

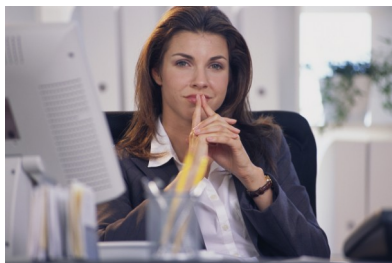
How will you utilize a freelance paralegal in your practice?

A freelance paralegal can change the way you work, make your practice more efficient, help balance your caseload, and give you more time to focus on pressing matters. It all leads to less stress and a better work-life balance.

Many attorneys are overwhelmed with their caseload, yet do not have the ability to hire a permanent employee, perhaps due to insufficient income or overhead, or simply because there isn't quite enough regular work to hire support.

By utilizing a freelance paralegal, the attorney always has a support system in place, pays only for the work performed, keeps overhead at a minimum, and offers lower legal fees to clients.

So, how will you utilize a freelance paralegal in your practice?



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How can a [virtual] freelance paralegal improve your practice?

**Providing legal support to
attorneys and firms as needed.**

What is a Freelance Paralegal?

A freelance paralegal is a paralegal who contracts with an attorney, firm, agency, corporation, or other entity to provide substantive legal support on an on-going or as-needed basis under the supervision of a licensed attorney. The main difference between a regular paralegal and a freelance paralegal is that a freelance paralegal is not an employee.

Also referred to as virtual paralegals, freelance paralegals are business owners in themselves, providing their own office space and equipment, benefits and retirement, and paying their own self-employment taxes.

While the terms freelance paralegal and virtual paralegal are used interchangeably, some freelance paralegals offer in-person contact or support whereas virtual paralegals do not personally meet with the attorneys and firms they work with. Since they work from their own office, generally communicating electronically, freelance paralegals can provide services to attorneys, firms, corporations, and agencies across the country.

Freelance paralegals perform the same tasks paralegal-employees perform including, but not limited to, case development and management, legal and factual research, document management, case review and analysis, drafting and analyzing of legal and factual documentation, and form preparation. For more specific examples, see the publication entitled, "What is a Paralegal?"

A freelance paralegal can help reduce your workload, minimize overhead, and lower your clients' legal fees.

Why Utilize a Freelance Paralegal

A freelance paralegal is available on an as-needed basis to handle matters such as daily overflow, short-term projects, long-term projects, or large cases. An attorney will utilize a freelance paralegal to help free up the attorney's time for more pressing matters, to help manage a heavy caseload, to help the attorney's regular paralegal manage his or her caseload, to provide support during the regular paralegal's absence, to help minimize the practice's overhead and increase its profit margin, and to lower clients' legal fees.

In today's economy, many firms — especially small firms and solo practitioners — are barely making ends meet and they're struggling to acquire and retain clients. Many are reducing their hourly rate or cutting costs to survive. Similarly, larger firms are reducing the number of attorneys they employ and are stretching the caseload amongst those remaining. Attorneys who lost their jobs are going freelance or solo but are faced with budget constraints and don't have the financial ability or overhead to hire permanent employees.

In these cases, solo practitioners, small firms, and attorneys who find themselves with an increased caseload benefit from utilizing a freelance paralegal. They don't have to pay employment taxes or insurance; they don't need extra office space, furniture, computers, or supplies; and, they don't have to pay regular wages to have an

employee always available and waiting. Freelance paralegals are available when needed, they pay their own self-employment taxes and utilize their own office space, computers, equipment, furniture, and supplies.

In return, attorneys have more time for attorney matters, overhead costs are kept at a minimum, profits increase, and clients pay lower legal fees, all without cutting costs or reducing the hourly billable rate.



Benefits of Utilizing a Freelance Paralegal

- Reduced workload and stress
 - On-call support
 - More time for other cases, legal strategies, pressing matters
 - Delegation of tasks an attorney doesn't need to spend time on
 - Increased profit from additional billable income
 - Reduction in clients' legal fees; increased client satisfaction and improved firm reputation
 - No reduction of your hourly billable rate
 - No hiring expenses
 - Minimal overhead necessary to run practice
 - No additional office space, furniture, supplies, computers, or tools
 - No employment taxes, disability, unemployment, or workers' compensation insurance to pay
 - No health or dental insurance to provide
 - No SEP or retirement plans to provide
 - No continuing education fees to pay for employees
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