

|taylor root

| In-house legal
and compliance
salary guide
US

Contents

Introduction	 3
Overall key findings	 4
In-house legal Financial services	 5
Key findings	6
Commentary	7
Salary tables	9
In-house compliance Financial services	 10
Key findings	11
Commentary	12
Salary maps	14
Salary tables	16
In-house legal Commerce and industry	 17
Key findings	18
Commentary (tier one locations)	19
Salary tables (tier one locations)	21
Commentary (tier two locations)	22
Salary tables (tier two locations)	24
Get in touch	 25
About Taylor Root	 26
Our specialist recruitment brands	 27

Introduction

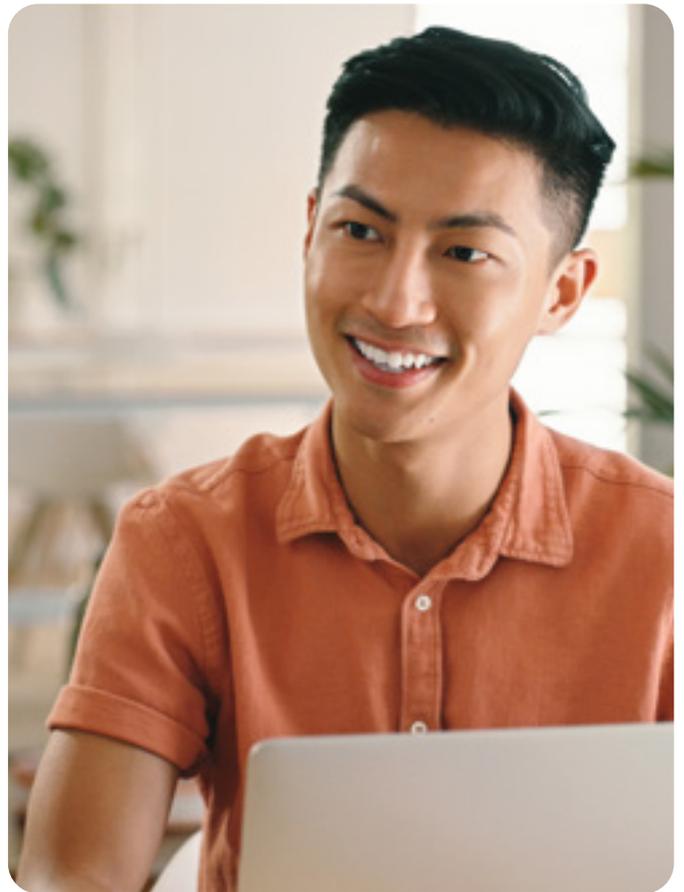
I would like to extend a warm welcome to the first edition of Taylor Root’s US market report and salary guide.

We are incredibly proud to be a part of a global brand, and we are especially proud that our annual global report is referred to by tens of thousands of talented legal and compliance professionals, as such we wanted to replicate its success and bring a wider range of insights specifically to our north American network. This report, exclusively for our US community, is a combination of insights from our internal experts, data from our systems and LinkedIn Talent Insights. It is designed to be a benchmarking tool for business leaders and candidates alike.

The US in-house legal and compliance recruitment market has demonstrated remarkable resilience over the past two years. However, during Q4 2024 we have saw a sharp rise in the number of roles coming to market. This correlates private equity deal activity rebounding in 2024, thus driving a surge in hiring for legal and compliance professionals who can support dealmaking activity.

As a result, we are anticipating that 2025 is going to be a stellar year for the legal and compliance recruitment market. However, businesses looking to hire must be savvy. Post-pandemic, candidates have grown used to flexibility and hybrid working. Many are prepared to take lower salaries to maintain their work/life balance.

Thank you for taking the time to read the US in-house market report and salary guide. We hope you find it insightful. Should you wish to discuss this report in detail, we would be keen to meet and explore how it might be relevant to you personally or your business.



We are especially proud that our annual global report is referred to by tens of thousands of talented legal and compliance professionals.



