

Executive Summary: **2015 AALL Biennial Salary Survey & Organizational Characteristics**

As legal information professionals' roles and work environments have changed over the years, it has become increasingly important to provide useful information for budgeting and salary negotiations. The American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) has conducted the *AALL Biennial Salary Survey & Organizational Characteristics (AALL Salary Survey)* since 1993 to provide comparable and comprehensive salary information for legal information professionals who work in law school, law firm/corporate, and government law libraries.

The *AALL Salary Survey* is the only source of comprehensive, comparative salary information for legal information professionals. It provides salary data for 25 law library positions broken out by many different characteristics, including location, number of people supervised, education, and years of experience. Additional breakouts specific to each library type are also included. Furthermore, in the case of law firm/corporate law libraries, annual bonus paid is also provided, and, in the case of law school libraries, tenure and teaching information is supplied.

Similar to years past, leadership at AALL member law libraries was emailed invitations to participate in the web-based survey. In total, 455 surveys were completed by the 868 AALL member libraries surveyed—an overall response rate of 52.4 percent. Within this total, 121 were returned by law school libraries (a 65.8 percent response rate); 256 by law firm/corporate law libraries (a 50.8 percent response rate); and 78 by government law libraries (a 43.3 percent response rate). The number of responses received enables reliable and valid characterization of the three main library types. No reports were sent to or received from libraries outside of the United States (U.S.). Therefore, all the salary and bonus data presented in the report are for U.S. locations.

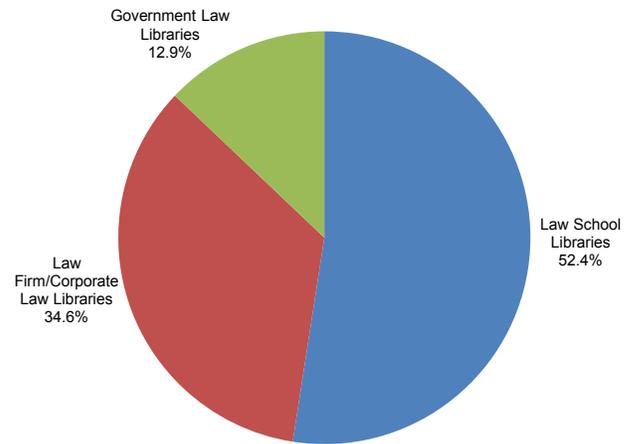
Respondents could access job position descriptions for reference in order to ensure consistency in the data reported. All salaries are effective as of July 1, 2015. Data were suppressed if there were fewer than five individuals reporting in order to avoid disclosing any individual salary data. The salaries reported are annual and/or annualized, an extrapolation to a full-time equivalent for the positions reported.

Characteristics of All Responding Libraries

Annual salary data for 2,604 individuals were provided by the 455 libraries responding to the 2015 *AALL Salary Survey*. There are two types of positions—professional (1,756) and non-professional (848). Non-professionals comprise: *library assistant/paraprofessional, library clerk, computer technician, and administrative assistant*.

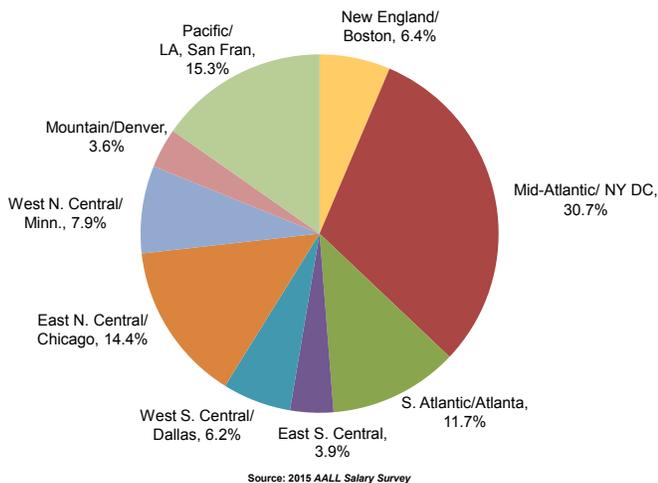
More than half (52.4%) of the professionals included in the survey were in law school libraries while just over one-third (34.6%) were in law firm/corporate law libraries; the remainder were in government law libraries.

