



# LEGAL SUPPORT 2018 SALARY SURVEY

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CHARTERHOUSE PARTNERSHIP

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## LEGAL SUPPORT MARKET OVERVIEW

In line with previous years, salary banding will dictate remuneration levels in each of the firms surveyed. Some firms have re-defined their banding for the intermediate level, which continues to be the most highly demanded band for support staff. As technology continues to advance and junior lawyers are increasingly self-sufficient, support ratios for the intermediate band are also expanding, along with ratios at the senior band in some firms. To support secretarial staff with these growing ratios, firms have invested more in their in-house technology training and Learning & Development programs.

Intermediate level secretaries continue to be the band in the highest level of demand. Candidates at this level are generally spoilt for choice when seeking new employment, so we would advise any firms looking to recruit intermediate legal secretaries that speed is a major factor for a successful recruitment process. The demand at this level is market wide, however over the last year we have seen spikes in the following practice areas; Insurance (Plaintiff and Defendant), Environment & Planning, Commercial Litigation, Property, Construction and Corporate.

Over the last year firms have been much more open-minded to hiring candidates from markets outside of law. The firms that have considered these 'non-traditional' support staff have generally looked to administrators with industry specific experience to the practice or from other professional services bodies.

The majority of the firms surveyed will either see their secretarial bands remain the same as they were the previous year or increase slightly based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), most commonly at 2.5%. The exception to this across firms surveyed will be performance-based bonuses. These bonus payments are either calculated on individual performance or a combination of both individual performance and team performance versus budget.

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## SALARY DATA

Over the past year we have seen bandings level out across the majority of the tiers. Whilst Boutique firms have raised salaries in the support market to compete with Mid-Tier and Top-Tier firms, the variances in salary banding has generally been with some of the new International firms to the Australian market as they try to attract talent from more established local brands; or from Mid-Tier firms that have established new offices (predominantly post-merger).

### DEFINITIONS

**Boutique Firms:** We categorise Boutique firms by the number of practice areas they offer to clients and the total staff headcount within a firm. This category can sometimes include specialist firms, though the key characteristic for this band is still related to headcount.

**Mid-Tier Firms:** The Australian Mid-Tier is the broadest in the banding, and the most rapidly changing in the current climate. Over the past year we have seen a lot of staff movement in the mid-tier, primarily due to mergers; which will continue into 2018.

**Top-Tier Firms:** For the purpose of this survey we are using the classic definition of an Australian Top-Tier firm. They are the largest six firms in Australia based on total headcount and revenue.

**International Firms:** The number of International firms joining the Australian market has slowed in 2018. Although there have been global mergers in the Top-Tier and Mid-Tier, for the purpose of this survey we are referencing internationally headquartered firms with a smaller Australian presence.

## SYDNEY

Junior Legal Secretary (0 - 2 years)	\$42,000 - \$50,000
Intermediate Legal Secretary (2 - 4 years)	\$50,000 - \$65,000
Senior Legal Secretary (5 years +)	\$70,000 - \$82,000
EA to Managing Partner / EA to General Counsel	\$80,000 - \$90,000
WP Operator	\$70,000 - \$80,000
Discovery Paralegal	\$55,000 - \$70,000
Paralegal (Practice Specific)	\$65,000 - \$90,000
Conveyancer	\$85,000 - \$120,000
Practice Manager	\$90,000 - \$130,000
Office Assistant (0 - 1 year)	\$40,000 - \$43,000
Mail Room / Shared Services Assistant	\$40,000 - \$50,000
Legal Receptionist	\$55,000 - \$70,000

*\*Salaries include base salary and superannuation only*

## MELBOURNE

Junior Legal Secretary (0 - 2 years)	\$45,000 - \$55,000
Intermediate Legal Secretary (2 - 4 years)	\$55,000 - \$65,000
Senior Legal Secretary (5 years +)	\$65,000 - \$75,000
EA to Managing Partner / General Counsel	\$75,000 - \$85,000
WP Operator	\$70,000 - \$75,000
Discovery Paralegal	\$55,000 - \$70,000
Paralegal (Practice Specific)	\$60,000 - \$80,000
Conveyancer	\$70,000 - \$100,000
Practice Manager	\$90,000 - \$120,000
Office Assistant (0 - 1 year)	\$40,000 - \$42,000
Mail Room / Shared Services Assistant	\$40,000 - \$50,000
Legal Receptionist	\$50,000 - \$65,000

*\*Salaries include base salary and superannuation only*

## NON-MONETARY DRIVERS

### Career Drivers

source: 2018 Charterhouse Legal Salary Survey

### What keeps me here

non salary benefits



health check ups



fitness groups



flexible working hours



team culture

### What would tempt me to leave

top 3 drivers of change



Ready for next challenge



salary increase



Quality Management

Firms are increasingly using non-monetary benefits to positively influence prospective legal support staff to accept employment offers.

The key motivator for legal support staff to either stay in their role or find a new role is cultural fit, both the firm in general and their existing or prospective team.

The other key movement drivers include team-based Health & Wellbeing initiatives such as Yoga, Pilates, Group Personal Training Sessions and Team Sports such as Soccer, Touch Football and Netball. Some of the other Health & Wellbeing initiatives provided to legal support staff include discounted Health Insurance, free breakfast and fruit at work, Flu Vaccinations and Health Checks.

Due to the nature of the work in legal support roles, flexible working arrangements can sometimes be a challenge for firms to accommodate, however this continues to be a strong retention/attraction motivator for staff when considering opportunities. Over the past year we have seen an increase in firms either tweaking core hours to accommodate support staff, or offering job share solutions to retain high performers.

Learning & Development and Technology within the legal industry are other major drivers in staff movement for 2018. Over the last year we have seen increased retention within the firms who have invested in technology and training, especially in the growing Mid-Tier firms.

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## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This document was created by Sommer Bath, National Director Legal and David Drew, Manager - Legal Support, in consultation with Lauren Miller, Operations & Insight Manager. The data used to create this document was sourced from a combination of the following sources:

- Charterhouse Partnership 2018 Legal Professional and Legal Support Client Survey
- Charterhouse Partnership 2018 Legal Professional and Legal Support Candidate Survey
- Salary data recorded from placements made since the 2017 review period
- The Law Society's of NSW and Victoria
- Client and market knowledge of Charterhouse Legal consultants
- Articles - Thomson Reuters, Forbes, Legal 500 and the Diversity Council of Australia

## ABOUT THE TEAM

The Charterhouse Legal team specialise in the recruitment of Legal Professional and Legal Support, Shared services staffing solutions for Private Practice law firms and In-house Legal teams.

If you would like to discuss any of the information outlined in this document, please contact David Drew on [davidd@charterhouse.com.au](mailto:davidd@charterhouse.com.au) or 02 9641 2421