



Economic Survey

OREGON STATE BAR
2002 ECONOMIC SURVEY

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Survey prepared by
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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	Purpose	1
	Survey Design/Process	1
	Explanation of Data Analysis	2
	Validity of Sample	3
	Comparison to Previous Surveys	4
	Survey Table and Map	5
ATTORNEY PROFILE/ CHARACTERISTICS	Gender	7
	Age	8
	Years Admitted to Practice in Oregon	8
	Total Years Admitted to Practice.....	9
	Type of Employment	10
	Area of Practice	10
	Size of Practice.....	11
	Level of Employment	11
	Method of Pay	12
COMPENSATION	Compensation	13
	All Respondents	14
	Full-Time and Part-Time	14
	Gender.....	16
	Age	18
	Years Admitted to Practice in Oregon	19
	Total Years Admitted to Practice.....	20
	Type of Employment	21
	Area of Practice	22
	Size of Practice.....	25
	Level of Employment	26
	Method of Pay	26
BILLING PRACTICES	Hours Billed	28
	Method of Pay	28
	Billing Rate	29
	Total Years Admitted to Practice.....	30
	Area of Private Practice	31
	Billing Methods	34
PRACTICE PROFILE/ CHARACTERISTICS	Hours Worked	35
	Type of Employment	36
	Pro-Bono/Community Service Hours.....	37
CAREER SATISFACTION	Gender.....	38
	Total Years Admitted to Practice.....	39
	Type of Employment	39
	Area of Practice	40
	Level of Employment	41
COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE		43

INTRODUCTION

In early 2002, the Oregon State Bar commissioned an economic survey to be conducted of the membership of the Oregon State Bar. This survey was administered by Flikirs Professional Services, Inc., an independent survey firm. The survey was very similar to surveys conducted previously in 1994 and 1998. The following report details the survey process and the findings obtained from an analysis of the data contained in the survey questionnaires that were completed and returned.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to gather demographic and economic information regarding Oregon attorneys. Data was gathered in five major areas.

- Attorney Profile and Characteristics – information regarding gender, age, years admitted to practice in Oregon, total years admitted to practice, type of employment, area of practice, size of practice, level of employment, and method of pay.
- Compensation – information regarding annual compensation for 2001 received from legal practice.
- Billing Practices for Attorneys in Private Practice – information regarding hours billed per month, hourly billing rate, and billing methods utilized.
- Practice Profile and Characteristics – information regarding total hours worked per month and hours spent in pro-bono and community service activities.
- Career Satisfaction – an overall rating of the attorney's satisfaction with his/her legal career.

Survey Design/Process

The project involved a mail survey of a sample of attorneys selected from the list of Oregon Active, Active Emeritus, and Active Pro Bono Members of the Oregon State Bar. For purposes of this project, the Bar membership was divided into seven geographic regions. From each region, a proportional random sample was selected comprised of one-third of the attorneys. The use of a random sample afforded every member within each region an equal chance of receiving a questionnaire. Proportional sampling assured that data from

attorneys in regions of the state with fewer attorneys (i.e., Southern Oregon, Eastern Oregon, and Oregon Coast) did not distort the overall data.

The questionnaire was developed by the Economic Survey Committee of the Oregon State Bar, consisting of Steve Hutchinson, John Tyner, Bette Worcester, and Rod Wegener. The questionnaire design was limited to one page to increase the rate of participation. Whenever possible, questions were designed to correspond to the data that was collected in the economic surveys that were conducted in 1994 and 1998 in order to facilitate comparison.

Attorneys sampled received a cover letter from the President of the Oregon State Bar, the questionnaire with an identification code number, and a postage-paid return envelope in May, 2002. After approximately two weeks, a reminder postcard was sent to those attorneys who had not responded. A replacement questionnaire, with a cover letter from Flikirs Professional Services, Inc., was sent to those attorneys who had not responded by the initial deadline.

Data from completed surveys was entered into a statistical computer program. Four surveys were returned with the identification code number removed and, thus, could not be used in the analysis.

Explanation of Data Analysis

The data analysis relies on descriptive statistics, including averages, medians, and percentiles.

- The **average**, also known as the mean, is calculated by adding all the respondents' scores for a particular item and dividing by the total number of respondents.
- The **median**, also known as the midpoint, is the point at which 50% of the responses are above and 50% are below that number.
- The **percentiles**, e.g., 25th, 75th, and 95th, represent the point in the range of responses at which 25%, 75%, and 95% of the responses occur for a specific question. For example, the 95th percentile compensation amount is the compensation amount (may not be an actual reported compensation amount) at which 95% of the reported amounts were below and 5% of the compensation amounts were above. Statistical interpolation was used to compute the specific percentile points.

Items may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Data was indicated as “n/a” if no data was reported or if data from less than three individuals was reported for average and median data, or if data from less than five individuals was reported for percentile data.

