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**STATE BAR OF TEXAS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & ANALYSIS**



**2001 HOURLY RATE REPORT**

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## Introduction

Information about the economics of law practice in Texas can be a valuable competitive tool in today's environment of rapid change. As part of its on-going effort to make such information more widely available to attorneys, Texas Bar CLE and the State Bar's Department of Research and Analysis conducted the 2001 Lawyer Technology Survey. The overall goal of the survey was to assist attorneys by providing information on technology utilization, hourly rates, and compensation.

This report presents the data collected on hourly rates in private law firms. The report provides detailed breakdowns of rates by law firm size, years of experience, area of practice, and region of the state. The time frame of reference for all data is calendar year 2000.

A written questionnaire was mailed in February 2001 to a stratified random sample of some 6,000 Texas attorneys from 12 economic regions<sup>1</sup> of the state. The survey's response rate was 45 percent. A more detailed description of the survey's methodology and a copy of the questionnaire are included at the end of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> The state was broken down into 12 economic regions based on metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The regions and the counties included in each appear on pages 8-9 of this report.

**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Hourly Rate (n=1042)</b>	
<b>\$125 or less</b>	14%
<b>\$126 to \$150</b>	22%
<b>\$151 to \$175</b>	18%
<b>\$176 to \$200</b>	18%
<b>\$201 to \$225</b>	6%
<b>\$226 to \$250</b>	7%
<b>\$251 to \$275</b>	4%
<b>\$276 to \$300</b>	4%
<b>\$301 to \$325</b>	1%
<b>\$326 to \$350</b>	1%
<b>\$351 to \$375</b>	2%
<b>More than \$375</b>	3%
<b>Average</b>	\$197
<b>Median</b>	\$175
<b>Most Common</b>	\$150
<b>Low</b>	\$50
<b>High</b>	\$950

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

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**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Law Firm Size<sup>2</sup>**

Hourly Rate	Law Firm Size							
	Solos (n=310)	2 to 5 (n=299)	6 to 10 (n=93)	11 to 24 (n=71)	25 to 40 (n=56)	41 to 60 (n=39)	61 to 100 (n=38)	More than 100 (n=132)
<b>\$150 or less</b>	50%	40%	32%	42%	37%	3%	1%	7%
<b>\$151 to \$175</b>	20%	21%	13%	15%	20%	21%	25%	8%
<b>\$176 to \$200</b>	19%	19%	24%	20%	15%	40%	21%	6%
<b>\$201 to \$300</b>	10%	18%	31%	23%	18%	16%	45%	40%
<b>More than \$300</b>	1%	3%	0%	0%	11%	20%	9%	39%
<b>Average</b>	\$168	\$188	\$182	\$174	\$197	\$235	\$231	\$287
<b>Median</b>	\$155	\$175	\$190	\$165	\$162	\$200	\$233	\$280
<b>Most Common</b>	\$150	\$150	\$200	\$150	\$150	\$200	\$195	\$350
<b>Low</b>	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$85	\$100	\$116	\$135	\$110
<b>High</b>	\$325	\$950	\$295	\$300	\$375	\$450	\$360	\$460

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Number of attorneys in all offices/branches.

**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Years of Experience<sup>2</sup>**

Hourly Rate	Years of Experience						
	2 or Fewer (n = 69)	3 to 6 (n = 143)	7 to 10 (n = 155)	11 to 15 (n = 159)	16 to 20 (n = 145)	21 to 25 (n = 123)	More than 25 (n = 219)
<b>\$150 or less</b>	67%	47%	42%	30%	30%	32%	23%
<b>\$151 to \$175</b>	13%	21%	22%	19%	13%	10%	23%
<b>\$176 to \$200</b>	20%	17%	12%	17%	23%	20%	17%
<b>\$201 to \$300</b>	0%	11%	17%	23%	25%	30%	27%
<b>More than \$300</b>	0%	3%	8%	11%	9%	7%	11%
<b>Average</b>	\$141	\$173	\$183	\$205	\$224	\$209	\$211
<b>Median</b>	\$150	\$162	\$175	\$180	\$190	\$199	\$193
<b>Most Common</b>	\$150	\$150	\$175	\$150	\$200	\$200	\$175
<b>Low</b>	\$50	\$100	\$100	\$85	\$100	\$120	\$75
<b>High</b>	\$200	\$380	\$380	\$365	\$950	\$445	\$460

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Based on year first licensed in any jurisdiction.

