

Job Options For Lawyers and Law School Graduates

What Can You Do With a Law Degree? By Deborah Arron

Private Law Firms

Possible arrangements:

solo practice with direct client contact	profit and loss partnership
solo practice as consulting expert	corporation
cooperative	main or branch office of national megafirm
office space partnership	

Possible positions:

managing partner	senior partner (permanent associate)
department manager	staff attorney (contract employee)
partner	of-counsel
non-equity partner	freelance temporary
partnership track associate	

Possible locations:

home office	bedroom community
large city	central business district
small city	suburban business district
town	foreign country
rural area	

Sample areas of practice:

administrative	discrimination	international
adoption	domestic relations	labor
agricultural	elder	litigation
alternative-dispute resolution	employment	lobbying
antitrust	employment relations	matrimonial
banking	energy	natural resources
biomedical issues	environmental	pensions
bond	estate planning	probate
business organization	family	public contracts
commercial finance	franchising	public utility
commercial litigation	general practice	real estate
communications	govt. relations/lobbying	social security
computer	guardianship	sports
constitutional	health care	taxation
construction	immigration	trademark
copyright	international finance	trust
corporate reorganization	intellectual property	workers' comp

Bar Associations

Possible positions:

complaint audit and review
disciplinary proceedings prosecutor
general counsel
lawyer referral service
lawyer referral service/telephone intake

legal education staff attorney
state bar court staff
trial counsel
volunteer legal service project/staff atty.
volunteer legal service project/supervisor

Corporations

Possible positions:

associate general counsel
bank trust officer
department legal advisor
medical division service
V.P. legal administration

general counsel
in-house insurance defense
litigation management
tax department of public accounting firm

Government

Federal jurisdiction positions:

administrative law judge in agency or department
assistant U.S. attorney
federal public defender
Judge Advocate General office of any military branch (active or reserve)
staff attorney in agency or department
U.S. attorney
U.S. trustee in bankruptcy

Persons in State, County and City jurisdictions:

administrative law judge
assistant attorney general
assistant city attorney
assistant district/prosecuting attorney
assistant public defender
attorney general
chief legal counsel for State Ethics Board
chief or supervising public defender
city attorney
code reviser
county council/board of supervisors
legal advisor

district/prosecution attorney
hearing officer
hearing officer for agency or department
hearing office or administrative law judge
law enforcement legal advisor
legal counsel to sheriff's office
legislative analyst
probate referee
program advisor
staff attorney for agency/department
condemnation specialist

Judicial

Possible jurisdictions:

county trial court system	municipal or small claims court
government agency or department	state appellate court system
Federal District court/Court of Appeals/Supreme Court	

Possible positions:

central research staff	law clerk
hearing officer or administrative law judge	magistrate/commissioner
judge or justice	pro-tem
justice of the peace	

Law Schools

Possible positions:

adjunct (part-time)	instructor
bar review course instructor	law school tutor
bar review tutor	lecturer
dean	tenure-track professor
director/supervising attorney of clinical education program	

Legal Aid/Services

Possible positions:

director of legal affairs	staff attorney
director of legal project	staff researcher
litigation coordinator	supervising attorney

Universities/School Districts

Possible positions:

general counsel	staff attorney
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LAW RELATED OPTIONS

Arbitration and Mediation

Possible employers:

affiliation with a not-for-profit group	newspapers
community dispute resolutions boards/panels	panels such as American Arbit.Assn.
for-profit business	private solo practice
government	universities
labor unions	

Possible positions:

arbitrator
contract mediator
director/manager
director of legal services
employee grievance mediator

owner/founder
program administrator
staff mediator
training
volunteer mediator

Bar Associations

Possible positions:

administrator
admissions/licensing director
assistant director
continuing legal education director
coordinator of Lawyer Helpline service
director, Lawyers Concern with Lawyers
executive director
fee arbitration program director

law-related education director
lawyer's assistance program director
legislative representative
membership services director
pro bono foundation administrator
programming director
public affairs director
special project coordinator

Communications

Possible positions:

editor of legal magazine
editor of legal newspaper
editor, writer and/or owner/publisher of a legal newsletter, journal or magazine reporting developments in specific areas
freelance writer for any legal magazine
legal correspondent for television or radio network news
reporter on legal issues for general circulation magazine/newspaper
reporter for legal newspaper
scriptwriter for television program
supervising producer of television program
writer for legal magazine

Consulting-with Law Firms and Lawyers

Possible positions:

automation
business valuation expert
communication with clients and juries
computer usage, on systems purchasing/training
employee selection, both professional & Staff
expert witness on lawyer standard of care or legal ethics
expert witness on insurance coverage bad faith/underwriting issues
expert witness on general/limited partnership disputes
jury selection
law training/professional development

mergers and acquisitions
quality of life
office space design
pension & profit-sharing plans
strategic planning
stress reduction
telephone management selection
time management
trial preparation
trial preparation
trial strategy
visual aids for trial
wardrobe and personal appearance

marketing and promotions/marketing research

writing

With other types of business:

consulting in cost, quality and effective use of
legal services
dispute resolution
environmental consulting
freelance negotiation
intellectual property protection systems design
labor-management relations
litigation avoidance
litigation management (manage and perform
document production and routine discovery
“in-house” at a lower cost and with
greater control over the litigation)

IRS compliance analyst

pension benefits program
promotion of European investment
real estate syndication
seminars to teach law to non-lawyers
sexual harassment avoidance training