Validity of Sample

The respondents were compared overall with the total sample (including non-respondents) with regard to data available from the Oregon State Bar membership records, including region, gender, age, and years admitted to practice in Oregon. The regional comparison indicated that each region had less than a 1% difference between the respondent percentage and the total sample for that region.

When compared with the total sample, the percentage of women responding was only slightly higher than the percentage of men responding. Women represented 28% of the sample and 30% of the respondents. The respondents were compared to the total sample by the age categories used in the analysis. Of the five age categories, three categories had identical percentages for respondents and the total sample. The other two categories each had a 1% difference between the respondent percentage and the total sample.

The respondents were also compared to the total sample by the categories used in the analysis of years admitted to practice in Oregon. Six of the eight categories of years admitted to practice had identical percentages for respondents and the total sample. Of the other two categories, one had a 1% difference and one had a 2% difference between the respondents and the total sample.

Given the proportional sampling method by region, the large number of respondents, and the similarity of respondents and non-respondents regarding gender, age, and years admitted to practice in Oregon, the data in this report can be viewed as representative of attorneys in Oregon.

Comparison to Previous Surveys

Throughout this report, comparative data is presented comparing current data to data collected in the 1998 survey. Many of the averages for specific data are very similar to the 1998 data. The median age increased by two years from 45 to 47 years of age. The percentage of female respondents increased by one percentage point from 29% in the 1998 survey to 30% in 2002.

The average compensation reported in 2002 (\$102,643) was approximately 22% higher than reported in 1998 while the median compensation (\$78,000) increased by approximately 24%. The average hourly billing rate also increased by 26% from \$138 per hour in 1998 to \$174 per hour in 2002.

Average hours worked per month and pro bono hours declined slightly between 1998 and 2002. Average community service hours increased from 11.1 hours per month in 1998 to 11.4 hours in 2002. The Oregon rating for career satisfaction (based on a 5-point scale) raised slightly from 3.6 in 1998 to 3.7 in 2002.

The following table contains some highlights of the overall data collected in the three surveys.

Item	1994 Survey	1998 Survey	2002 Survey
Median Age	44	45	47
Gender - Females	25%	29%	30%
Average Number of Years in Practice	15	16	18
Lawyers in Private Practice *	76%	71%	71%
Full-Time Lawyers	81%	81%	78%
Average Compensation	\$73,630	\$83,805	\$102,643
Median Compensation	\$58,000	\$63,090	\$78,000
Median Hours Billed per Month - Private Practice	120	120	120
Average Hourly Billing Rate - Private Practice	\$123	\$138	\$174
Median Hourly Billing Rate - Private Practice	\$120	\$130	\$165
Average Hours Worked per Month - Full-Time	189	189	186
Average Pro-Bono Hours per Month	9.3	9.2	9.1
Average Community Service Hours per Month	10.8	11.1	11.4
Career Satisfaction - 5-point scale	3.5	3.6	3.7

* An additional 5% were in Private Non-Profit organizations in 1998 and 2002. In 1994, no distinction was made between Private Practice and Private Non-Profit organizations in the collection of data.

Survey Table and Map

The sample was selected from the list of Oregon Active, Active Emeritus, and Active Pro Bono Members prepared by the Oregon State Bar as of May 2002. The survey sample comprised of one-third of the attorneys was selected on a regional basis using the seven geographic regions defined by the Bar in the previous surveys conducted in 1994 and 1998. The following table lists the seven regions; the number of individuals on the total Oregon Active, Active Emeritus, and Active Pro Bono Membership list; the percentage that each region represents of the total; the number of individuals in the sample selected; the number of completed questionnaires returned; and the percentage rate of return.

The overall return rate was 66%, represented by 2,215 completed questionnaires. This rate of return is considered to be good for a survey of this type. The percentage rate of return for completed questionnaires by region closely parallels the percentage each region represents of the total bar membership as shown in the table below.

The map on the following page graphically displays the seven regions of Oregon utilized for this survey.

Survey Table

Region	Total Membership	%	Sample Size	Returned Number	%
Downtown Portland (Zip Codes 97201, 97204, 97205, 97207, 97208, 97228, 97258)	3,629	35.8%	1,209	812	36.7%
Tri-County (Remainder of Portland, Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties)	2,675	26.4%	890	571	25.8%
Upper Willamette Valley (Marion, Polk, and Yamhill Counties)	1,309	12.9%	436	283	12.8%
Lower Willamette Valley (Benton, Lane, and Linn Counties)	1,042	10.3%	347	227	10.3%
Southern Oregon (Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, and Klamath Counties)	545	5.4%	182	130	5.9%
Eastern Oregon (Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler Counties)	602	5.9%	200	121	5.5%
Oregon Coast (Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Curry, Lincoln, and Tillamook Counties)	339	3.3%	113	71	3.2%
Totals	10,141	100%	3,377	2,215	100%

Survey Map

Seven regions of Oregon utilized for this survey:

Sampling Regions