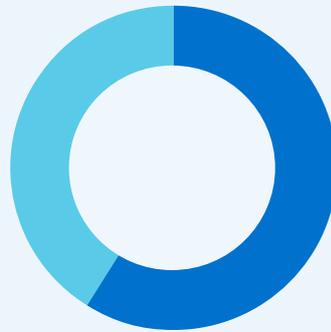
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Overall key findings

There are over 1.9million in-house legal and compliance professionals in the US



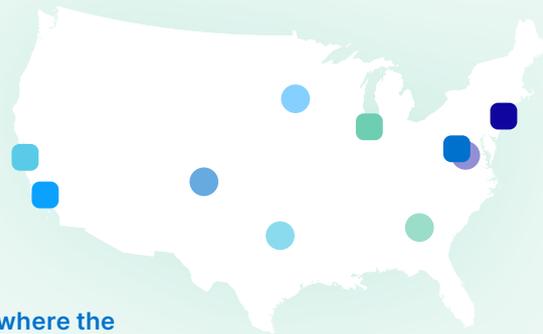
This is a **19%** YoY growth



59% Male
41% Female

Top locations for lawyers and compliance professionals in the US

- 1 New York
- 2 Washington DC
- 3 Los Angeles
- 4 San Fransico
- 5 Chicago



Hidden gem locations where the supply of professionals is high, relative to hiring demand

- 1 Washington
- 2 Denver
- 3 Minneapolis-St Paul
- 4 Dallas
- 5 Atlanta



What are the fastest growing job titles among this talent

- 1 Senior Associate General Counsel
- 2 Deputy General Counsel
- 3 Associate Legal Counsel
- 4 Senior Legal Counsel
- 5 Legal



Top skills possessed by in-house legal professionals

- 1 Legal writing
- 2 Legal services
- 3 Legal assistance
- 4 Regulatory compliance
- 5 Legal research



Fastest growing industries hiring legal talent

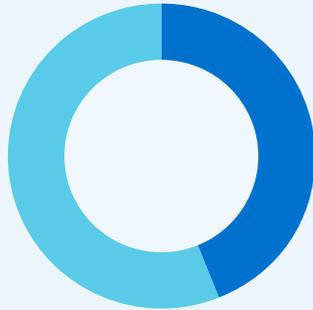
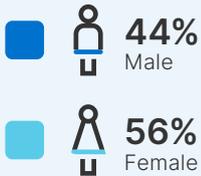
- 1 Defence and space manufacturing – **131% growth**
- 2 Food and beverages services – **102% growth**
- 3 Industrial machinery manufacturing – **90% growth**
- 4 Environmental services – **88% growth**
- 5 Strategic management services – **81% growth**

In-house legal Financial services

The private debt and private equity sectors have been experiencing active hiring. The demand in these areas is primarily driven by the need to manage complex deals and regulatory frameworks, both of which require specialized legal expertise

Financial services key findings

17,000 in-house lawyers working in financial services in the US

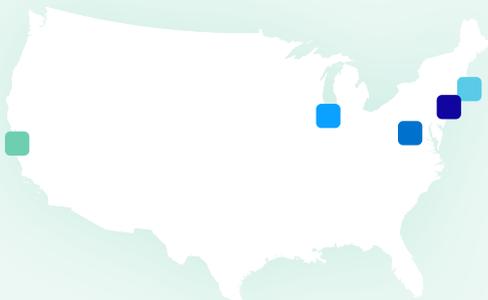


1,500 in-house lawyers changed roles in the past 12 months



Top locations for compliance professionals:

- 1 New York
- 2 Washington D.C
- 3 Chicago
- 4 Boston
- 5 San Francisco



According to hiring managers, the most important skill for compliance professionals is:

- 1 Canadian law, **up 100%**
- 2 Canadian regulatory compliance, **up 80%**
- 3 Global regulatory law, **up 67%**
- 4 Commercial transactions, **up 54%**
- 5 Market regulation, **up 50%**



The most common job titles amongst compliance talent:

- 1 Group Legal Counsel
- 2 Legal Associate
- 3 Chief Legal Counsel
- 4 Head of Legal Affairs
- 5 General Counsel



What are the fastest growing titles among this talent:

- 1 Group Legal Counsel
- 2 Legal Associate
- 3 Chief Legal Counsel
- 4 Head of Legal Affairs
- 5 General Counsel



The industries hiring this talent include:

- Financial services
- Banking
- Investment management
- Insurance
- Capital markets

Financial services commentary

With the everchanging landscape of the financial services legal industry, it is crucial for businesses to stay informed and adapt to trends to stay competitive.

