

Lawyers

Lawyers are people trained in the area of the law. Through years of schooling and practice, lawyers learn how to research and understand the law, and more importantly, how to apply what they have learned to different situations. Lawyers need many skills such as listening, advising, advocating, mediating, negotiating, and communicating.

To practice law in Saskatchewan a person must meet certain educational requirements and be licensed by the Law Society of Saskatchewan.

Educational Requirements

To practice law in Saskatchewan a person must receive a law degree from a recognized law school. For example, the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan is a recognized law school.

Before being admitted into the College of Law, applicants must have successfully completed at least two years at a university, or have a university degree. As well, they must write the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). The LSAT is a test that measures certain mental abilities considered important to the study of law.

There is strong competition to get into the College of Law because enrollment is limited. Therefore, the College chooses applicants who have good academic marks and a high LSAT score.

Each year the College of Law admits a few students who do not have these formal educational requirements. Mature students, disadvantaged students and students of Native origin can apply for this special admission. The College still considers grades and LSAT scores, as well as writing ability, work experience, age and background.

Native students admitted under this special category take an eight-week preparation course offered by the Native Law Centre at the University of Saskatchewan. They take the program prior to full-time attendance in the College of Law.

All students in the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan take a three year course. The course requires hard work and commitment - students must read, understand and remember a large amount of material. When they graduate, students receive a Bachelor of Laws degree (LL.B.).

License to Practice Law

The Law Society is the governing body of the legal profession in Saskatchewan. It sets admission standards, as well as standards of professional conduct.

To practice law in Saskatchewan, a person must also be admitted to the Law Society of Saskatchewan.

To be admitted to the Law Society, a law school graduate must generally article for one year with a practicing lawyer, attend the Bar Admissions Course during the articling year, and write and pass the Bar Examinations. The articling period may be reduced for those persons who have already articulated in another province and become a member of another Law Society.

The Law Society of Saskatchewan also considers a person's character, and may be particularly concerned about a criminal record for fraud or theft. Any questions in this regard should be directed to the Law Society.

Members of the Law Society may practice law in several different areas.

Private practice

Lawyers in private practice work either by themselves or in a partnership with other lawyers. Individuals, corporations, organizations, and banks may hire private lawyers on a case-by-case basis. Some lawyers may limit their practice to particular areas of the law, for example, family law, criminal law, environmental law or business law, while other lawyers work in all areas of the law.

Becoming a Lawyer

Legal Aid

The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission provides some legal services to people with little or no income. The Commission hires lawyers to provide these services. Lawyers who work for Legal Aid practice mainly in the family and criminal law areas.

Corporate Counsel

Many larger corporations hire their own lawyers. Corporate lawyers work full time for the corporation that hires them.

Crown Counsel

All levels of government, including government agencies and crown corporations, hire lawyers. Governments hire lawyers to do many different jobs: prosecute persons who have broken the law, write legislation and regulations, represent the government in court actions, and provide the government with legal advice.

Other Career Opportunities

Graduates from law school can choose from many different career possibilities. Not all law graduates choose to practice law. For instance, some graduates teach law at university law schools. Usually, university teachers will have a master's degree or a doctorate in law.

Many people use a background in law as a stepping stone to other careers such as business, politics, or journalism. Still, others lawyers work for organizations that provide general legal information to the public.

The Law Society of Saskatchewan does not require people who are not actually practicing law to be admitted to the Law Society.

Can a lawyer practice anywhere?

Graduates from the University of Saskatchewan College of Law qualify to practice in all Canadian provinces, except Quebec. A lawyer must be a member of the Law Society for each province in which the lawyer wants to practice law. Rules for admission differ from province to province. If you are interested in practicing law in another province or territory, you should direct your questions to the Law Society of that particular province or territory.

There may be restrictions on a lawyer's ability to practice in other countries. Sometimes a lawyer is required to be a citizen of the country, or to have lived there for a certain length of time. If you are interested in becoming a lawyer in another country, you should direct your questions to the licensing authority in that country.

For More Information

- ▶ Admissions Committee
College of Law
15 Campus Drive
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon SK S7N 5A6
- ▶ Native Law Centre
101 Diefenbaker Place
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon SK S7N 5B8
- ▶ Law Society of Saskatchewan
1100 - 2500 Victoria Avenue
Regina SK S4P 3X2
- ▶ Public Legal Education Association
300 - 201 21st Street East
Saskatoon SK S7K 0B8

See also PLEA's fact sheet
Legal Careers