

Consumer Law Section Hourly Rate Survey Results

In March 2008, the Oregon State Bar conducted a survey on behalf of the Consumer 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 Consumer Law Section and might not represent all Oregon lawyers.*

Methodology and Response Rate

All members of the Consumer Law Section with an email address on file with the bar were invited (via email) to participate. Of the 237 possible respondents, we received 54 responses, for a 23% 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 every region of the state except for the Oregon Coast, with the most coming from the Tri-County Area (35%) and Downtown Portland (30%).

The majority, 89%, work in law firms with five or fewer attorneys.

The average number of years spent in a practice area is 11-13, with the largest groups represented having practiced 0-2 and 5-7 years (13% of the total each).

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. The majority indicated they practice in multiple fields of litigation, with only 6% (1 in 19) devoting their entire practice to a specific area and only 20% 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, it appears that most Consumer Law attorneys haven't been in the field for very long. The range of data goes from 0 years of experience up to 41+ years of experience, and a full 73% of respondents indicated 15 years of experience or less in Consumer Law fields.

Representation of AoPs

Eleven different areas AoPs were listed. Respondents were asked which areas they practice in, and could choose more than one option. The most-represented groups were: Unlawful Trade Practice Claims (22% of responses), Unlawful Debt Collection Practices (19% of responses) and Automobile Fraud (14% of responses). The least-represented groups were: Credit Discrimination (0.0% of responses), Class Actions (3% of responses) and Predatory Lending (4% of responses).

Hourly Rates Aggregate

Because individual respondents sometimes provided rates for more than one AoP, the total number of responses for Consumer Law hourly rates was 75.

Litigation

Respondents in this section reported hourly rates in intervals of \$25. Intervals began at \$50 an hour and progressed up to \$450+ per hour.

No respondents claimed an hourly rate of less than \$100 per hour, but 11% claimed less than \$150 per hour. A total of 32% of respondents reported rates between \$100 and \$199 per hour. More than half (53%) reported rates between \$200 and \$299. Approximately one in seven (15%) reported rates between \$300 and \$399. And no respondents claimed hourly rates of more than \$400.

The average and median hourly rate for litigation is approximately \$250.

Consultation/Negotiation

Respondents in this section reported hourly rates in intervals of \$50. Intervals began at \$50 per hour and progressed up to \$451+ per hour

In this group, 13% of respondents claimed an hourly rate of less than \$100 per hour, and 31% claimed less than \$150 per hour. A total of 51% of respondents reported rates between \$100 and \$199 per hour. About 1 in 4 (25%) reported rates between \$200 and \$299. And 11% reported rates between \$300 and \$399. No respondents claimed hourly rates of more than \$400.

The average and median rate for consultation/negotiation in Consumer Law is approximately \$150 - \$200 per hour.

What region (county) is your office in?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Downtown Portland	29.6%	16
Tri-County area (Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas)	35.2%	19
Oregon Coast (Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, Coos, Curry)	0.0%	0
Upper Willamette Valley (Yamhill, Polk, Marion)	20.4%	11
Lower Willamette Valley (Benton, Linn, Lane)	5.6%	3
Southern Oregon (Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath)	1.9%	1
Central Oregon (Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson)	1.9%	1
Eastern Oregon (all other Oregon counties)	5.6%	3
<i>answered question</i>		54
<i>skipped question</i>		0

What size is your firm?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Sole practitioner	49.1%	26
2-5 Attorneys	39.6%	21
6-10 Attorneys	3.8%	2
11-15 Attorneys	0.0%	0
16-20 Attorneys	3.8%	2
21-25 Attorneys	0.0%	0
26-30 Attorneys	1.9%	1
31-35 Attorneys	0.0%	0
36-40 Attorneys	0.0%	0
41-45 Attorneys	0.0%	0
46-50 Attorneys	0.0%	0
51-75 Attorneys	1.9%	1
76-100 Attorneys	0.0%	0
101+ Attorneys	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		53
<i>skipped question</i>		1

How long have you been practicing law?