Candidate expectations

As we move through 2025, we note four key trends in the US financial services legal recruitment market which will impact the space.

1. Market misalignment

There is a noticeable misalignment between candidates and clients in the current legal job market. Salary expectations between the two can differ by as much as 15-20%, with candidates expecting higher compensation than what clients are willing to offer

2. Remote working vs. on-site expectations

Many financial services clients are enforcing a five-day in-office work week. However, in-house legal professionals prefer hybrid or remote work models. Interestingly, many candidates would prioritize hybrid working arrangements over higher compensation, highlighting a fundamental gap in workplace expectations that is likely to persist

3. Compensation structures in start-ups

For start-ups and Series B companies, equity plays a significant role in compensation packages. However, while candidates often expect equity from day one, many companies are hesitant to offer equity immediately, opting to do so at a later stage. This misalignment remains a significant hurdle in attracting top talent

4. Benefits in larger companies

There has been little change in the benefits offered by larger companies, which remain standard and generally unmodified. This could be a sticking point as candidates seek more innovative and flexible benefits

Private debt and private equity

The private debt and private equity sectors have been experiencing active hiring. The demand in these areas is primarily driven by the need to manage complex deals and regulatory frameworks, both of which require specialized legal expertise. There is particularly strong interest in mid-level roles where professionals can navigate corporate and regulatory challenges.

Hedge funds

Hedge funds have maintained a steady hiring pace. The role of an in-house lawyer in a hedge fund can be quite dynamic and involves a range of responsibilities, from structuring the fund and negotiating agreements with counterparties to, providing ad hoc advice on proposed investments and ensuring compliance with regulations.

Interim recruitment

Interim roles have gained considerable popularity. Many organizations are opting for interim and fixed-term contract arrangements to manage workloads and legal spend flexibly. This trend is particularly notable in the New York, where interim positions are often seen as a strategic and cost-effective solution.

A focus on retention strategies

Companies are notably focusing on retaining their legal talent to avoid the high costs associated with new hires. Buy backs have seen a rise, and one-time retention bonuses are gaining prominence as effective retention strategies. In some cases, we have seen mid-level employees offered six-figure retention bonuses and 20% salary increases.

Where we are seeing this, we are imploring candidates to pause and think about their initial motivations for seeking a new role: will a raise and bonus resolve the reasons you originally wanted to leave your role?

In summary

As the financial services legal industry navigates through 2025, it is essential for businesses to remain agile and proactive in addressing the evolving trends in recruitment and retention. Market misalignments, especially in salary expectations and work models, highlight the need for a balanced approach between client requirements and candidate preferences.

Start-ups and larger companies must reassess their compensation and benefit structures to attract and retain top talent effectively. The active hiring in private debt, private equity, and hedge funds underscores the growing demand for specialized legal expertise in managing complex deals and regulatory frameworks.

Additionally, the rise of interim recruitment and a strong focus on retention strategies further emphasize the industry's shift towards flexibility and long-term stability. Businesses that adapt to these trends and foster a collaborative and innovative work environment will be well-positioned to thrive in the competitive landscape.

Companies are notably focusing on retaining their legal talent to avoid the high costs associated with new hires.



Salaries | Financial services

Buy side

Tier one cities: New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington DC

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	175,000 - 225,000	20 - 25%
4 - 6 years experience	225,000 - 275,000	30% - 40%
6 - 10 years experience	275,000 - 375,000	40% - 50%
10+ years experience	375,000 - 400,000	50%+
General Counsel	400,000 +	50%+

Sell side

Tier one cities: New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington DC

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	200,000 - 225,000	20 - 25%
4 - 6 years experience	250,000 - 312,500	25% - 35%
6 - 10 years experience	312,500 - 400,000	35% - 45%
10+ years experience	400,000 - 500,000	45% - 50%
General Counsel	437,500 - 625,000	50%+



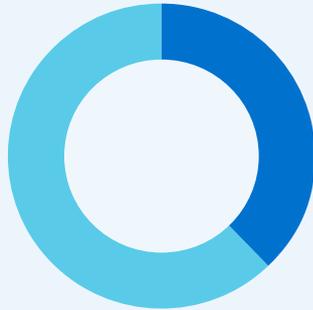
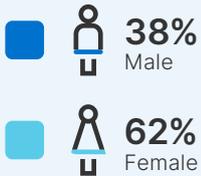
In-house compliance

Financial services

Market conditions for in-house talent remain robust, particularly in regulated industries. Investments in healthcare, technology, telecommunications, and AI have bolstered the market's strength. In-house practice appeals to professionals at all experience levels, leading to fierce competition for these positions.

