

## Loss of Over 1,000 Jobs in Legal Services Sector



*Summary: Initial reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show a decline in over 1,000 jobs in the legal services sector.*

The legal services sector took a drop in October while the complete U.S. economy had gains, making a small effect on the national unemployment rate, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's latest monthly report. Preliminary findings show a loss of 1,100 jobs in the legal services sector, which includes lawyers, paralegals, legal secretaries, and others in law-related jobs.

The October report from the Labor Department's U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics studies the employment situation in several U.S. industries. The data showed a decline in the number of people employed in the legal services industry compared to in September. The report states that 1,126,200 people were employed in the sector but the number could be revised.

September and August's employment numbers were revised downwards with September dropping 1,300 jobs from the initial report that month. August was revised down 1,000 jobs from that month as well.

The drop in numbers is not surprising since a number of staff layoffs have been announced at large law firms across the country. A Portland, Oregon-based Am Law 200 firm, Stoel Rives, reported in July that it was cutting 17 administrative jobs. Stoel Rives cited a strategic revamping of its operations as the reason for its cuts, a reason that several law firms claim.

Hogan Lovells announced they were offering voluntary retirement packages to around 400 business staff in the U.S. after already reducing numbers in the U.K. They confirmed that around 12 percent accepted the retirement package, which is roughly 45 employees, according to the National Law Journal.

Rumors emerged in September that Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy was offering buyout packages to legal secretaries as the firm planned its move of the Hudson Yards office in New York to the Manhattan west side.

Even with three months of drops in the legal industry employment numbers, the overall numbers have remained steady over the past several years. Since June 2013, the monthly reports have shown between 1.12 million and 1.13 million people employed in the legal services sector. This range is only around 50,000 less than pre-recession highs in 2007.

The rest of the U.S. economy saw improvements after a slump in September. Economists suggest that the recent natural disasters in Texas and Florida affected the number of people on payrolls but has since bounced back. The report shows a gain of 261,000 jobs throughout the country. The unemployment rate sits at 4.1 percent, which is a 0.7 percent reduction since January. The number of unemployed Americans has fallen by 1.1 million since January.

Do you think things will turn around next year for the legal sector? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

**To learn more about past BLS employment reports, read these articles:**

- [Only 100 Jobs Added to the U.S. Legal Sector](#)
- [Legal Industry Jobs Grow in December](#)
- [Legal Industry Sees Strong Job Growth](#)

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