



## Q: Dear Legal Eagle,

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### **What are the benefits of working in the government as opposed to a law firm? Signed . . .Not Ready for a Law Firm**

A: Dear Not Ready for a Law Firm,

At Legal Authority, we believe that for many attorneys there is no better job than working for the Federal or State government. One of our Employment Advocates used to work for the United States Department of Justice and, the way he tells it, after 5:15 p.m. each evening you could fire a cannon down the hall because everyone had gone for the day. In all seriousness, though, there are some major advantages to choosing a career with the Government.

First, government positions are most often secure. Many government attorneys practice their entire careers with the government and face little prospect of a layoff regardless of bad economic winds. It is also extremely difficult to be fired as a government attorney, because government jobs are generally there to stay regardless of the status of the economy.

Second, government attorneys are often quite collegial with one another, and there is a fraternity of sorts amongst them because they are not competing to bill hours.

Third, the work government attorneys do is often immensely interesting. For example, you may be working on the type of high-profile litigation you might see only once or twice (or perhaps never) in a law firm career. Additionally, many government attorneys often spend at least one day a week in court. Government attorneys who do not do litigation may be involved in important policy work that has a national impact.

Almost always, the health care and retirement benefits that government attorneys receive often far eclipse what one could expect in private practice.

At the end of the day, many attorneys choose not to work for the government. One of the most common reasons attorneys do not choose government work is because of perceived financial concerns. Nevertheless, many government attorneys do make over \$100,000 a year and live comfortably. There may not be new Porsches in most of their futures, but money is not the major motivation for most government attorneys. Many government attorneys simply enjoy practicing law with like-minded individuals in a relatively secure environment.

Government attorneys often enjoy much better lifestyles than other attorneys. With more time and energy left for family and leisure activities, government attorneys reap the kind of less tangible benefits that can make a tremendous difference in career satisfaction.



Surprisingly, government opportunities are not often requested by Legal Authority clients. When you consider the super lives many government attorneys lead and how interesting the work is, this is surprising. While the searches we generally conduct for government attorneys are often less extensive than the law firm or in-house searches, government searches are often our most satisfying because we know the attorney is likely to land a position they are happy with - which is what it is all about in the end.

You too can have your job search questions answered by the Legal Eagle. Please send any questions to [asktheeagle@legalauthority.com](mailto:asktheeagle@legalauthority.com). If your question is chosen and published in our next issue, you will receive a free SOMETHING!