

# Are You an Associate Looking to Relocate?

Discover markets in which your skills are most sought after.



## UNITED STATES

	Transferable Practice Skills	Licensure Requirements	Things to Know
<b>Atlanta</b>	Broader experience is more valuable for the Southeast. It's better to be a "jack of all trades" in the corporate sector with experience in M&A, private equity, joint ventures and corporate finance work than to have a narrow specialization. "Hot" practice areas include real estate, tax, corporate, healthcare, and electrical and mechanical engineering patent prosecution.	Georgia offers a shorter bar examination for lawyers admitted by examination and in good standing in another state for at least 12 months prior to taking its Attorneys' Examination. Also, admission without examination is an option for associates from reciprocal states who have practiced at least 5 years.	Associates are moving to Atlanta for the 200+ sunny days per year and the overall cost of living, which is significantly lower than Chicago, D.C. or New York. Metro Atlanta ranks third for Fortune 500 companies, has a dynamic restaurant scene, is home to the world's largest aquarium and is the all-time most popular destination for film production. BigLaw and boutique firms in Atlanta seek associates from larger markets like New York and D.C., but most still inquire about candidates' Southeastern connections.
<b>Baltimore</b>	Practices in the highest demand are corporate, M&A, finance, real estate, and labor and employment. Litigation practices involving products liability defense and business litigation are also hot. Niche practices such as healthcare regulatory, renewable energy, land use, soft IP/licensing and cybersecurity/privacy are always of interest.	Maryland administers the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) to new law school graduates and less-experienced attorneys licensed to practice in another U.S. jurisdiction and it will accept transfers of qualifying UBE Scores from applicants who achieved those scores in other UBE states. More experienced lawyers working for 3 of the most recent 5 years or for more than 10 years overall may be eligible for admission to the bar without examination.	Many young professionals live and work in Baltimore because it has an abundance of charming neighborhoods with iconic row houses and modern high rises. This urban lifestyle provides young professionals with easy access to local amenities, dining and eclectic entertainment. Firms include BigLaw, major regional, smaller general practice and boutique firms. BigLaw associates from large markets like D.C. and New York are sought after by Baltimore firms. The city is attractive because you can be a big fish in a small pond where the cost of living is significantly lower than larger cities.
<b>Boston</b>	Corporate technology, life science, finance and investment management remain active, as well as intellectual property prosecution. Electrical engineering degrees and Ph.Ds. are in demand.	Associates must pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE). They must be admitted to another state, district or territory of the U.S. and must have been actively engaged in the practice or teaching of law for 5 of the past 7 years.	Boston firms continue to look for some connection to the city (i.e., school, family or friends). They also look for candidates from top schools with excellent grades. With the rich experience, Boston is open to transitioning in-house lawyers to private practice.
<b>Chicago</b>	Corporate has been the engine powering Chicago's legal economy for several years now. Broad-based corporate/M&A and private equity practices are the primary drivers. Finance is also a hot area including traditional bank finance, project finance and public finance. Chicago's sizable tech industry means continually high demand for associates interested in patent practice, both litigation and prosecution. There has been a notable uptick in code-based practices such as restructuring and ERISA as well as an increased demand for data privacy and cybersecurity.	Associates who have been licensed to practice in the highest court of law in any U.S. state, territory or D.C. for no fewer than 3 years may be eligible for admission on motion. An applicant licensed to practice law for fewer than 15 years must have passed the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination.	The economic and cultural capital of the Midwest, Chicago has a diversified and vibrant economy that drives the nation's third-largest legal market. Chicago is home to a large number of Fortune 1000 companies (particularly in the manufacturing, transportation, food and insurance industries), a growing tech sector, and a large and important financial market with 5 major exchanges.
<b>D.C.</b>	Regulatory practice areas are the core strength of the D.C. legal market, such as healthcare, FDA, government contracts, white collar, FCPA, intellectual property, securities, FERC and international trade. Corporate practices have a strong focus on securities, capital markets and M&A.	Lawyers who have been admitted for 5 years in another jurisdiction immediately preceding application for admission in D.C. can be admitted without examination; other lawyers can be admitted without examination if they graduated from an ABA-accredited law school and obtained certain minimum scores on the Multistate Bar Examination and the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination.	D.C. is one of the most competitive legal markets, and firms tend to be very credentials conscious. Associates from top 20 law schools with high GPAs and top honors as well as other BigLaw experience are in demand. D.C. does not have many mid-sized firms, but all major market and many smaller regional firms have offices here. The federal government is also a big draw for lawyers, and it is not uncommon for those in regulatory practice to move between private practice and the government.