Compliance key findings

17,000 in-house compliance professionals working in financial services in the US

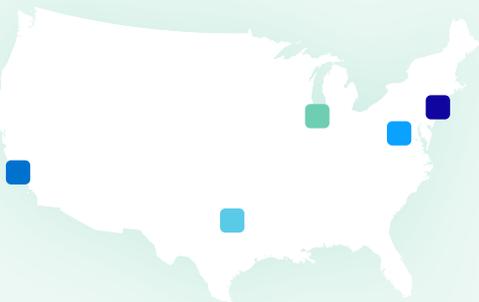


12,000 in-house compliance professionals changed roles in the past 12 months.



Top locations for compliance professionals:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------|
| 1 New York | 4 Dallas |
| 2 Los Angeles | 5 Chicago |
| 3 Washington D.C | |



According to hiring managers, the most important skill for compliance professionals is:

- 1 Internal and external investigations, **up 188%**
- 2 Federal and state regulatory compliance, **up 101%**
- 3 Global regulatory compliance, **up 90%**
- 4 Privacy regulations, **up 61%**
- 5 Regulatory requirements, **up 55%**



The most common job titles amongst compliance talent:

- 1 Compliance Specialist
- 2 Compliance Manager
- 3 Compliance Officer
- 4 Compliance Analyst
- 5 Chief Compliance Officer



What are the fastest growing titles among this talent:

- 1 Compliance Lead
- 2 Corporate Compliance Manager
- 3 Senior Compliance Manager
- 4 Compliance Manager
- 5 Chief Compliance



The industries hiring this talent include:

- Banking
- Financial services
- Private credit/debt
- Investment management
- Insurance

Compliance commentary

After a challenging couple of years, the US financial services sector found its footing in 2024, with deal activity rebounding sharply. A side effect of this means that there has been a significant increase in the number of institutions looking to hire compliance professionals.

Candidate sentiment

With leading firms like BlackRock mandating a full return to office by the end of 2024, employees now find themselves in an evolving environment shaped by new expectations and priorities.

In the face of these sweeping changes, job candidates are vocal about their desire for a balanced work-life routine. Many are willing to accept wage reductions in exchange for hybrid schedules of just three office days per week. As the pandemic heightened awareness of personal well-being, flexibility remains a major draw in the fight for top compliance talent.

Financial services firms are in an aggressive hiring spree, seeking compliance professionals to navigate an intricate web of regulations.

A tough regulatory environment

As the financial services industry aggressively pursues innovation and cost-efficiency, regulators are actively launching new rules to balance growth with governance. And whilst we anticipated a raft of SEC changes in 2024, they did not materialize at the scale expected. However, this does not mean changes are not coming. Key focus areas for regulators include monitoring liquidity and solvency to ensure stability. Meanwhile, there's increasing scrutiny on tech solutions—artificial intelligence included—to deliver value ethically and without bias.

For compliance professionals in the US, this means a booming demand for professionals who can navigate the evolving landscape and ensure adherence to complex regulatory requirements. The need for foresight and strategic planning will be crucial for compliance teams to anticipate and prepare for new

regulations, thus preventing potential risks that could arise from non-compliance. That foresight and ability to adapt will be indispensable in maintaining industry stability and driving progress.

The rise of private credit

In the past few years, we have seen a significant shift towards the emergence of private credit strategy. According to S&P Global, private credit grew tenfold between 2011 and 2021, with this trend set to continue.

In today's fast paced financial landscape, private credit stands out as one of the most interesting areas of growth and innovation. For compliance professionals entrenched in this sector, understanding its trajectory and capitalizing on emerging opportunities is essential.

The United States continues to lead in the advancement of private credit. With a mature market infrastructure and a robust regulatory environment, the US has been able to foster an atmosphere of innovation and expansion in this domain. Major players, including Blackstone and Apollo, have reported significant milestones, evidencing the sector's upward trajectory. According to Business Times, Blackstone's expansion into international territories further underscores the global potential of private credit.