Workplace Setting
Professional Positions



Source: 2015 AALL Salary Survey

Geographic Distribution – All Respondents
Professional Positions



Source: 2015 AALL Salary Survey

The largest percentage of professional respondents (30.7%) was located in the Mid-Atlantic region, very similar to the 2013 geographic distribution. The Pacific and East North Central regions (15.3% and 14.4%, respectively) were the next most frequently cited regions.

Most professionals held more than one academic degree. Nearly nine out of 10 professionals (87.5%) held a BA/BS while 12.4% had an MA/MS. Approximately half (47.6%) had earned an MLS *without* a JD, slightly more than one-third had *both* an MLS and a JD, while 5.0% had a JD but no MLS. Only 1.3% had earned a PhD.

Similar to previous surveys, half (50.2%) of the professionals included in the survey had 16 or more years of library experience, while almost one in six (16.8%) had fewer than six years of experience.

Information Budget for All Responding Libraries

Participants were asked to report the annual information budget by hard copy items (*books, serials, microforms, etc.*) and electronic information (*CD-ROM, online databases, OCLC, RLIN, etc.*). Law firm/corporate law libraries had the highest average total information budget, followed by the law school libraries.

Average Information Budget per Library

		Average 2015 Information Budget		
		Hard Copy Information	Electronic Information	Total Budget
Type of Library	Law School	\$658,676	\$409,947	\$1,068,622
	Government Law	\$257,425	\$130,540	\$387,965
	Law Firm/Corporate Law	\$385,026	\$863,796	\$1,248,822

The hard copy budget as a percent of the total information budget has been declining over the years for law school and government libraries, but is fairly stable in recent years for law firm/corporate law libraries.

Hard Copy Information Budget as a Percent of Total Information Budget

		2015	2013	2011
Type of Library	Law School	62%	66%	73%
	Government Law	66%	72%	79%
	Law Firm/Corporate Law	31%	30%	31%

Staffing for All Responding Libraries

The average number of professionals per library was 5.06 in 2015; an increase over 2013 (4.22 professionals per library), and a slight decrease compared to 2011 (5.66). The average number of paraprofessionals, however, was lower in 2015 than in 2013; 2.38 compared to 2.52, respectively. The average number of total staff for all libraries increased from 8.14 in 2013 to 9.23 in 2015.

Average Number of Staff Members (FTE)

	Law School Library	Government Law Library	Law Firm/ Corporate Law Library	All Libraries
Professional	8.03	3.34	4.06	5.06
Paraprofessional	5.61	1.57	.95	2.38
Students/Clerks	4.81	.62	.59	1.79
Total Library Staff	18.45	5.53	5.60	9.23

The ratio between professional and paraprofessional staff at law firm/corporate law libraries increased in 2015 (2.84:1) compared to 2013 (2.40:1), and was similar to that reported in 2009 (2.80:1). The same ratio for government law library respondents increased to 2.34:1 compared to years past when it was below 2.0, while the law school library ratio dropped once again to 0.78:1 for 2015. Overall, the ratio remained almost the same; 1.78:1 in 2015 compared to 1.79:1 in 2013.

Ratio of Professionals to Paraprofessionals (FTE)

		2015	2013	2011
Type of Library	All Libraries	1.78 to 1	1.79 to 1	1.91 to 1
	Law School	.78 to 1	.87 to 1	1.20 to 1
	Government Law	2.34 to 1	1.77 to 1	1.49 to 1
	Law Firm/Corporate Law	2.84 to 1	2.40 to 1	3.39 to 1

