

Careers

A legal assistant or “paralegal” is a trained specialist who can manage a law office operation, assisting the attorney with legal research and in the design and development of new procedures, techniques, services, and processes for the law office. One of a paralegal’s most important tasks is helping lawyers prepare for closings, hearings, trials, and corporate meetings. Paralegals investigate the facts of cases and ensure all relevant information is considered. They also identify appropriate laws, judicial decisions, legal articles, and other materials relevant to assigned cases. Computer use and technical knowledge has become essential to paralegal work.

Salary

Earnings of paralegals and legal assistants vary greatly. Salaries depend on education, training, experience, type and size of employer, and geographic location of the job. In 2004, full-time wage and salary paralegals and legal assistants had median annual earnings of \$39,130 (\$59,370 in federal government; \$38,260 in local government; \$34,910 in state government).

Job Outlook

Paralegals and legal assistants are projected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through 2014. Employment growth stems from law firms and other employers with legal staffs increasingly hiring paralegals to lower the cost and increase the availability and efficiency of legal services.

Education & Training Options

Montgomery College offers an associate of applied science degree (A.A.S) in paralegal studies, a certificate in paralegal studies, and a letter of recognition in legal analysis. (See *reverse for paralegal studies curricula.*)

■ Degree

The A.A.S. curriculum is designed for those interested in a career in a law office as a paraprofessional. It is also designed for legal secretaries presently employed in attorneys’ offices who wish to improve their skills for career advancement.

■ Certificate

Developed in cooperation with members of the Montgomery County Bar Association, this evening certificate curriculum is designed primarily for persons wishing to enter the paralegal field.

■ Letter of Recognition

This sequence of three courses is designed for persons who wish to develop skills in legal analysis.

Contact @ MC

Germantown Campus240-567-7742
Takoma Park/
Silver Spring Campus240-567-1343
[www.montgomerycollege.edu/Departments/
paralegt](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/Departments/paralegt)

Paralegal Studies Curricula

Degrees, Certificates, and Letters of Recognition

Montgomery College is authorized by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to offer four degrees (associate of arts, associate of science, associate of applied science, and associate of arts in teaching) and certificates. In addition, the College recognizes students who satisfactorily complete certain course sequences with letters of recognition.

Some curricula are offered at all campuses, whereas others are limited to one or two. When a curriculum is offered at a specific campus, it is indicated by G for Germantown, R for Rockville, or TP for Takoma Park/Silver Spring.

Admission to Montgomery College is open to all.

Math, English, and reading assessment tests are required prior to registering. (Some students may be exempt from assessment. Consult the *Montgomery College Catalog* for criteria.) Financial aid and scholarships are available to qualified candidates.

Take the next step.

Complete an Application for Admission form (online @ www.montgomerycollege.edu/admissions/mcadmiss.htm) or call 240-567-5000 for information.

Paralegal Studies A.A.S. (G, TP): 341

First Semester

BA 101	Introduction to Business	3
EN 101	Techniques of Reading and Writing I	3
HE 100	Principles of Healthier Living	1
LA 101	Introduction to the Legal System	3
PS 101	American Government	3
	Speech foundation	3

Second Semester

CA 120	Introduction to Computer Applications	3
	English foundation	3
LA 102	Legal Research	3
	LA elective	.3
	Behavioral and social sciences distribution	3

Third Semester

LA 103	Legal Writing	3
LA 118	Civil Litigation	3
	LA elective	3
	Mathematics foundation	3
	Natural sciences lab distribution	4

Fourth Semester

LA 104	Interpersonal Communications, Legal Interviewing, and Investigating Techniques	3
LA 116	Real Property	3
LA 120	Drafting Wills and Probating Estates in Maryland	3
	LA elective or CJ 221	3
	Arts or humanities distribution	3

Total credit hours 62

(more)

Paralegal Studies Curricula

(continued)

Paralegal Studies Certificate (G, TP): 156

Required Courses

EN 101	Techniques of Reading and Writing I	3
LA 101	Introduction to the Legal System	3
LA 102	Legal Research	3
LA 103	Legal Writing*	3
LA 104	Interpersonal Communications, Legal Interviewing, and Investigating Techniques	3

Electives (Select three)†

CJ 221	Criminal Law	3
LA 106	Ethics	3
LA 110	Maryland Contract Law	3
LA 114	Domestic Relations	3
LA 116	Real Property	3
LA 118	Civil Litigation	3
LA 120	Drafting Wills and Probating Estates in Maryland	3
LA 122	Law Office Administration	3
LA 125	Introduction to Corporate Law and Practice	3
LA 210	Torts	3
LA 212	Immigration Law	3

Total credit hours 24

* A keyboarding skill of 35 wpm is required before enrolling in this course.

† Students may elect CJ 221 or any paralegal course above LA 104.

Legal Analysis Letter of Recognition (G, TP): 804

LA 101	Introduction to the Legal System	3
LA 102	Legal Research	3
LA 103	Legal Writing	3

Total credit hours 9