Compliance demands remain robust, with private equity and private credit sectors under sharp focus – prominent players like BlackRock are acquiring HPS Investment Partners, triggering debate on the broader impact of such consolidations.

In summary

The US financial services sector has shown remarkable resilience, finding its stride in 2024, and ushering in a surge of hiring for compliance professionals. This rebound has been accompanied by evolving expectations among job candidates, who now prioritize work-life balance and flexibility, even at the cost of higher wages. Financial services firms are responding to these preferences as they aggressively seek talent to navigate complex regulatory landscapes.

Despite anticipated changes not fully materializing in 2024, regulatory scrutiny remains intense, with a focus on ensuring stability and ethical use of technology. Compliance professionals are in high

demand to anticipate and adapt to upcoming regulations, thereby maintaining industry stability and fostering growth.

The rise of private credit as a significant area of growth further underscores the need for skilled compliance experts. The US leads in this domain, supported by a mature market infrastructure and robust regulatory framework, with major players driving innovation and expansion.

Businesses that understand these trends and proactively manage expectations and regulatory demands will be best positioned to succeed in the dynamic and competitive financial services landscape of 2025.



Legal and compliance salary maps | West Coast

California

Legal Counsel

USD 275,000*

Credit hedge fund
10 billion AUM

Legal Counsel

USD 250,000*

Venture capital fund

Compliance (no JD)

