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## Part-time lawyering gradually becoming more common, NALP says

by Jeff Blumenthal Staff Writer

Most large law firms have made part-time schedules available to all of their lawyers. But according to a study conducted by NALP: The Association for Legal Career Professionals, just 5.9 percent of lawyers are working part time and 73 percent of those lawyers are women.

That number has crept up from 2.4 percent when NALP first started tracking the data in 2004. The percentage of firms allowing part-time lawyers either by firmwide policy or case specific instances has increased from 86 percent to 98 percent.

Thirteen percent of women lawyers work part time with 12 percent of female partners and 9.8 percent of female associates working part time. Only 2.4 percent of all male lawyers work part time. The NALP survey includes data from 1,475 law offices and over 140,000 lawyers nationwide, mostly from larger firms.

Chicago, New York and Washington account for nearly one-third of the lawyers reflected in the survey and show a sharp dichotomy with respect to part-time work. Part-time partners are twice as common in Chicago (4 percent) and Washington (4.8 percent) as in New York (1.9 percent).

Among the 1,023 Philadelphia partners surveyed, 4.4 percent work part time, 11.3 percent of women partners work part time and 2.8 percent of male partners are part-timers. Of the 1,185 Philadelphia law firm associates surveyed, 6.7 percent work part time with 13.8 percent of female associates and only 0.2 percent of male associates. When factoring in all 2,507 Philadelphia lawyers surveyed, 7.2 percent work part time (higher than the 5.9 percent national average), include 15.7 percent of women and 2.7 percent of men. In all, 75 percent of local attorneys working part time in Philadelphia are women. All of the 17 local firms surveyed offer part-time scheduling and 9.1 percent have a policy applicable to all lawyers while 54.5 percent do not allow entry-level lawyers to work part time.

Philadelphia has been sort of an epicenter for concerns about working part time. In 1999, Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis lawyer Deborah Epstein Henry sent an e-mail to 15 friends to develop an impromptu support group for part-time lawyers. Invite anyone who might be interested, she added. About 150 people showed up. She founded

[Flex-Time Lawyers LLC](#), which has since expanded into New York City and now serves as a national consulting firm advising law firms, corporations and lawyers on work/life balance and the retention and promotion of women attorneys.