

Boutique and Mid-Sized Law Firms Paying Big Law Salary Scale

In 2018, during what turned out to be the strongest year in the legal market since the Great Recession, Milbank LLP announced a new salary scale for their associates. To stay competitive in the hunt for the best young associates, almost 100 of Milbank's Big Law competitors quickly followed suit.

The current Big Law salary scale is:

Class Year	Salary
1st year	\$190,000
2nd year	\$200,000
3rd year	\$220,000
4th year	\$255,000
5th year	\$280,000
6th year	\$305,000
7th year	\$325,000
8th year	\$340,000
9th year	\$350,000
Summer Associates	\$3700/week

However, it's not only the biggest firms in the country that are vying for top talent. Dozens of mid-sized firms and sophisticated, specialized boutiques have also jumped on the Big Law salary scale bandwagon--or close to it. Some of these law firms are even paying their associates *more* than their AmLaw counterparts.

Here's a list of firms outside the AmLaw 100 where associates are getting paid the big bucks.

Law Firm	1st Year Salary	Firm Type	Practice Area(s)	Location(s)
Ahmad, Zavitsanos, Anaipakos, Alavi & Mensing P.C.	\$190,000	Boutique	Litigation	Houston
Axinn, Veltrop & Harkrider LLP	\$170,000-\$180,000*	Boutique	Antitrust	New York; Hartford; Washington D.C.
Banner Witcoff	\$190,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	Chicago
Barack Ferrazzano Kirschbaum & Nagelberg LLP	\$190,000	Midsized	Mixed Practice	Chicago (HQ); Minneapolis; Austin
Brewer, Attorneys & Counselors	\$185,000	Boutique	Litigation	New York; Dallas
Caplin & Drysdale, Chartered	\$170,000	Small-Midsized	Mixed Practice	Washington D.C.; New York
Chapman and Cutler LLP	\$180,000 (except Salt Lake City - \$130,000)	Midsized	Mixed Practice	Chicago (HQ); New York; San Francisco; Washington D.C.; Salt Lake City
Condo Roccia Koptiw LLP	\$180,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	Philadelphia

Law Firm	1st Year Salary	Firm Type	Practice Area(s)	Location(s)
Desmarais	\$210,000	Midsize	Patent Litigation	New York; San Francisco
Dovel and Luner	\$215,000	Boutique	Plaintiff-Side Litigation	Los Angeles
Durie Tangri	\$180,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	San Francisco; Los Angeles
Duval & Stachenfeld	\$190,000	Boutique	Real Estate	New York
Farella Braun & Martel LLP	\$180,000	Midsize	Mixed Practice	San Francisco; St. Helena
Friedman Kaplan Seiler & Adelman LLP	\$180,000	Boutique	Litigation; White Collar	New York; New Jersey
Gibbs & Bruns LLP	\$190,000	Boutique	Litigation	Houston
Groom Law Group Chartered	\$190,000	Boutique	ERISA/Employee Benefits	Washington D.C.
Gunderson Dettmer Stough Villeneuve Franklin & Hachigian, LLP	\$190,000	Midsize	Mixed Practice	Multiple Offices in California; Boston; New York; Ann Arbor; Singapore; Beijing
Hickman Palermo Becker Bingham LLP	\$160,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	San Jose
Holwell Shuster & Goldberg	\$190,000	Boutique	Litigation	New York
Hueston Hennigan LLP	\$190,000	Boutique	Litigation	Los Angeles
Keker & Van Nest LLP	\$190,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	San Francisco
Kellogg, Hansen, Todd, Figel & Frederick P.L.L.C.	\$225,000	Boutique	Litigation	Washington D.C.
Klee, Tuchin, Bogdanoff & Stern LLP	\$190,000	Boutique	Corporate Law	Los Angeles
Kobre & Kim LLP	\$190,000	Boutique/Midsize	Litigation	New York; Miami; San Francisco; Washington D.C.; Multiple International Offices
Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP	\$180,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	Chicago
McDonnell Boehnen				

Law Firm	1st Year Salary	Firm Type	Practice Area(s)	Location(s)
Hulbert & Berghoff LLP	\$180,000	Midsize	Intellectual Property	Chicago
McKool Smith	\$190,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	Multiple offices nationwide
Morvillo, Abramowitz, Grand, Iason & Anello PC	\$190,000	Boutique	Litigation	New York
Shartsis Friesen LLP	\$190,000	Small-Midsize	Mixed Practice	San Francisco
Smyser Kaplan & Veselka, L.L.P.	\$190,000	Small-Midsize	Mixed Practice	Houston
Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox, P.L.L.C.	\$180,000	Midsize	Intellectual Property	Washington D.C.
Susman Godfrey	\$195,000	Boutique	Litigation	Houston; Seattle; Los Angeles; New York
Tenesgrity Law Group	\$180,000	Boutique	Patent Litigation	Redwood Shores, CA
Warren Lex	\$190,000	Boutique	Litigation	San Francisco
Wolf, Greenfield & Sacks, P.C.	\$190,000	Boutique	Intellectual Property	Boston

* Salaries vary by geographic market.