USD 250,000*

Venture capital fund

Compliance Analyst

USD 95,000*

Venture capital fund

Compliance

Associate

USD 140,000*,

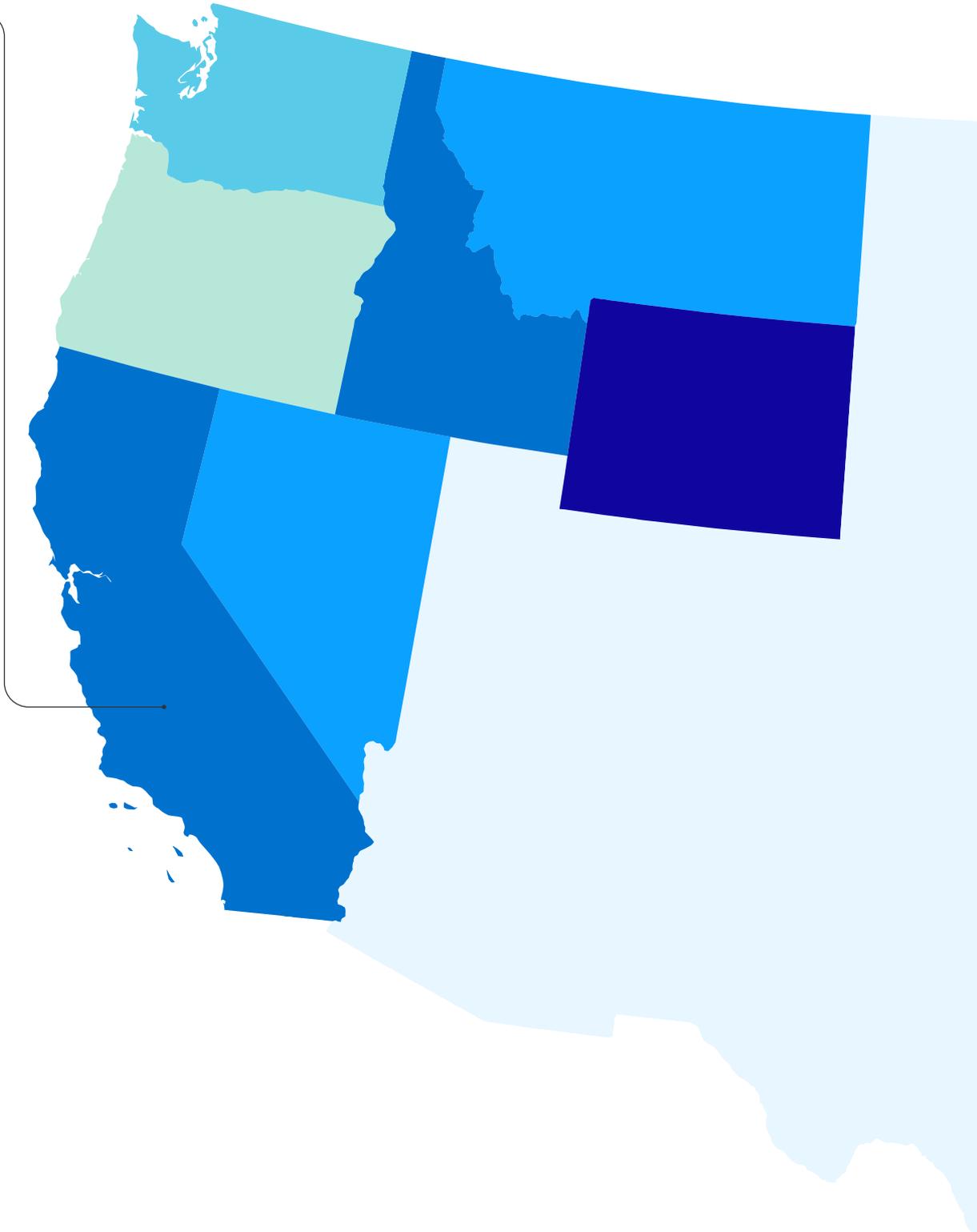
Venture capital

Compliance

Associate

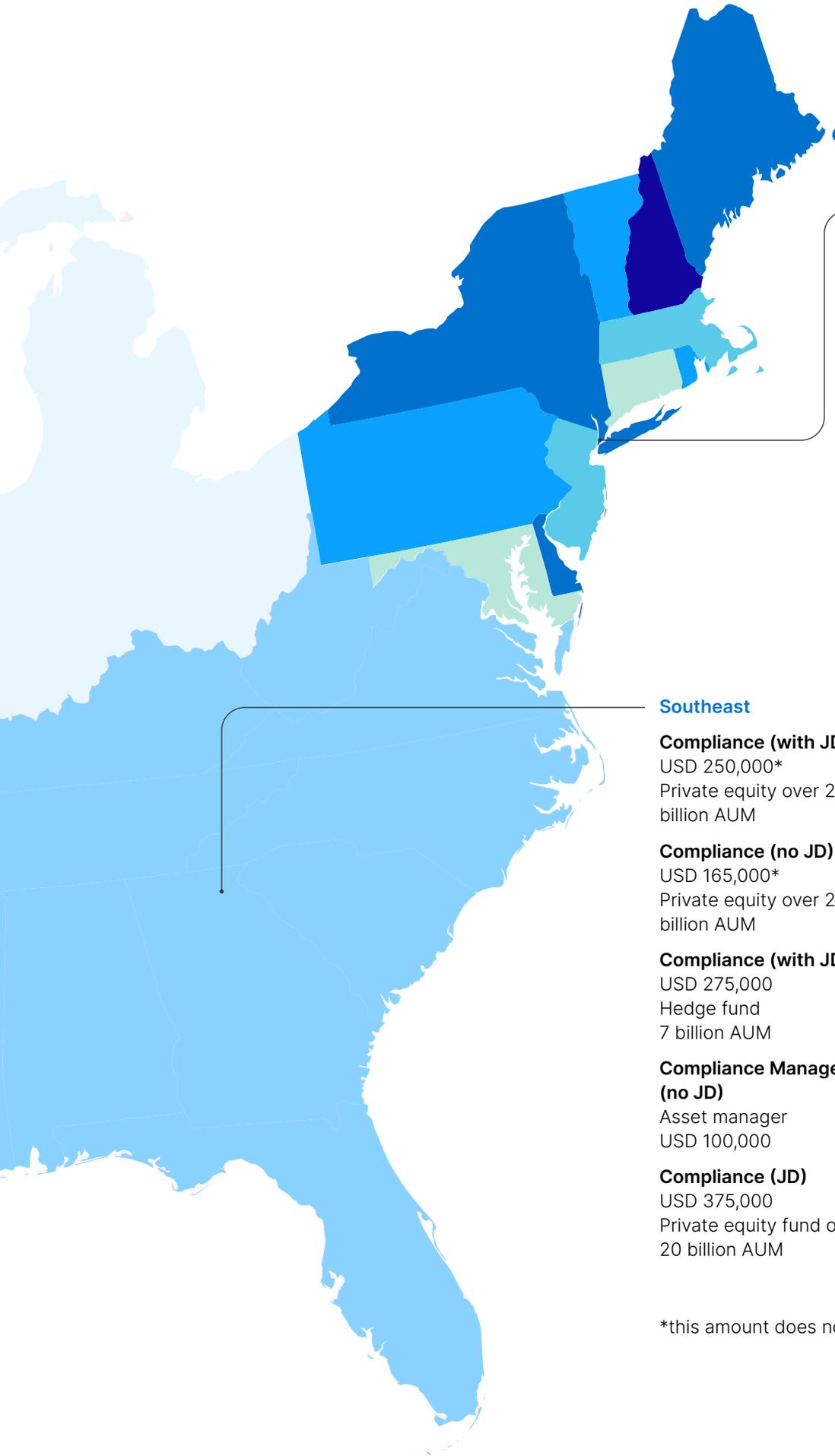
USD 130,000*

Real estate
investment firm



*plus bonus

Legal and compliance salary maps | East Coast



New York City

- Compliance Analyst**
USD 150,000*
Investment manager
- Trading Compliance Officer**
USD 220,000*
Hedge fund
- Senior Compliance/Counsel**
USD 500,000* + equity
Private credit over 50 billion AUM
- Compliance (no JD)**
USD 250,000*
Hedge fund 8 billion AUM

Southeast

- Compliance (with JD)**
USD 250,000*
Private equity over 20 billion AUM
- Compliance (no JD)**
USD 165,000*
Private equity over 20 billion AUM
- Compliance (with JD)**
USD 275,000
Hedge fund
7 billion AUM
- Compliance Manager (no JD)**
Asset manager
USD 100,000
- Compliance (JD)**
USD 375,000
Private equity fund over 20 billion AUM
- Compliance (with JD)**
USD 250,000*
Private equity over 20 billion AUM
- Multi Asset Legal**
USD 450,000
Hedge fund 45 billion
- Legal Counsel**
USD 250,000*
Venture capital fund 20 billion AUM
- Legal Counsel**
USD 725,000
Credit hedge fund
8 billion AUM
- Legal Counsel**
USD 375,000* + equity
Private credit over 50 billion AUM

*this amount does not include bonus

Salaries | Compliance

