

Business Law Section Hourly Rate Survey Results

In March 2008, the Oregon State Bar conducted a survey on behalf of the Business Law Section on hourly rates for Oregon lawyers. The survey aimed to provide detailed information on hourly rates charged by attorneys in specific areas of practice. *To see more detailed results from the survey, please see the attached printouts. All results in this report pertain to members of the Business Law Section and might not represent all Oregon lawyers.*

Methodology and Response Rate

All members of the Business Law Section with an email address on file with the bar were invited (via email) to participate. Of the 1,247 possible respondents, we received 275 responses, for a 22% response rate. Respondents were asked four questions: geographic area, firm size, years of experience, and hourly rates for specific practice areas.

Demographics

Survey respondents came from all regions of the state. The majority came from downtown Portland (45%) and the Tri-County Area (20%). The least-represented groups were the Oregon Coast (3%) and Central Oregon (4%).

The majority, 62%, work in law firms with 10 or fewer attorneys.

The average number of years spent in a practice area is 11-13, with the largest group represented having practiced two years or less (16% of the total).

Discussion of Survey Responses

Percent of time devoted to an Area of Practice (AoP)

Respondents were asked to specify how much of their work is devoted to a specific AoP. All respondents indicated they practice in multiple fields, with 0.0% devoting their entire practice to a specific area and only 5.26% spending 60% or more of their time on a single area of practice.

Experience in a specific AoP

When examining the amount of time spent in a specific AoP, the results seem spread evenly between all levels of experience. The range of data goes from 0 years of experience up to 41+ years of experience. Of these ranges, the two largest represented groups were less than five years of experience (23% of total) and 26-30 years of experience (16% of total).

Representation of AoPs

Twelve different AoPs were listed. Respondents were asked which areas they practice in, and could choose more than one option. The most-represented groups were: Small Business (23% of responses), and Real Estate (18% of responses). The least-represented group was: Secured Transactions (3% of responses).

Hourly Rates Aggregate

Because individual respondents sometimes provided rates for more than one AoP, the total number of responses for hourly rates was 656. Respondents reported hourly rates in intervals of \$25. Intervals began at \$50 an hour and progressed up to \$450+ per hour.

Less than one percent of respondents reported rates of less than \$100 per hour. About one-fourth of respondents (28%) reported rates between \$100 and \$200 per hour. Forty-three percent reported rates between \$200 and \$299. About one in four (24%) reported rates between \$300 and \$399. And approximately 5% claimed hourly rates of more than \$400.

The average and median hourly rate for Business Litigation lawyers is approximately \$250 per hour.

What region (county) is your office in?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Downtown Portland	44.7%	123
Tri-County area (Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas)	20.0%	55
Oregon Coast (Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, Coos, Curry)	2.9%	8
Upper Willamette Valley (Yamhill, Polk, Marion)	9.8%	27
Lower Willamette Valley (Benton, Linn, Lane)	8.7%	24
Southern Oregon (Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath)	4.7%	13
Central Oregon (Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson)	3.6%	10
Eastern Oregon (all other Oregon counties)	5.5%	15
<i>answered question</i>		275
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What size is your firm?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Sole practitioner	23.5%	64
2-5 Attorneys	26.1%	71
6-10 Attorneys	12.1%	33
11-15 Attorneys	5.5%	15
16-20 Attorneys	4.4%	12
21-25 Attorneys	6.3%	17
26-30 Attorneys	4.8%	13
31-35 Attorneys	0.7%	2
36-40 Attorneys	0.0%	0
41-45 Attorneys	0.4%	1
46-50 Attorneys	0.4%	1
51-75 Attorneys	2.9%	8
76-100 Attorneys	0.4%	1
101+ Attorneys	12.5%	34
<i>answered question</i>		272
<i>skipped question</i>		3

How long have you been practicing law?

