you say that it is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely or not at all likely that you will at some point return to work as a licensed paralegal?

Timing of Likely Return to Working as a Licensed Paralegal

Among those reporting that they will likely return to private practice (over one-third (37%) believe they will return to working as a licensed paralegal within a year.

The proportion who anticipate a quick return (within a year) does not differ between women and men. However, the proportion who expect to return in 3 to 4 years is significantly higher among women than men (11% and 0%, respectively).

Timing of Likely Return to Work as a Licensed Paralegal Among those Reporting They Will Likely Return to Paralegal Practice (Excluding Those Whose Change is Due to Maternity/Parental Leave or Retirement)

	TOTAL SAMPLE	WOMEN	MEN
	n=100	n=175	n=35*
	%	%	%
Less than 1 year	37	35	43
1-2 years	22	25	14
3-4 years	7	11↑	-
More than 4 years	2	1	3
Don't know	32	28	40

*CAUTION: SMALL SAMPLE SIZE. RESULTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED DIRECTIONAL

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