**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Years of Experience<sup>2</sup> and Law Firm Size<sup>3</sup>**

Years of Experience	Median Hourly Rates							
	Law Firm Size							
	Sole Practitioners	2 to 5 Attorneys	6 to 10 Attorneys	11 to 24 Attorneys	25 to 40 Attorneys	41 to 60 Attorneys	61 to 100 Attorneys	More than 100 Attorneys
<b>2 Years or Less</b>	\$125	\$125	\$125	**	**	**	\$250	**
<b>3 to 6 Years</b>	\$150	\$150	\$169	\$150	\$148	**	**	\$237
<b>7 to 10 Years</b>	\$150	\$175	\$130	\$180	\$158	**	\$170	\$300
<b>11 to 15 Years</b>	\$150	\$175	\$200	\$175	**	**	**	\$295
<b>16 to 20 Years</b>	\$175	\$185	\$164	\$194	\$190	**	**	\$343
<b>21 to 25 Years</b>	\$162	\$200	\$219	**	**	**	**	\$400
<b>More than 25 Years</b>	\$175	\$200	\$217	**	**	\$250	**	\$375

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Based on year first licensed in any jurisdiction.

<sup>3</sup> Number of attorneys in all offices/branches.

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**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Area of Practice<sup>2</sup>**

Area of Practice	Hourly Rates				
	Average	Median	Most Common	Low	High
<b>Administrative &amp; Governmental</b> (n = 31)	\$203	\$180	\$120	\$110	\$450
<b>Alternative Dispute Resolution</b> (n = 15)	\$192	\$200	\$200	\$125	\$250
<b>Appellate</b> (n = 31)	\$183	\$175	\$225	\$110	\$250
<b>Banking</b> (n = 68)	\$247	\$225	\$225	\$100	\$400
<b>Bankruptcy: Business</b> (n = 31)	\$225	\$200	\$250	\$125	\$375
<b>Bankruptcy: Consumer</b> (n = 21)	\$220	\$175	\$175	\$100	\$500
<b>Business</b> (n = 181)	\$226	\$200	\$175	\$100	\$950
<b>Construction</b> (n = 18)	\$200	\$180	\$150	\$125	\$350
<b>Consumer-DTPA</b> (n = 19)	\$148	\$150	\$150	\$85	\$375
<b>Creditor-Debtor</b> (n = 16)	\$153	\$150	\$138	\$100	\$225
<b>Criminal</b> (n = 47)	\$160	\$150	\$125	\$70	\$300
<b>Entertainment &amp; Sports</b> (n= 11)	\$192	\$185	\$150	\$150	\$250
<b>Environmental &amp; Natural Resources</b> (n = 28)	\$198	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$355
<b>Family</b> (n = 215)	\$165	\$150	\$150	\$50	\$350

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Area accounting for 25% or more of time practicing law and which had 10 or more respondents.



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**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Area of Practice<sup>2</sup> (continued)**

Area of Practice	Hourly Rates				
	Average	Median	Most Common	Low	High
<b>Health</b> (n = 18)	\$273	\$244	\$445	\$125	\$445
<b>Insurance</b> (n = 59)	\$135	\$125	\$125	\$85	\$375
<b>Intellectual Property</b> (n = 29)	\$286	\$300	\$325	\$150	\$375
<b>Labor-Employment</b> (n = 95)	\$205	\$196	\$200	\$85	\$460
<b>Litigation: General Civil</b> (n = 265)	\$192	\$179	\$200	\$50	\$450
<b>Litigation: Personal Injury<sup>3</sup></b> (n = 61)	\$170	\$150	\$150	\$85	\$375
<b>Litigation: Personal Injury Defense</b> (n = 22)	\$146	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$250
<b>Litigation: Unspecified</b> (n = 59)	\$196	\$185	\$250	\$100	\$350
<b>Maritime-Admiralty</b> (n = 13)	\$259	\$250	\$250	\$100	\$380
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b> (n = 24)	\$177	\$175	\$125	\$110	\$275
<b>Real Estate</b> (n = 153)	\$181	\$175	\$150	\$75	\$300
<b>Taxation</b> (n = 36)	\$220	\$200	\$200	\$100	\$310
<b>Wills-Trusts-Probate</b> (n = 170)	\$178	\$175	\$150	\$75	\$325

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Area accounting for 25% or more of time practicing law and which had 10 or more respondents.