Tier one cities: New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington DC

Experience level	Salary range (USD)*	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	80,000 - 110,000	10 - 15%
4 - 6 years experience	110,000 - 160,000	15 - 20%
6 - 9 years experience	160,000 - 200,000	20 - 25%
10 - 15 years experience	200,000 - 250,000	25 - 50%
15+ years experience	250,000+	50 - 300%

Tier two cities: Philadelphia, Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Miami and Nashville

Experience level	Salary range (USD)*	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	75,000 -100,000	10 - 15%
4 - 6 years experience	100,000 - 140,000	15 - 20%
6 - 9 years experience	140,000 - 180,000	20 - 25%
10 - 15 years experience	180,000 - 250,000	25 - 50%
15+ years experience	250,000	50 - 300%

* Add 10-30% if hold JD/have a legal function

** Some firms cap base compensation at 250,000

*** Fully remote or remote three or more days a week could result in numbers outside of range.

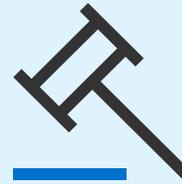
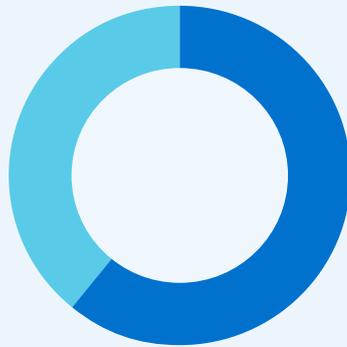
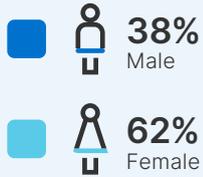
In-house legal

Commerce and industry

Equity remains a vital component of compensation packages for senior candidates, particularly in public versus private sectors and during IPOs. Recent trends show a shift in compensation for remote roles, typically offering lower pay, contributing to a rebalancing in the market.