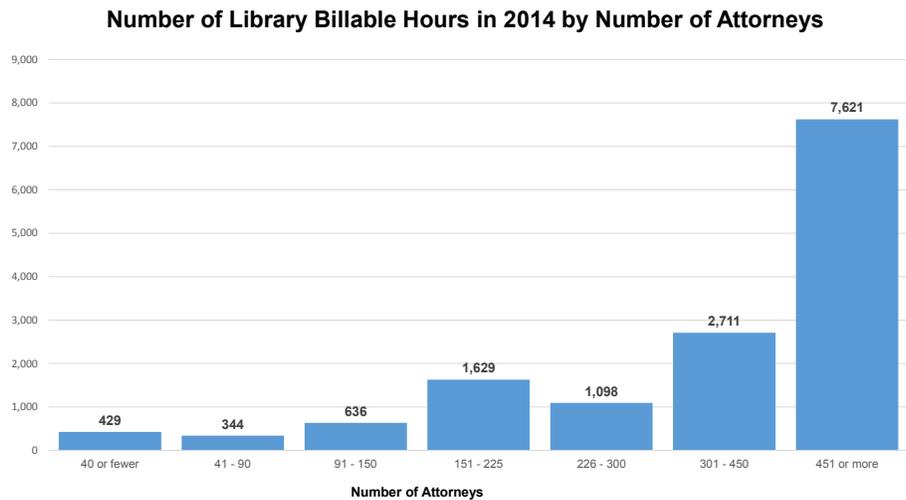
Law School Libraries

The average number of students (FTE) for 2015 was 606 with an average of 44 faculty. The ratio of library professionals to students (FTE) was 1 to 79.93, while the ratio of library professionals to faculty was 1 to 5.98.

The associate/deputy/assistant director at responding law school libraries reported an average annual salary of \$95,718 which is an increase of 3.3% compared to the 2013 survey results. Reference/research librarians had an average salary of \$68,480, a 2.9% increase over 2013. The average salary for instructional/reference/research librarians showed an increase of 11.1% over 2013.

Law Firm/Corporate Law Libraries

Respondents reported an average number of attorneys per firm of 114, and an average of 4.1 library professionals per firm. The ratio of library professionals to attorneys was 1 to 43.30. An average of 3.4 firm librarians work outside the library in other firm departments.



Billable hours the library worked during 2014 in general increased with the size of the firm (in terms of number of attorneys).

Reference/research librarians earned an average of \$78,570 which was an increase of 2.1% compared to 2013. Director/chief librarians (a.k.a., head librarian/library manager/information manager/manager of library services) reported an average salary of \$122,074—an increase of 1.6% over 2013. The average salary of solo librarians showed an increase of 8.0% in contrast to 2013.

Government Law Libraries

The typical responding government law library did not receive federal funds. Nearly nine in ten (88%) reported not receiving federal funds in 2015.

Solo librarians had an average salary of \$75,495 in 2015, which was an increase of 13.2% over 2013. The director/chief librarian (a.k.a., state law librarian/circuit librarian/county law librarian) reported an average salary of \$97,419, an increase of 4.3%. Reference/research librarians reported a salary increase of 16.0% compared to 2013 (\$61,311 in 2015, and \$52,845 in 2013).

About the Methodology

The web-based questionnaires were created by AALL and Association Research, Inc., (ARI) based on prior surveys with recommendations from AALL's Economic Status of Law Librarians Committee, which received feedback from AALL Special Interest Sections representing each of the library types. ARI, an independent survey research firm serving nonprofit clients exclusively, carried out the survey research. ARI performed all data collection, tabulation, analysis, and reporting work while maintaining complete confidentiality throughout. Additionally, to avoid disclosing any individual salary information, data representing fewer than five individuals were suppressed.

Order the *AALL Salary Survey*

The *AALL Biennial Salary Survey & Organizational Characteristics* report is available online to AALL members free of charge. Purchase the print edition by contacting orders@aall.org or 312.939.4764.

About AALL

The American Association of Law Libraries was founded in 1906 to promote law libraries' value to the legal and public communities, foster the law librarianship profession, and provide leadership in the legal information field. With nearly 4,500 members, AALL represents law librarians and related professionals who are affiliated with law firms; law schools; corporate legal departments; courts; and local, state, and federal government agencies. For more information, visit www.aallnet.org.

About Association Research Institute, Inc.

Since 1984, Association Research, Inc., (ARI) has produced customized survey research exclusively for nonprofit organizations, serving hundreds of professional, trade, and charitable organizations. While ARI's clients are exclusively nonprofits, its services are wide ranging. They include member needs assessments, benchmarking surveys, economic forecasts and analyses, readership surveys, monthly business statistics, quarterly economic opinion surveys, and compensation and benefits surveys. ARI has successfully designed and processed thousands of survey instruments while maintaining total client confidentiality. Learn more about ARI at www.associationresearch.com.

Additional Information

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