<b>Miami</b>	Corporate transactional candidates who are New York trained are always in demand in Florida.	Attorneys cannot waive into the Florida Bar; they must pass the Florida Bar Exam. Foreign attorneys with the New York Bar can only practice in Miami if they attend a U.S. law school for three years and earn a J.D. Associates who plan on moving to Florida at a later date should consider taking the Florida Bar after graduation to show their commitment.	Miami is a sophisticated and growing market with a burgeoning tech and start-up scene and a high concentration of international banks. There are many wonderful opportunities for attorneys with foreign language skills, particularly in Spanish, Portuguese or, ideally, both. Despite the current slowdown, Litigation dominates the practices seeing the most activity in Miami.
<b>New York</b>	The New York market is highly specialized and heavily focused on transactional work. With its connection to the financial services industry, specializations include M&A, capital markets, finance, funds, real estate and tax.	Attorneys must be admitted to a reciprocal jurisdiction and have practiced for 5 of the preceding 7 years of the application for admission.	There is less demand for regulatory work in New York than other U.S. markets. New York firms are less focused on a candidate's connection to New York. Being barred in New York continues to be important both for corporate and litigation openings.
<b>Northern California</b>	Corporate practice areas (M&A, capital markets, finance and emerging company work) are the most transferable practice areas to the Bay Area. Technology transactions, intellectual property litigation, real estate and executive compensation are also highly desired. Privacy is also a growing area. Well-credentialed litigators are always welcome.	If an associate has been practicing in good standing in another jurisdiction for more than 4 years, they are eligible to take only the Attorney Exam portion of the CA Bar, which means they don't have to repeat the Multistate Bar Exam. If an associate has been practicing for less than 4 years, they have to take the full CA Bar Exam. International degrees often transfer, and those associates are eligible to sit for the CA bar.	Northern California is the primary hub for the technology industry; if you want to work with the companies making the apps and websites you use on a daily basis, look no further. The Bay Area has more affordable housing than it has in years. The climate is reasonably steady as the rest of the country heats up—it is fairly regular year-round, which also allows for year-round outdoor activities that are readily available.
<b>Philadelphia</b>	Corporate practices are white hot; somewhat hot are real estate, litigation and L&E.	An attorney licensed to practice law in another state may be admitted to the bar if they are a member of the bar of a reciprocal state. Associates must have passed the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam.	Philadelphia is a provincial town—the firms want to know that you have some tie to the area or your spouse/significant other does. There is wanderlust here for the relocating attorney coming from major markets like New York, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago.
<b>Southern California</b>	Different regions of Southern California have different practice area specializations. M&A and labor and employment are core strengths throughout Southern California; litigation with a specialization in medical devices/products is prominent in Orange County and San Diego; and securities, white collar construction and real estate are popular in Los Angeles.	If an associate has been practicing in good standing in another jurisdiction for more than 4 years, they are eligible to take only the Attorney Exam portion of the CA Bar, which means they don't have to repeat the MultiState Bar Exam. If an associate has been practicing for less than 4 years, they have to take the full CA Bar Exam.	Finance practices are New York-based practices, and those groups prefer to see associates with experience in top New York finance firms. Los Angeles is a litigation town, and most of the legal work is middle market-rate work.
<b>Seattle</b>	Corporate practice areas are the most transferable, especially those with M&A, EC/VC or capital markets experience. General litigation is also transferable.	Lawyers admitted to the practice of law in other states or territories of the U.S. or D.C. are not required to sit for the lawyer bar examination if they present satisfactory proof of admission and current good standing in that jurisdiction, together with proof of active legal experience for at least 3 of the past 5 years immediately preceding the filing of the application. You may also take the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) in any state and transfer a qualifying score (270 or higher) to Washington to use in the admission process, for up to 40 months after the date of the administration of the UBE in which the score was earned.	The Seattle legal market is small in comparison to the larger West Coast markets in SoCal and NorCal. If someone wants to eventually transition to Seattle, it is best to have as broad of a practice as possible. It is also helpful to be open-minded as you may not need to be slightly retool as not all practices exist in the Seattle market. The Seattle market is also one that attorneys need to move quickly on opportunities as there are not many roles that pop up over a year.