<sup>3</sup> Includes Personal Injury "Unspecified"

**Survey Sampling Regions and Counties in Each Region\***

**1 Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CMSA**

*Brazoria PMSA*  
 Brazoria  
*Galveston-Texas City PMSA*  
 Galveston  
*Houston PMSA*  
 Chambers  
 Fort Bend  
 Harris  
 Liberty  
 Montgomery  
 Waller

**2 Dallas-Fort Worth CMSA**

*Dallas PMSA*  
 Collin  
 Dallas  
 Denton  
 Ellis  
 Henderson  
 Hunt  
 Kaufman  
 Rockwall  
*Fort Worth PMSA*  
 Hood  
 Johnson  
 Parker  
 Tarrant

**3 Austin-San Marcos MSA**

Bastrop  
 Caldwell  
 Hays  
 Travis  
 Williamson

**4 San Antonio MSA**

Bexar  
 Comal  
 Guadalupe  
 Wilson

**5 El Paso MSA**

El Paso

**6 Corpus Christi MSA**

Nueces  
 San Patricio

**7 Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA**

Hardin  
 Jefferson  
 Orange

**8 Central Texas MSAs**

Waco MSA  
 McLennan  
 Killeen-Temple MSA  
 Bell  
 Coryell

**9 East & NE Texas MSAs**

*Bryan-College Station MSA*  
 Brazos  
*Longview-Marshall MSA*  
 Gregg  
 Harrison  
 Upshur  
*Sherman-Denison MSA*  
 Grayson  
*Texarkana MSA*  
 Bowie  
*Tyler MSA*  
 Smith  
*Victoria MSA*  
 Victoria  
*Wichita Falls MSA*  
 Archer  
 Wichita

**10 South Texas MSAs**

*Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito MSA*  
 Cameron  
*Laredo MSA*  
 Webb  
*McAllen-Edinburg-Mission MSA*  
 Hidalgo

**11 West Texas MSAs**

*Abilene MSA*  
 Taylor  
*Amarillo MSA*  
 Potter  
 Randall  
*Lubbock MSA*  
 Lubbock  
*Odessa-Midland MSA*  
 Ector  
 Midland  
*San Angelo MSA*  
 Tom Green

**12 Non-Metropolitan Counties**

Anderson  
 Andrews  
 Angelina  
 Aransas  
 Armstrong  
 Atascosa  
 Austin  
 Bailey  
 Bandera  
 Baylor  
 Bee  
 Blanco  
 Borden  
 Bosque  
 Brewster  
 Briscoe

**Survey Sampling Regions and Counties in Each Region (continued)**

**12 Non-Metropolitan Counties (continued)**

Burleson	Fayette	Karnes	Morris	Sutton
Burnet	Fisher	Kendall	Motley	Swisher
Calhoun	Floyd	Kenedy	Nacogdoches	Terrell
Callahan	Foard	Kent	Navarro	Terry
Camp	Franklin	Kerr	Newton	Throckmorton
Carson	Freestone	Kimble	Nolan	Titus
Cass	Frio	King	Ochiltree	Trinity
Castro	Gaines	Kinney	Oldham	Tyler
Cherokee	Garza	Kleberg	Palo Pinto	Upton
Childress	Gillespie	Knox	Panola	Uvalde
Clay	Glasscock	Lamar	Parmer	Val Verde
Cochran	Goliad	Lamb	Pecos	Van Zandt
Coke	Gonzales	Lampasas	Polk	Walker
Coleman	Gray	La Salle	Presidio	Ward
Collingsworth	Grimes	Lavaca	Rains	Washington
Colorado	Hale	Lee	Reagan	Wharton
Comanche	Hall	Leon	Real	Wheeler
Concho	Hamilton	Limestone	Red River	Wilbarger
Cooke	Hansford	Lipscomb	Reeves	Willacy
Cottle	Hardeman	Live Oak	Refugio	Winkler
Crane	Hartley	Llano	Roberts	Wise
Crockett	Haskell	Loving	Robertson	Wood
Crosby	Hemphill	Lynn	Runnels	Yoakum
Culberson	Hill	Madison	Rusk	Young
Dallam	Hockley	Marion	Sabine	Zapata
Dawson	Hopkins	Martin	San Augustine	Zavala
Deaf Smith	Houston	Mason	San Jacinto	
Delta	Howard	Matagorda	San Saba	
De Witt	Hudspeth	Maverick	Schleicher	
Dickens	Hutchinson	McCulloch	Scurry	
Dimmit	Irion	McMullen	Shackelford	
Donley	Jack	Medina	Shelby	
Duval	Jackson	Menard	Sherman	
Eastland	Jasper	Milam	Somervell	
Edwards	Jeff Davis	Mills	Starr	
Erath	Jim Hogg	Mitchell	Stephens	
Falls	Jim Wells	Montague	Sterling	
Fannin	Jones	Moore	Stonewall	

\* Metropolitan areas as defined by Office of Management & Budget, June 1993, using 1990 Census data. Data excludes Miller County, AR, part of the Texarkana MSA.

