

University of New Hampshire

University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository

M.S. in Leadership

College of Professional Studies Granite Division

Spring 2022

Paralegal Training in New Hampshire

Donald Shedd
Granite State College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.unh.edu/ms_leadership

Recommended Citation

Shedd, Donald, "Paralegal Training in New Hampshire" (2022). *M.S. in Leadership*. 4.
https://scholars.unh.edu/ms_leadership/4

This Capstone is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Professional Studies Granite Division at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in M.S. in Leadership by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact Scholarly.Communication@unh.edu.

WELCOME



PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Donald Francis Shedd II

Master of Science in Leadership

Spring 2022 Term

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.

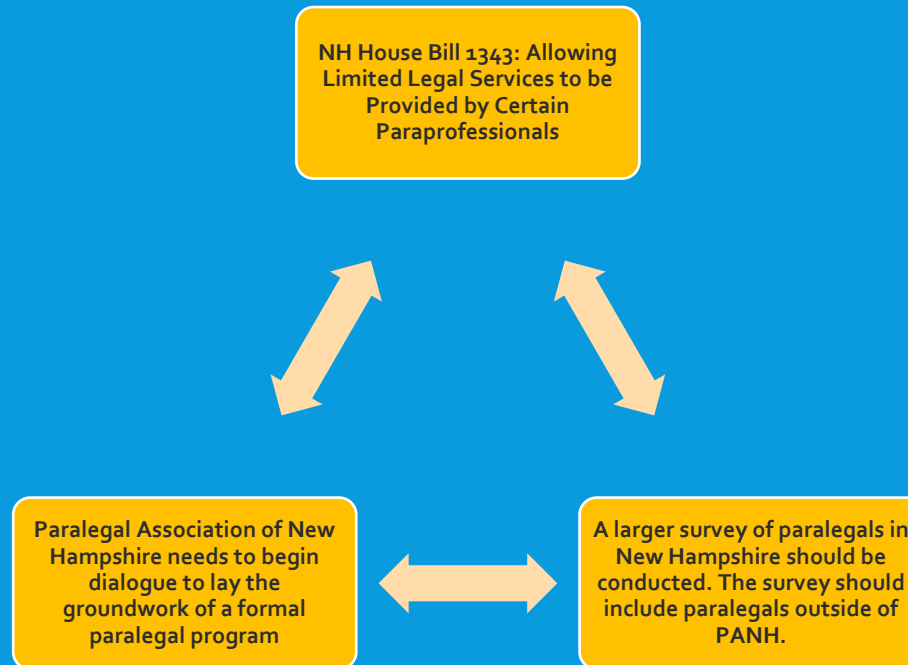
Personal Experiences with Training

- 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



PARALEGAL TRAINING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: REFERENCES

- Andersen, S. & Jeffs, C. (2016). CLE opportunities for paralegals. *Utah Bar Journal*. Vol. 29, Issue 3. 55-56
- Chambliss, E. (2014). Law school training for licensed "legal technicians"? Implications for the consumer market. *South Carolina Law Review*. Vol. 65, Issue 3. 579-610
- Crossland, S. & Littlewood, P. (2014). The Washington state limited license legal technician Program: enhancing access to justice and ensuring the integrity of the legal profession. *South Carolina Law Review*. Vol. 65, Issue 3. 611-622
- Dilloff, N. (2013). Law school training: bridging the gap between legal education and the practice of law. *Stanford Law & Policy Review*. Vol. 24, Issue 12. 425-456
- Dotterer, J. (2013). The dollars and sense of utilization of paralegals for the new decade. *Utah Bar Journal*. Vol. 26, Issue 2. 62-65
- Dupont, C. (2018). Licensed legal practitioners. *Utah Bar Journal*. Vol. 31, Issue 3. 16-18
- Haemmel, W. (1973). Paralegals/legal assistants – a report of the advances of the new paraprofessional. *American Business Law Journal*. Vol. 11, Issue 2. 103-121
- Kay, F., Hagan, J. & Parker, P. (2009). Principals in practice: the importance of mentorship in the early stages of career development. *Law and Policy*. Vol. 31, Issue 1. 69-110
- www.panh.org
- www.paralegals.org
- Wayment, G. (2016). The litigation paralegal's role at trial. *Utah Bar Journal*. Vol. 29, Issue 9. 57-59
- Wayment, G. (2019). Getting that first job as a paralegal. *Utah Bar Journal*. Vol. 32, Issue 1. 64-65
- Wiryra, A., Larasati, A., Gruskin, S. & Ferguson, L. (2020). Expanding the role of paralegals: supporting realization of the right to health for vulnerable communities. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*. Vol. 20, Issue 1. 1-10

THANK YOU AND QUESTIONS

- I'd like to take just a second to thank everyone who has gotten me to this point: My employer, the Office of the City Solicitor, my colleagues at the Paralegal Association of New Hampshire, and most importantly to my family, my wife and sons, who sacrificed so much and continuously supported me on this journey.
- At this time, I'd like to answer any questions you might have.

