

WELCOME



PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

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PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: INTRODUCTION

- “As defined by the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA), a Paralegal is a person, qualified through education, training or work experience to perform substantive legal work that requires knowledge of legal concepts and is customarily, but not exclusively, performed by a lawyer” (<https://panh.org/>).
- According to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, New Hampshire has no formal educational or training requirements for paralegals working in this State.

PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: LITERATURE REVIEW

- The American Bar Association first recognized paralegals in 1969
- The literature is relatively quiet from the 70s until the mid 2000s
- In 2013, Neil Dilloff highlighted that, over the past several years, there had been a number of articles written discussing “the perceived gap between what currently is being taught in the nation’s law schools and what various practicing members of the legal profession believe needs to be taught” (Dilloff 2013, pg. 426).
- In 2014 Elizabeth Chambliss wrote “The idea of training paraprofessionals to perform simple legal tasks has attracted great interest in recent years among reform-minded lawyers” (Chambliss 2014, pg. 579)
- In 2015 Washington State, via a partnership between law schools and community colleges started a Limited License Legal Technician Program
- In 2018, Utah created a Licensed Paralegal Practitioner Program which is overseen by the Utah State Bar
- Writing for the Utah Bar Journal in 2019, Greg Wayment advised that, for a paralegal, experience is critical. Wayment further went on to state “once you get a position at a law firm, learn everything you can and constantly look for opportunities to expand your skill set. A lot of the skills necessary to be an effective paralegal are learned on the job” (Wayment 2019, pg. 64).

PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: METHODOLOGY

- Using Qualtrics™ a survey was sent to 12 voting members of the Paralegal Association of New Hampshire.
- Survey participants were asked to answer 20 questions regarding paralegal training, their experiences, and their insights into the creation of a training program.
- Of the 12 surveys distributed, 6 were returned and able to be used for analysis.
- Qualtrics™ was used for data analysis and examination of survey results.

PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: RESULTS

Demographic Professional Information

- All of the respondents have been paralegals for at least four years
- A significant amount of respondents work for more than one attorney at the same time.
- Primary practice areas cover a wide array of legal fields from criminal prosecution, trusts and estates, real estate, small business, real property, and litigation.

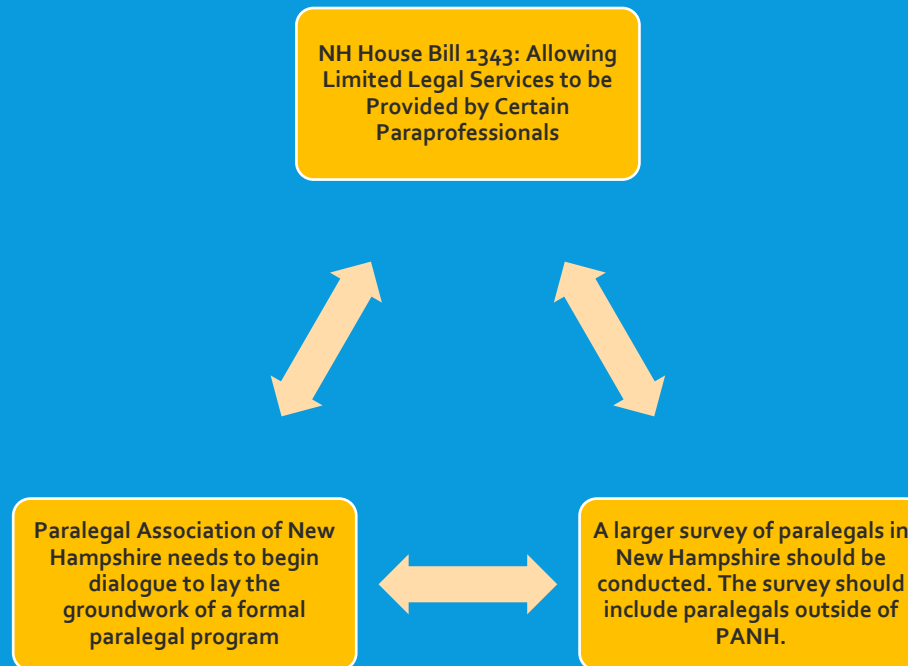
Personal Experiences with Training

- 2/3 of paralegals surveyed received no formal training. Of those without training, 75% indicated that formal training would have been helpful and beneficial to their development as a paralegal.
- Only 2 respondents went through training. One lasted less than a week, the other more than a month. When asked what they wish their training focused more on, one paralegal responded "actual paralegal duties, I had to figure it out and create it on my own."

Insights into Training

- All of the paralegals surveyed believed entry level paralegals would benefit from a post-hire, on-the-job training program, with all either strongly agreeing or somewhat agreeing that most skills necessary to be an effective paralegal being learned on the job.
- All of the respondents believed that any training program developed should focus on 3 criterion: necessary/firm specific skills; ethics and professional conduct; and CLEs and professional development.

PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: OVERALL FINDINGS AND WHERE WE GO FROM HERE



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THANK YOU AND QUESTIONS

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- At this time, I'd like to answer any questions you might have.

