



# HONG KONG IN-HOUSE | LEGAL & GOVERNANCE

Industry Trends & Salary Guide

2025

# IN-HOUSE LEGAL & GOVERNANCE IN HONG KONG

## 2025 INDUSTRY TRENDS & SALARY GUIDE

### QUALIFIED LAWYERS & PARALEGALS

Heading into 2025/26, Hong Kong's in-house legal sector continues to flourish, with qualified lawyers and paralegals commanding attention in several high-growth practice areas. International dispute resolution, spanning litigation and arbitration, is a powerhouse, fuelled by the city's prominence as an arbitration hub and the uptick in regional trade disputes. Private equity (PE), venture capital (VC), merger and acquisition (M&A), and fund investments are thriving, driven by active investment strategies and deal pipelines. Data protection expertise is highly sought after, particularly for candidates holding Certified Information Privacy Professional (CIPP) credentials, as companies grapple with stricter privacy laws amid technological advancements. Financial services regulation remains a bedrock, particularly valuing professionals with experience across multiple jurisdictions to manage intricate global compliance demands. Paralegals are increasingly indispensable, assisting with intellectual property oversight and due diligence in these fast-moving fields.

#### Qualified Lawyer

*All salaries are per month and in HKD unless otherwise specified.*

Post-Qualification Experience	Regional Position	Local Position
0-3 years	\$65,000 - 90,000	\$55,000 - 82,000
3-6 years	\$90,000 - 120,000	\$82,000 - 95,000
6-10 years	\$120,000 - 165,000	\$95,000 - 145,000
10-15 years	\$165,000 - 230,000	\$145,000 - 165,000
15+ years	\$230,000 - 350,000	\$165,000 - 210,000

#### Paralegal

*All salaries are per month and in HKD unless otherwise specified.*

Professional Experience	Banking & Financial Services	General Corporate
0-3 years	\$28,000 - 35,000	\$25,000 - 30,000
3-6 years	\$35,000 - 45,000	\$30,000 - 43,000
6-10 years	\$45,000 - 68,000	\$43,000 - 65,000
10-15 years	\$68,000 - 90,000	\$65,000 - 85,000
15+ years	\$90,000 - 110,000	\$85,000 - 105,000

## COMPLIANCE & RISK

The compliance and risk arena in Hong Kong for the coming financial year is buzzing with opportunity, as regulatory pressures sharpen the need for niche skills. Financial Crime Compliance (FCC), with a focus on Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Countering Financing of Terrorism (CFT), leads the charge, emphasising investigative work and regulatory submissions amid stricter oversight. Investment compliance is a key area, especially for firms juggling sophisticated portfolios, while product risk and tech risk are gaining ground as technology reshapes operations. Cybersecurity is surging, propelled by escalating digital threats and regulatory updates, demanding professionals who can bridge technical and legal worlds. Employers are shifting toward advisory roles over traditional internal control positions, favouring professionals who can provide strategic guidance—think former regulators or lawyers with regional exposure.

*All salaries are per month and in HKD unless otherwise specified.*

Professional Experience	Banking & Financial Services	General Corporate
0-3 years	\$28,000 - 40,000	\$25,000 - 32,000
3-6 years	\$40,000 - 60,000	\$32,000 - 45,000
6-10 years	\$60,000 - 88,000	\$45,000 - 70,000
10-15 years	\$88,000 - 145,000	\$70,000 - 120,000
15+ years	\$145,000 - 250,000	\$120,000 - 150,000

## COMPANY SECRETARY & LEGAL SECRETARY

Company secretaries and legal secretaries are vital cogs in Hong Kong's governance framework, supporting organisations through a maze of regulatory and operational challenges. Company secretaries are essential for ensuring adherence to mounting governance standards, particularly as businesses expand globally and face intensified expectations around transparency. Legal secretaries, on the other hand, are critical for managing documentation and compliance workflows, especially in high-pressure settings like PE/VC and dispute-heavy practices. Insights from local governance bodies suggest a 15% spike in demand for mid-level company secretaries, and the market rewards those who can handle cross-border complexities and deliver under pressure, offering strong career prospects.

