

Careers in Law

Traditionally most law graduates in India join **litigation or court room practice after enrolling as advocates**. Although a lawyer is qualified enough to practice law immediately upon enrolment as an advocate, as a matter of fact, **most litigation lawyers start their careers as junior advocates to more experienced or senior lawyers at the Bar**. Associating with a more experienced lawyer is helpful in learning court room skills and procedural matters. **Practicing lawyers are also selected to various judicial offices in India**. Advocates practicing in courts such as the High Courts and Supreme Court are **directly appointed as judges in the High Courts and in some rare cases to the Supreme Court**. For other judicial offices such as **District and Sessions Judge and other subordinate judicial offices, the selection is made generally through a competitive examination in most states in India**.

Litigation practice is not the only career option available to a lawyer in a globalized world. A number of **fresh law graduates join law firms or other consulting firms especially in the field of corporate transaction law**. Such transaction lawyers **need not be arguing cases before courts or tribunals, but will be helping their clients in matters such as negotiation, drafting, and counseling and in less informal forms of representation**. Careers in corporate law firms have been increasingly attractive for fresh graduates in law. Generally lawyers **start their careers as associates and can rise to become partners depending on the success of their practice**.

Companies, businesses, trade associations and certain civil society organizations also require lawyers to routinely plan and strategize their activities and functions. The office of General Counsel is gaining popularity in India and it plays a key role in senior level management decisions. **The office of the General Counsel or the Legal Departments of certain large companies employ several hundred lawyers for legal advice and related services**. In addition, **public sector undertakings, banks and other private companies also employ law officers** to help them in their routine activities.

'Non-legal' professional services firms such as Legal Process Outsourcing (LPO) firms now offer quasi legal services. The advent of the LPOs is a recent phenomenon associated with the globalization of legal profession. Lawyers are required **in international organizations and other institutions such as the United Nations, the IMF, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the WTO**. Familiarity with specialized streams of law is important to get a job in such institutions. Lawyers can also play a crucial role **by associating with civil society organizations and think tanks** which work on areas as varied as environment, right to information, right to food, right to work, gender justice, etc.