Answer Options	Response	Response
0-2 Years	13.2%	7
3-5 Years	9.4%	5
5-7 Years	13.2%	7
8-10 Years	11.3%	6
11-13 Years	3.8%	2
14-16 Years	9.4%	5
17-19 Years	7.5%	4
20-22 Years	7.5%	4
23-25 Years	1.9%	1
26-28 Years	3.8%	2
29-31 Years	5.7%	3
32-34 Years	5.7%	3
35-37 Years	0.0%	0
38-40 Years	3.8%	2
41-44 Years	1.9%	1
45+ Years	1.9%	1
<i>answered question</i>		53
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Percent of practice devoted to this type of case						
Answer Options	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%	Totals
Automobile fraud (incl. lemon law)	8	1		1		10
Banking and financial services	4					4
Class actions			1	1		2
Credit discrimination						0
Fair Credit Reporting Act	3	1		1		5
Predatory lending	2				1	3
Retail installment contracts	4					4
Unlawful debt collection practices	8	2	2		1	13
Unlawful trade practice claims	14	1				15
Bankruptcy	1	2	1	1	1	6
Personal Injury	2	2	1	1	1	7
TOTALS:	46	9	5	5	4	69
% of Total:	66.67%	13.04%	7.25%	7.25%	5.80%	

Years of experience in this area										
Answer Options	<5	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41+	Totals
Automobile fraud (incl. lemon law)	6	2	3	1						12
Banking and financial services	2			2		1				5
Class actions	1					1				2
Credit discrimination	1									1
Fair Credit Reporting Act	2	2	2							6
Predatory lending		2				1				3
Retail installment contracts	1	1		2				1		5
Unlawful debt collection practices	5	2	4	1		1				13
Unlawful trade practice claims	4	3	4	1		2				14
Bankruptcy	1		1		1	2		1		6
Personal Injury		4	1		2					7
TOTALS:	23	16	15	7	3	8	0	2	0	74
% of Total:	31.08%	21.62%	20.27%	9.46%	4.05%	10.81%	0.00%	2.70%	0.00%	

AVERAGE

Litigation Hourly Rate																		
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
Automobile fraud (incl. lemon law)				3	1	3	1		3									11
Banking and financial services							2	1	1			1						6
Class actions							1							1				2
Credit discrimination									1									1
Fair Credit Reporting Act				1					1	4			1					7
Predatory lending									2			2						4
Retail installment contracts						2	1		1									4
Unlawful debt collection practices				1		2	2	1	4	1		1	1					13
Unlawful trade practice claims				2		4	2		5					1				14
Bankruptcy								2		1		2	1					6
Personal Injury			1		1	1		1	2									7
TOTALS:	0	0	1	7	2	14	8	6	23	3	0	6	3	2	0	0	0	75
% of Total:	0.00%	0.00%	1.33%	9.33%	2.67%	18.67%	10.67%	8.00%	30.67%	4.00%	0.00%	8.00%	4.00%	2.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	

AVERAGE

Consultation / Negotiation Hourly Rate											
Answer Options	\$50 or less	\$51-\$100	\$101-\$150	\$151-\$200	\$201-\$250	\$251-\$300	\$301-\$350	\$351-\$400	\$401-\$450	\$451+	Totals
Automobile fraud (incl. lemon law)	1	2	3	3	2						11
Banking and financial services			1	3		1					5
Class actions						1					1
Credit discrimination				1							1
Fair Credit Reporting Act			2	1	1		1				5
Predatory lending				1			1	1			3
Retail installment contracts	1		1	1	1	1					5
Unlawful debt collection practices			2	3	2	2	2				11
Unlawful trade practice claims	1	2	1	5	2	1		1			13
TOTALS:	3	4	10	18	8	6	4	2	0	0	55
% of Total:	5.45%	7.27%	18.18%	32.73%	14.55%	10.91%	7.27%	3.64%	0.00%	0.00%	

AVERAGE