### Company Secretary

*All salaries are per month and in HKD unless otherwise specified.*

Professional Experience	Banking & Financial Services	General Corporate
0-3 years	\$28,000 - 40,000	\$25,000 - 35,000
3-6 years	\$40,000 - 52,000	\$35,000 - 55,000
6-10 years	\$52,000 - 80,000	\$55,000 - 75,000
10-15 years	\$80,000 - 110,000	\$75,000 - 100,000
15+ years	\$110,000 - 160,000	\$100,000 - 130,000

## MARKET TRENDS & SALARY INSIGHTS

Several defining trends are shaping Hong Kong's in-house legal and governance market for 2025/26. Buy-side entities, such as asset managers and hedge funds, are ramping up headcounts, while banks are taking a cautious approach to hiring amid a shaky economic backdrop. Tech and fintech sectors keep pushing boundaries, driving consistent demand, while sustainability/ESG and entertainment industries unlock new roles due to regulatory shifts. Family offices stand out as a unique pathway, attracting seasoned Legal and Compliance heads from large organisations or Partners and Counsels from private practice seeking closer ties to decision-makers.

Salary trends show modest single-digit base increases paired with 1 to 1.5 months' bonus from 2024 across sectors. To snag stable, high-calibre candidates or rare expertise, employers are dangling 20-25% salary boosts. Flexibility is growing, with companies increasingly open to hires from varied industry backgrounds, though fluency in Chinese remains a non-negotiable edge in this bilingual hub.

This report captures Hong Kong's vibrant in-house legal and governance market, poised for evolution in a shifting global context. Reach out to Ethos BeathChapman for bespoke recruitment strategies to navigate this exciting terrain.

## OUR LEGAL & GOVERNANCE DESK

Strategically located across offices in Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Philippines, our consultants are seasoned search professionals. Access their industry expertise, skills and networks that are deep and broad in both local and regional markets.



LINUS CHOO  
**Regional Executive Director**  
Legal & Governance  
T +65 6692 0795  
E [linus@ethosbc.com](mailto:linus@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)



BRIAN CHAN  
**Head of Legal & Governance**  
Greater China  
T +852 3002 3111  
E [brian.chan@ethosbc.com](mailto:brian.chan@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)



DENNIS CHAN  
**Senior Consultant**  
Legal & Governance  
T +852 3002 3120  
E [dennis.chan@ethosbc.com](mailto:dennis.chan@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)



RUTH MA  
**In-House Lead**  
Legal & Governance  
T +852 3002 3112  
E [ruth.ma@ethosbc.com](mailto:ruth.ma@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)



LIM BO GENG  
**Private Practice Lead**  
Legal & Governance  
T +65 6692 0709  
E [bogeng.lim@ethosbc.com](mailto:bogeng.lim@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)



WEIYUN TEO  
**Associate Director**  
Legal & Governance  
T +65 6692 0793  
E [weiyun.teo@ethosbc.com](mailto:weiyun.teo@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)



RAIZA ESCOSIO  
**Head of Sourcing**  
Data & Business Enablement  
T +65 6692 9344  
E [raiza.escosio@ethosbc.com](mailto:raiza.escosio@ethosbc.com)

[Connect with me](#)

# ETHOS BEATHCHAPMAN

Our global experts adopt progressive ways-of-working, technologies, and data and analytics, moving nimbly to stay ahead in evolving markets, capture the talent you need, and design solutions for best outcomes.



Expertise & experience



Progress & growth driven



Market & talent insight

**5250+**

leaders appointed  
in **27 countries**

**1100+**

companies we've delivered  
exceptional solutions for

**476+**

contractors across the  
region (SG, AU, HK)

**EST. 2005**

**20 years** of experience in  
the Asia Pacific region

**10 YEARS**

is the experience each  
consultant has on average

**150+**

employees across  
**8 offices worldwide**

**Access local and regional expertise, and a diverse global talent pool**

**SINGAPORE**

**TOKYO**

**HONG KONG**

**SYDNEY**

**BEIJING**

**MELBOURNE**

**MANILA**

**LONDON**



## Connect With Us

Hong Kong, 28 Stanley Street, Unit 1605 & 1606, 16F

T +852 3002 3110 E [hello@ethosbc.com](mailto:hello@ethosbc.com)

