

PARALEGAL

 Frederick Community College



Program Contact

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Paralegal

This paralegal program is nationally recognized by the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) and has a chapter of Lambda Epsilon Chi—the Paralegal Honor Society. Law-related courses provide students with a variety of skills in preparation for employment in the legal field, or for transfer to a four-year university.

Paralegal A.A.S. Degree

The Paralegal A.A.S. program combines general education courses with specialized law courses to provide students with a wide variety of knowledge and skills. Students who complete the program will receive an A.A.S. degree, and while the primary goal of this program is to prepare students for employment in the legal field, course credits may also be transferred to a four-year college or university to pursue a bachelor's degree.

Learning Outcomes

- Apply basic legal concepts and fundamental principles of law for varied legal tasks.
- Recognize a legal dispute, gather facts, and perform legal analysis for varied legal matters.
- Conduct client interviews and prepare witnesses and evidence for presentation at legal proceedings.
- Perform legal research and utilize techniques of legal writing in the preparation of legal documents.
- Demonstrate conduct consistent with the ethical obligations of the legal profession to avoid ethical violations.

Paralegal Certificate

The Paralegal Certificate program is designed for individuals already in this field of employment who wish to increase their opportunities by acquiring college credentials. In addition, individuals who already have a degree in another field may be able to improve their employment opportunities through this program. This certificate program offers a condensed curriculum consisting of law-related courses.

Access to Justice Letter of Recognition

The Access to Justice Letter of Recognition program develops paralegals qualified to perform legal services under supervision to assist self-help center, private pro bono, or limited scope attorneys and promotes access to justice for low- and moderate-income people in crisis. This program offers specialized training that incorporates field placement to connect trained paralegals with legal professionals offering no-cost/low-cost services.

A drug screening and/or criminal background check is often required to obtain and maintain employment in this career field. Individuals whose criminal histories may interfere with their ability to secure employment should discuss any questions with FCC faculty.



Pre-Law

Paralegal programs may be used for students interested in law school. The FCC Paralegal Program curriculum covers the same substantive and procedural courses offered at law schools. Legal analysis (critical thinking), writing, technology, ethics and professionalism are infused into all legal specialty classes. The program manager, a full-time faculty member, serves as a pre-law advisor and assists students with law school applications.

Below is a list of law schools where FCC Paralegal Program graduates have earned their Doctorate of Jurisprudence (J.D.) or a Masters of Law (LL.M.), law degrees:

- Georgetown University Law Center
- Michigan State University College of Law
- The George Washington University of Law
- Widener University School of Law
- University of Maryland School of Law
- Thomas M. Cooley Law School
- University of Baltimore School of Law
- University of Southern California School of Law

Community Partners

Community partnerships are the cornerstone of the FCC Paralegal Program. The long-standing relationships with the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau, Frederick County Courthouse, the Pro Bono Committee, and the Bar Association of Frederick County result in a solid program where direct feedback is provided from the industry regarding trends, needs, and opportunities. The relationships support the hands-on approach of the program curriculum.

Paralegal Student Association

As a student enrolled in the FCC Paralegal Program, you are invited to join one of the most active student organizations on campus. The purpose of the association is to encourage students to obtain a degree/certificate in the legal field and to foster relationships between students and the legal community. The association collaborates with community partners to provide free legal clinics on Pro Bono Day.

View required course listings: frederick.edu/paralegal

For more information:

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Growth Potential & Estimated Salaries

The median annual wage for paralegals and legal assistants was \$59,200 in 2022. Employment of paralegals and legal assistants is projected to grow four percent from 2022 to 2032.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook (bls.gov/ooh)

Financial Assistance

FCC provides a tuition payment plan for students who wish to spread payment over several months. Scholarship and loan assistance is available for eligible students. For complete scholarship information, contact Financial Aid at 301.846.2620.

Internship Program

Internships help students integrate what is taught in the classroom with what is required in the workplace. Students take internships to develop knowledge and skills valued by employers. Students in the FCC Paralegal Program are eligible to receive credit for internships.

Transfer Note

To find more information about how credits will transfer from FCC to a state four-year institution, visit artsys.usmd.edu or consult a College advisor. FCC has articulation agreements with Stevenson University, University of Baltimore, and University of Maryland Global Campus, allowing students a seamless transfer experience. Students who plan to transfer should speak with an advisor or program manager from their chosen transfer institution before selecting elective courses.

Student Testimonials

"As a foreign attorney, the Paralegal Program provided a foundation for the United States Common Law legal system. After obtaining my Paralegal Certificate from FCC, I was accepted into, and successfully completed, a Master of Law (LL.M) from the George Washington School of Law in Business and Finance Law."

– Christiane Powers

"After graduating with my A.A.S. from FCC, I transferred to Stevenson University and obtained a bachelor's degree in legal studies. I am now a J.D. candidate at the University of Baltimore School of Law. Ask yourself—are you ready to bring your dreams to fruition? The Paralegal Program at FCC is your stepping stone to becoming a paralegal or moving forward to law school."

– LaRae Downs

"I started working at a non-profit law office as an administrative assistant and am now a paralegal. The Paralegal Program at Frederick Community College has been instrumental in teaching skills which have helped me excel at my job."

– Suzzane Gaither

"Around the time I graduated, Dr. Parker put me into contact with a law firm who ended up hiring me as their paralegal. I've been there for the last two years and can honestly say that I absolutely love being a paralegal. I really appreciate how hard Dr. Parker works to prepare students for their future careers."

– Kira Muren

"Through the Paralegal Studies Program at FCC I have worked in the local legal community since my second semester."

– Bonna Loverock

Frederick Community College (FCC) prohibits discrimination against any person on the basis of age, ancestry, citizenship status, color, creed, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, national origin, race, religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status in its activities, admissions, educational programs, and employment. • Under the ADA and Section 504, FCC makes every effort to accommodate individuals with disabilities for College-sponsored events and programs. For FCC employees needing accommodations, including interpreting, please email humanresources@frederick.edu. For students and others with accommodation needs or questions, please call 301.846.2408, or to request sign language interpreter services, please email interpreting@frederick.edu. Sign language interpreters will not be automatically provided for College-sponsored events without a request for services. Requests must be made at least five workdays before a scheduled event to guarantee accommodations. • If your request pertains to accessible transportation for a College-sponsored trip, please submit your request at least 21 calendar days in advance. Requests made less than 21 calendar days in advance may not be able to be guaranteed.