## EMEA

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<b>London</b>	M&A and private equity debt finance/banking investment funds project, energy and infrastructure are most sought after.	The SQE (Solicitors Qualifying Examination) was introduced starting in September 2021 to overseas lawyers who wish to qualify as a solicitor in England and Wales. It replaces the QLTS and is also open to domestic candidates who would have previously been required to take the LPC (Legal Practice Course), therefore it is open to candidates from all jurisdictions and not just those recognised by the SRA (Solicitors Regulation Authority). It is worth noting that foreign lawyers may be eligible for exemption from one or more parts of the SQE assessment if they produce a professional qualification that is equivalent to the whole part of that assessment.	Brexit has created more opportunity for visas as it's a point-based system now. Transactional practices travel best. However, salaries are a mixed range here—some mirror the U.S., some do not.

## ASIA-PACIFIC

	Transferable Practice Skills	Licensure Requirements	Things to Know
<b>Australia</b>	Corporate/M&A, capital markets, banking and finance, restructuring and insolvency, TMT/technology, major projects/infrastructure and competition/antitrust are in demand.	There is no bar exam in Australia that foreign lawyers need to take to qualify. Lawyers admitted overseas who want to practise Australian law must apply for admission in the Australian State or Territory in which they intend to practise. The process includes applying for an assessment of qualifications and, in the majority of cases, is followed by additional legal study/practical training at an Australian University or with an Australian legal practice certificate service provider. The new Free Trade Agreement between Australia and the UK will soon allow UK lawyers to practise as foreign lawyers in Australia using their home qualifications and title without the need to requalify.	The Australian legal market is a mature and sophisticated market that is growing in importance on the global stage. Although salaries on offer are, for the most part, lower than those found in the U.S. and London, the lifestyle and better work-life balance on offer are major draws for lawyers looking to transfer their careers to Australia.
<b>Hong Kong</b>	The Hong Kong market is highly specialized in transactional work. Lawyers with capital markets, corporate M&A, funds and finance are in demand. FCPA lawyers with U.S. experience are also well accepted in the market.	Lawyers with commonwealth or U.S. qualifications will be considered.	Chinese language skills are very important. Most of the UK and U.S. firms would consider lawyers with at least 2 years of post-qualification experience. They are also very open to considering candidates coming from the UK, U.S., Australia and Singapore markets.
<b>China</b>	Corporate M&A, FCPA and finance lawyers are in demand.	Lawyers with commonwealth or U.S. qualifications are well regarded with UK firms. The U.S. firms will only consider lawyers with U.S. qualifications.	Getting a foreign permit in mainland China for work lawyers has been a challenge and law firms generally prefer to hire PRC nationals to simplify the process. Due to compliance reasons, international law firms will only hire lawyers with at least 2 years of post-qualification experience.
<b>Singapore</b>	Regional energy and projects have always been important—from traditional O&G to LNG and increasingly power and renewables. Otherwise, general corporate areas (M&A, PE, ECM), funds and finance across a variety of sectors (asset, projects, DCM, restructuring, acquisition), technology (commercial tech and fintech), international arbitration and white collar work are popular.	An England and Wales admission is important to most international firms. In some cases, a U.S. admission (New York or another major U.S. Bar). Singapore Bar for certain areas and certain types of work. Other admissions (India, NZ, Australia) are common in Singapore, but there is a push from firms to obtain an additional qualification in E&W or New York Bar.	Singapore still has a semi-split legal market, with several large domestic firms providing commercial advice under Singapore law and the international firms focused on the cross-border elements governed by other jurisdictions. Singapore is a regional business hub for South East Asia, and most of the international firms here will be doing major deals in geographies outside of Singapore. So, expect to travel regularly. It's a very business friendly environment, and things run very efficiently here, with low taxes and strong remuneration. Commute times low, public transport is very efficient and central rents are a little high. The region is full of exotic destinations to travel to (Bali, Phuket, etc.).