Answer Options	Response	Response
0-2 Years	15.5%	42
3-5 Years	5.2%	14
5-7 Years	5.5%	15
8-10 Years	5.9%	16
11-13 Years	6.6%	18
14-16 Years	6.6%	18
17-19 Years	6.6%	18
20-22 Years	3.3%	9
23-25 Years	5.9%	16
26-28 Years	9.2%	25
29-31 Years	10.0%	27
32-34 Years	6.6%	18
35-37 Years	7.0%	19
38-40 Years	2.6%	7
41-44 Years	2.2%	6
45+ Years	1.1%	3
<i>answered question</i>		271
<i>skipped question</i>		4

Percent of practice devoted to this type of case						
Answer Options	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	Totals
Banking/Lending	17	6	2	1	1	27
Construction Law	20	3	2	1	1	27
Corporate Finance	39	5	2			46
Mergers and Acquisitions	44	15	5	1		65
Non-profits/Tax-exempt Organizations	29	1	2			32
Real Estate	73	33	11	3	3	123
Secured Transactions	21	1				22
Small Business	87	45	17	9	4	162
Tax	23	10	5	4		42
Securities	20	6	1			27
Generic Business Law	3	8	5	3	6	25
Estate Planning/Trusts/Wills/Probate	12	24	20	5	4	65
TOTALS:	388	157	72	27	19	663
% of Total:	58.52%	23.68%	10.86%	4.07%	2.87%	

Number of years handling this type of case										
Answer Options	<5	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41+	Totals
Banking/Lending	7	4	2	1	5	6	3	1		29
Construction Law	8		5	5		6	4			28
Corporate Finance	10	8	5	2	7	8	2	2		44
Mergers and Acquisitions	18	11	6	3	6	9	7	1	1	62
Non-profits/Tax-exempt Organizations	7	5	6	4	1	7	2	1		33
Real Estate	29	12	9	12	7	22	14	10	1	116
Secured Transactions	3	3	4		2	4	3	3		22
Small Business	39	19	18	15	9	20	15	9	4	148
Tax	10	4	3	4	6	4	7	3	2	43
Securities	8	3	2	2	4	8	1	1		29
Generic Business Law		6	4	3	5	3	2	2		25
Estate Planning/Trusts/Wills/Probate	6	14	6	10	4	7	8	8	2	65
TOTALS:	145	89	70	61	56	104	68	41	10	644
% of Total:	22.52%	13.82%	10.87%	9.47%	8.70%	16.15%	10.56%	6.37%	1.55%	

AVERAGE

Hourly rate charged for this type of case																		
Answer Options	\$50-\$74	\$75-\$99	\$100-\$124	\$125-\$149	\$150-\$174	\$175-\$199	\$200-\$224	\$225-\$249	\$250-\$274	\$275-\$299	\$300-\$324	\$325-\$349	\$350-\$374	\$375-\$399	\$400-\$424	\$425-\$449	\$450+	Totals
Banking/Lending	1					3	7	3	3	1	6	1	4	2				31
Construction Law				1	1	7	5	7	1	1	2		3					28
Corporate Finance					2	3	5	4	4	1	6	6	5	2	2	1	5	46
Mergers and Acquisitions			1	1	3	6	10	6	5	4	10	4	5	1	1	3	4	64
Non-profits/Tax-exempt Organizations	1	1	3	2	4	3	3	4	5		1	1	2			1		31
Real Estate			2	4	12	21	22	14	17	6	11	4	2	3	1			119
Secured Transactions			1		1	4	3	1	2		4	2	3	1				22
Small Business	1		2	6	14	31	24	20	15	12	13	4	5	1	1	1	1	151
Tax			1	2	4	3	5	3	6	3	7	3	3			3	1	44
Securities					1	3	5	4	2	1	3	1	3	3		1	3	30
Generic Business Law					1	3			3	5	7	3	1	2				25
Estate Planning/Trusts/Wills/Probate				4	8	17	5	9	8	5	2	3	2	1		1		65
TOTALS:	3	1	10	20	51	104	94	75	71	39	72	32	38	16	5	11	14	656
% of Total:	0.46%	0.15%	1.52%	3.05%	7.77%	15.85%	14.33%	11.43%	10.82%	5.95%	10.98%	4.88%	5.79%	2.44%	0.76%	1.68%	2.13%	

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