**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Region**

Region	Median Rates				
	Average	Median	Most Common	Low	High
<b>Houston – Galveston – Brazoria CMSA (n =77)</b>	\$215	\$180	\$200	\$50	\$950
<b>Dallas – Fort Worth CMSA (n = 89)</b>	\$205	\$190	\$150	\$100	\$450
<b>Austin – San Marcos (n = 71)</b>	\$224	\$217	\$250	\$110	\$450
<b>San Antonio MSA (n = 91)</b>	\$184	\$175	\$150	\$100	\$325
<b>El Paso MSA (n = 84)</b>	\$166	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$250
<b>Corpus Christi MSA (n = 106)</b>	\$170	\$164	\$150	\$85	\$375
<b>Beaumont – Port Arthur MSA (n = 85)</b>	\$157	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$338
<b>Central Texas MSAs (n = 81)</b>	\$149	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$250
<b>East and Northeast Texas MSAs (n = 108)</b>	\$155	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$350
<b>South Texas MSAs (n = 78)</b>	\$155	\$150	\$150	\$85	\$300
<b>West Texas MSAs (n = 125)</b>	\$158	\$150	\$150	\$95	\$250
<b>Non-Metropolitan Counties (n= 91)</b>	\$149	\$150	\$150	\$75	\$300

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Region and Law Firm Size<sup>2</sup>**

Region	Median Rates					
	Sole Practitioners	2 to 5 Attorneys	6 to 10 Attorneys	11 to 24 Attorneys	25 to 100 Attorneys	More than 100 Attorneys
Houston – Galveston – Brazoria CMSA (n =77)	\$175	\$175	**	**	\$170	\$360
Dallas – Fort Worth CMSA (n = 89)	\$175	\$175	\$194	**	\$200	\$243
Austin – San Marcos (n = 71)	\$178	\$198	**	**	\$245	\$289
San Antonio MSA (n = 91)	\$150	\$163	**	\$185	**	**
El Paso MSA (n = 84)	\$150	\$173	**	\$150	\$175	**
Corpus Christi MSA (n = 106)	\$150	\$175	\$175	\$150	\$136	**
Beaumont – Port Arthur MSA (n = 85)	\$150	\$150	\$150	**	\$150	**
Central Texas MSAs (n = 81)	\$150	\$150	**	\$140	**	**
East and Northeast Texas MSAs (n = 108)	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150	**	**
South Texas MSAs (n = 78)	\$150	\$150	**	\$140	**	**
West Texas MSAs (n = 125)	\$150	\$140	\$175	\$150	\$188	**
Non-Metropolitan Counties (n= 91)	\$150	\$150	**	**	**	**

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Number of attorneys in all offices/branches.

**2000 Typical Hourly Rates<sup>1</sup>  
By Region and Years of Experience<sup>2</sup>**

Region	2000 Median Hourly Rates					
	6 Years or Fewer	7 to 10 Years	11 to 15 Years	16 to 20 Years	21 to 25 Years	More than 25 Years
Houston – Galveston – Brazoria CMSA (n = 77)	\$150	\$175	**	**	**	\$200
Dallas – Fort Worth CMSA (n = 89)	\$168	**	\$197	\$200	**	\$225
Austin – San Marcos (n = 71)	\$188	\$228	\$200	**	\$225	\$245
San Antonio MSA (n = 91)	\$161	**	\$173	\$180	\$180	\$184
El Paso MSA (n = 84)	\$130	**	**	\$150	\$193	\$190
Corpus Christi MSA (n = 106)	\$130	\$150	\$155	\$175	\$150	\$188
Beaumont – Port Arthur MSA (n = 85)	\$139	\$150	\$148	\$150	**	\$155
Central Texas MSAs (n = 81)	\$125	**	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150
East and Northeast Texas MSAs (n = 108)	\$125	\$135	\$150	\$160	\$150	\$188
South Texas MSAs (n = 78)	\$125	\$156	**	\$148	\$175	\$165
West Texas MSAs (n = 125)	\$125	\$150	\$154	\$160	\$175	\$163
Non-Metropolitan Counties (n= 91)	**	\$125	\$150	\$150	\$150	\$150

<sup>1</sup> If an attorney's hourly rate varied by area of practice, a simple average rate was calculated.

<sup>2</sup> Based on year first licensed in any jurisdiction.

