



ABA National Lawyer Population Survey
Historical Trend in Total National Lawyer Population
1878 - 2018

Year	Resident Active Attorney Total	% Change from Prior Year	Year	Resident Active Attorney Total	% Change from Prior Year
2018	1,338,678	0.2%	1979	498,249	7.2%
2017	1,335,963	1.8%	1978	464,851	7.6%
2016	1,312,869	0.9%	1977	431,918	1.6%
2015	1,300,705	1.5%	1976	424,980	5.0%
2014	1,281,432	1.1%	1975	404,772	5.0%
2013	1,268,011	1.8%	1974	385,515	5.4%
2012	1,245,205	1.6%	1973	365,875	2.1%
2011	1,225,452	1.9%	1972	358,520	4.5%
2010	1,203,097	1.9%	1971	342,980	4.9%
2009	1,180,386	1.6%	1970	326,842	1.7%
2008	1,162,124	1.6%	1969	321,473	1.7%
2007	1,143,358	2.4%	1968	316,104	1.7%
2006	1,116,967	1.1%	1967	310,736	1.8%
2005	1,104,766	1.9%	1966	305,368	1.8%
2004	1,084,504	2.4%	1965	300,000	0.9%
2003	1,058,662	0.8%	1964	297,186	1.0%
2002	1,049,751	0.1%	1963	294,372	1.0%
2001	1,048,903	2.6%	1962	291,559	1.0%
2000	1,022,462	2.2%	1961	288,746	1.0%
1999	1,000,440	1.5%	1960	285,933	2.6%
1998	985,921	3.4%	1959	278,746	2.6%
1997	953,260	0.7%	1958	271,560	2.7%
1996	946,499	5.6%	1957	264,373	2.8%
1995	896,140	3.5%	1956	257,186	2.9%
1994	865,614	2.3%	1955	250,000	12.8%
1993	846,036	5.8%	1950	221,605	10.8%
1992	799,760	2.9%	1945	200,000	10.4%
1991	777,119	2.8%	1940	181,220	13.3%
1990	755,694	4.2%	1935	160,000	15.1%
1989	725,579	1.7%	1930	139,059	6.2%
1988	713,456	2.7%	1925	131,000	6.9%
1987	695,020	2.7%	1920	122,519	0.4%
1986	676,584	3.5%	1915	122,000	-0.1%
1985	653,686	0.9%	1910	122,149	3.5%
1984	647,575	4.0%	1905	118,000	3.1%
1983	622,625	0.9%	1900	114,460	27.7%
1982	617,320	0.8%	1890	89,630	39.7%
1981	612,593	6.6%	1880	64,137	0.0%
1980	574,810	15.4%	1878	64,137	N/A

* Data Source: 1998 forward - American Bar Association's National Lawyer Population Survey, prior to 1998 - ABA Archives, specific source unknown.

** For data from 1998 forward, individual state bar associations or licensing agencies are asked to provide the number of resident and active attorneys as of December 31st of the prior year, e.g. 2018 data is as of 12/31/2017. The numbers reflected here are the best available data provided to us from the respective associations or agencies.

*** In 2018, Indiana corrected the resident active figures for 2016; this report reflects the new total attorney count for 2016 than was previously reported.

Copyright © 2018 American Bar Association

The ABA hereby grants permission for copies of the materials herein to be made, in whole or in part, for classroom use in an institution of higher learning or for use by not-for-profit organizations, provided that the use is for informational, non-commercial purposes only and any copy of the materials or portion thereof acknowledges original publication by the ABA, including the title of the publication, the name of the author, and the legend "Reprinted by permission of the American Bar Association. All rights reserved." Requests to reproduce portions of this publication in any other manner should be sent to the Copyrights & Contracts, American Bar Association.