

## NEWSWIRE ARTICLE

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### **Part-time lawyers at law firms fell last year More lawyers seek to augment salaries as firms look to streamline.**

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SANTA MONICA - The percentage of lawyers working part time in major law firms nationwide decreased in 2011, according to a new study.

Although most law firms make part-time schedules available to lawyers, very few lawyers actually partake. In fact, 2011 was the first time in the 17 years the National Association for Law Placement Inc. conducted the analysis that the percentage declined.

The percentage dipped nationally from 6.4 in 2010 to 6.2 in 2011. A little more than 70 percent of the part-time workers in 2011 were women.

The national percentage of women lawyers who work part time is 13.4, and of that, 11.8 percent are partners and 10 percent are associates, according to the NALP.

By contrast, only 2.7 percent of all male lawyers work part time.

In California, San Francisco has the highest percentage of part-time partners, at 7.8 percent, according to the report. That's the third-highest in the nation behind Portland and Seattle. San Jose came in a distant second to San Francisco in California, with 5.9 percent of partners working part time. In Los Angeles, 3.8 percent of partners work part time, and in Orange County that number is 2.7 percent.

The decline is a sign that business is picking up in the legal industry, according to some recruiters and consultants.

"[The] recession ... impacted hiring decisions and talent retention," said Sandy Lechtick of Esquire Inc. "Law firms are demanding more commitment as far as hours and business development."

Leah Hoffman, division director for the recruiting firm Robert Half Legal, said she law firms are finding creative solutions to cut costs and increase efficiency. One trend, she said, is to consolidate roles.

"Firms that had someone who was dedicated to just litigation and another doing corporate matters ... [now say] we can use one person to have a hybrid role."

Although some consultants believe the economy has motivated the firms to promote full-time work, they also speculate lawyers are seeking full-time schedules to increase their own bottom lines.

"More [lawyers] want to maximize their incomes, which means putting in more time," Lechtick said.

Nationwide, 13.6 percent of people employed in 2010 worked part time, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Similarly, 13.2 percent of people who work in "professional specialties," such as engineers or doctors, worked part time. However, the percentage of people in the professional specialties category working part time has also decreased from 13.6 in 2009.

The findings in the analyses are of the NALP Directory of Legal Employers. The 2011-2012 directory includes listings from mostly large firms and contains part-time use information for 1,269 individual law offices and firms and more than 125,000 lawyers.

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