Corporate/Business/Banking

Possible positions:

acquisitions evaluator	ethics officer
ADA compliance specialist	hospital administration
ADA coordinator	insurance claims representative
adjuster for insurance or self-issued company	insurance/binding specialist
assistant to the president of community hospital	labor administration
associate director of business affairs	law librarian
attorney-pension operations for insurance company	leasing contract administrator
bank investment compliance officer	legal editor
bank probate administrator	legal translation specialist
bank regulation analyst	life insurance agent
commercial loan administrator	litigation oversight
compliance officer	loan administrator
contract compliance administrator	policy/legislative affairs director/staff
contract negotiator	prepaid legal plan administrator
contract specialist	procurement analyst
contracting director or staff	product licensing director or staff
corporate quality/technical affairs director	property protection specialist
dispute resolution specialist	public affairs director or staff
EEOC compliance officer	purchasing director
employee benefit plan administrator	regulation analyst
employee benefit plan designer	SEC compliance monitor
employee benefits product director	tax law analyst
employee benefits analyst	trainer (teaching in a corporate environ.)
employee relations officer	training administrator
employee/labor relations director	trust examiner
errors and omissions examiner	trust officer
estate administrator	workers' compensation claim examiner

Designing and/or Selling Legal Products and/or Services

Sample employers:

public accounting firm	retailers
legal publishers	self-employment
management consultant	software developers
manufacturers	wholesalers

Product examples:

advertisements in legal newspapers/magazines	law books and directories
communication systems	legal applications computer software
computer animation/graphics	legal forms
computer hardware/software	mail order products with a lawyer theme
computer systems and components	office furniture
computerized legal forms	office equipment
corporate kits	office supplies
executive gifts	printing
forms	visual aids for trial

Service examples:

accounting/bookkeeping	legal research services
advertising	legal search consultant (“headhunter”)
appraiser (personal or real property)	litigation management
career life and planning for lawyers	litigation research
CLE-accredited seminars	litigation support
completion of legal forms	management consulting
computer-assisted research and retrieval market analysis	
computer-generated accident reconstruction	“mastery of practice” training seminars
contract attorney placement	medical illustration
corp. communications (newsletter/brochure)	medical research
couriers/messenger service	office machine maintenance and repair
courtroom exhibit preparation and design	out placement services
deposition and trial transcript summaries	paralegal and clerical staff placement
expert witness clearinghouse/referral service	paralegal service (document organ/index/retrieval)
facilities management	polygraphs
graphic design	probate administration
in-firm training programs	professional development courses
in-house continuing legal education	public relations
independent law librarian	research
independent paralegal	storytelling for law firm social events
insurance coverage	strategic automation
interactive CLE videos	strategic planning retreats
investigator, criminal or civil	systems integration
language/interpretation service	videotaping (depositions, will-signings, accident scenes)

Education-Related

Possible positions in law schools:

assistant dean	director of continuing legal education
dean	director of development/community relations
director of admissions	director of alumni affairs
director of student affairs	director of career services/development

Possible positions in other educational systems:

administrator of bar review course
assistant director of the house of technology transfer
bioethicist, primarily in hospital or medical school
community college instructor in business law, political science, constitutional law, criminal justice, or specialty subjects
course designer or coordinator for a continuing education business
director of a legal assistant/paralegal program (community college or continuing education program)
director of federal/state relations
in-house corporate training in subjects like negotiation, dispute resolution or sexual harassment avoidance
instructor in court reporter program
instructor in a national CLE program
lecturer in advanced individual tax planning
planned giving officer
special assistant to the President
undergraduate-level instructor in business law, business ethics, environmental policy, political science, constitutional law, legal studies, labor relations, tax, law and society, criminal justice

Entrepreneurial

Possible products or services:

consumer advocate	do-it-yourself will writing
dispute resolution training	legal information to non-lawyers
diversity training	private investigator
do-it-yourself divorce	self-help law book publisher
do-it-yourself probate	sexual harassment avoidance training

Foundations and Nonprofit Organizations

Possible positions:

development officer	legal information answer line coordinator
director of development	legal outreach program developer
director of planned giving	lobbyist
executive director for law-related organization	
freelance development/fundraising assistant	

Government & Politics

Possible positions:

bank fraud investigator	environment protection specialist
bankruptcy administrator	executive asst. to Director of Natural Resources
bankruptcy case administrator manage	human relations coordinator, Office of
bankruptcy examiner	Women's Rights
claims officer	international or interstate trade relations
specialist	
code research analyst	land use examiner
commissioner	legal documents officer
community relations coordinator	legislative aide to Senator/Congressman
congressional staff support	legislative director for Senator
contract administrator	member of Labor Relations Board
court Administrator	purchasing agent
court clerk	regulation analyst
deputy planning commissioner	research staff for congressional committee
director of ethic commission	supervisor of public accountants
director of public disclosure commission	underwater diver planner
elected official	victim's compensation
	investigator/advocate

Labor Unions

Possible positions:

administrator	labor negotiator union representative
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Law Enforcement

Possible positions:

CIA Agent	immigration inspector
court bailiff	juvenile justice
customs inspector	police administration
DEA agent	police officer
FBI agent	Postal inspector
fines, penalties & forfeiture specialist	special agent with Dept. of Justice in

Legal Publishers and Research Firms

Possible positions:

access specialist	legal research and writing
acquisitions	purchasing
client support specialist	research associate
computer-aided legal research	sales representative
editor	service representative
legal reporting	vice-president for governmental relations

Private Law Firm

Possible positions:

client services manager
director of business development
director of client relations
director of management/legal information
director of practice development
director of training (clerical/paralegal)
firm manager
in-house corporate communications
in-house editor of legal writing

law librarian
legal administrator
legal assistant manager
marketing manager
paralegal/legal assistant
personnel director
recruiting administrator/director
strategic planner