## **Methodology**

### **Data Collection and Sampling Procedures**

Hourly rate information was collected on the 2001 Lawyer Technology Survey, a project sponsored by Texas Bar CLE. The written questionnaire (see copy at end of report) was mailed Bulk Rate on February 19, 2001 to a sample of attorneys licensed by the State Bar of Texas who were residing in-state, maintaining active membership in the State Bar of Texas, and who were not exempt from MCLE requirements. A reminder postcard was sent by first class mail on March 8, 2001 to the 3,966 attorneys who had not responded by that date.

Because the survey's results were to be presented by geographic region, the sample was stratified, or subgrouped, into 12 economic areas that were based on metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. A sample size of 6,000—500 attorneys from each region—was set based on budget constraints, the need to have adequate samples from the less populous regions of the state, an aspirational response rate of 50 percent, and the knowledge that some attorneys would have to be dropped from the sample due to bad addresses, refusals to participate, and related factors. Results reported for all respondents and results broken out by any factor other than region were weighted so that the regional breakdown of respondents matched the regional distribution of Texas attorneys who met the sampling criteria. Weighting procedures are described in more detail below.

### **Response Rate**

Eight attorneys had moved out-of-state between the time of initial sampling and mailing and were dropped, resulting in a sample size of 5,992. An additional 33 were dropped from the sample due to bad addresses that could not be resolved, and eight refused to participate, resulting in a final working sample size of 5,951. As of the May 8, 2001 cutoff date, 2,668 completed questionnaires were returned to the State Bar of Texas, for an overall response rate of 45 percent. Response rates for each sampling region are shown in the table below.

## Methodology (continued)

<b>Working Sample and Response Rates by Sampling Region</b>							
<b>Sampling Region</b>	<b>Original Sample</b>	<b>Dropped Due to Being Out-of-State<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Dropped Due to Bad Addresses</b>	<b>Refusals<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Working Sample Size</b>	<b>Number of Responses<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
<b>Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CMSA</b>	500	1	4	0	495	193	39%
<b>Dallas-Fort Worth CMSA</b>	500	2	4	1	493	221	45%
<b>Austin-San Marcos MSA</b>	500	1	5	0	494	218	44%
<b>San Antonio MSA</b>	500	0	1	0	499	210	42%
<b>El Paso MSA</b>	500	3	1	1	495	206	42%
<b>Corpus Christi MSA</b>	500	0	2	1	497	208	42%
<b>Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA</b>	500	0	3	2	495	205	41%
<b>Central Texas MSAs</b>	500	1	2	1	496	236	48%
<b>East &amp; Northeast Texas MSAs</b>	500	0	3	1	496	226	46%
<b>South Texas MSAs</b>	500	0	3	0	497	184	37%
<b>West Texas MSAs</b>	500	0	2	0	498	230	46%
<b>Non-Metro Counties</b>	500	0	3	1	496	212	43%
<b>Region Unknown</b>	0	0	0	0	0	119	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5,951</b>	<b>2,668</b>	<b>45%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Attorney had moved between time sample was drawn and mailing of questionnaire.

<sup>2</sup> As indicated on survey response cards (see end of report for survey materials).

<sup>3</sup> Based on county provided by respondents on questionnaire item number 30.



**Methodology (continued)**

**Weighting Procedures**

All results presented for the state as a whole or broken down by any factor other than region were weighted to reflect the known geographic distribution of attorneys who met the sampling criteria. The coding of a respondent’s sampling region was based on their response to question 30, “In which Texas county is your office located?”<sup>1</sup> The weighting factors are shown in the table below.

<b>Weighting Factors</b>			
	<b>Attorneys in Region as Percent of In-State Total<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Percent of Total Responses</b>	<b>Weighting Factor</b>
<b>Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CMSA</b>	31.3%	7.6%	4.12
<b>Dallas-Fort Worth CMSA</b>	29.7%	8.7%	3.41
<b>Austin-San Marcos MSA</b>	12.2%	8.6%	1.42
<b>San Antonio MSA</b>	7.4%	8.2%	.90
<b>El Paso MSA</b>	1.7%	8.1%	.21
<b>Corpus Christi MSA</b>	1.6%	8.2%	.20
<b>Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA</b>	1.3%	8.0%	.16
<b>Central Texas MSAs</b>	1.3%	9.3%	.14
<b>East &amp; Northeast Texas MSAs</b>	3.0%	8.9%	.34
<b>South Texas MSAs</b>	2.3%	7.2%	.32
<b>West Texas MSAs</b>	3.4%	9.0%	.38
<b>Non-Metro Counties</b>	5.1%	8.3%	.61

<sup>1</sup> 119 respondents did not answer this question and were not included in calculation of the weighting factors.

<sup>2</sup> In-state, active status attorneys, not exempt from MCLE.