Commerce and industry key findings

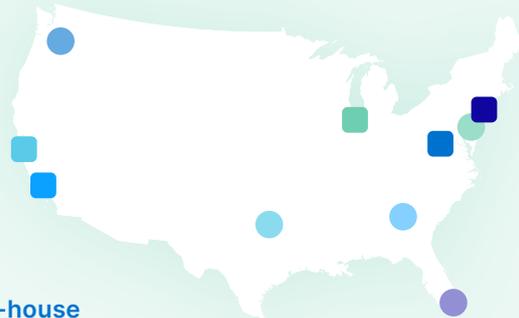
There are over 1 million in-house lawyers working in commercial industries



109,000 in-house lawyers changed roles in the past 12 months.

Top locations for lawyers and compliance professionals in the US:

- 1 New York
- 2 Washington D.C.
- 3 Los Angeles
- 4 San Francisco
- 5 Chicago



Growing locations for in-house legal professionals

- 1 Miami
- 2 Seattle
- 3 Dallas
- 4 Atlanta
- 5 Philadelphia



What are the fastest growing job titles among this talent:

- 1 Senior Associate General Counsel
- 2 Deputy General Counsel
- 3 Associate Legal Counsel
- 4 Senior Legal Counsel
- 5 Legal counsel



The most common job titles amongst in-house legal talent in the U.S:

- 1 General Counsel
- 2 Associate General Counsel
- 3 Assistant General Counsel
- 4 Corporate Lawyer
- 5 Legal Counsel



According to hiring managers, the most important skill for an in-house lawyer is:

- 1 Data and privacy, **up 62%**
- 2 Commercial transactions, **up 54%**
- 3 Intellectual property law, **up 31%**
- 4 Data privacy law, **up 20%**
- 5 Trademark law, **up 17%**



The industries hiring this talent include:

- Software development
- Higher education
- Real estate
- Hospitals and healthcare
- IT services and consulting

Commerce and industry | Tier one cities

2025 has started with a palpable sense of optimism in the legal recruitment market. The primary driver of this is the fact that the overall value of private equity (PE) exits hit \$413.2 billion in 2024, up 50% on 2023.

PE dealmaking is only expected to continue in the US throughout 2025, with the number of assets being held for over five years at record levels.

As a result, investors and their portfolio companies are increasingly seeking experienced legal talent to help these organizations prepare for exits. In this same vein, we have seen a sharp rise in the number of clients engaging with us on pre-IPO searches. Combined with the fact that some analysts predict around 20 unicorns, private companies valued at more than \$1 billion, could go public, 2025 has the potential to be a bumper year.

Candidate expectations

Senior legal candidates in the US have distinct expectations.

At the top of the market, there is a strong alignment between clients and candidates. Long-term incentive plans (LTIPs) are highly valued, with a preference for capital provided by the company. Equity from day one is often sought after incentive for those at the top end of the in-house legal career ladder.

While fully remote options are becoming less popular, a hybrid model with three days in the office remains appealing. There is a trend of candidates on the market seeking new roles, especially those in internal legal departments who need to move to smaller companies for advancement. Passive candidates are looking to step up to the next level, while mid-level professionals are overburdened with work, often handling the responsibilities of multiple people.

The rise of employment lawyers

When it comes to in-house legal roles, businesses are particularly focused on hiring commercial and employment counsels. Commercial counsels are essential for advising on a range of business transactions, ensuring contractual obligations are met, and providing guidance on commercial agreements.

Employment counsels are in high demand due to the increased reporting of workplace incidents, driven by a vocal workforce. They play a crucial role in handling employment disputes, ensuring compliance with labor laws, and fostering a positive workplace environment by working in tandem with human resources departments. Both roles are critical for businesses to navigate the legal complexities of today's market and maintain a secure and compliant operation.

Sectors to watch

Currently, there is a notable trend in the hiring of in-house legal roles across various industries. While the media sector is seeing minimal activity due to significant restructurings, startups and SMEs in the tech industry are actively recruiting, capitalizing on the availability of top talent following the large-scale tech layoffs.

The hospitality sector is also experiencing a resurgence, leading to increased hiring for in-house legal positions. However, we have seen a slow down in the energy and renewables sector, affecting the demand for legal professionals in these industries. Companies in these dynamic sectors continue to seek out experienced legal counsel to navigate the complexities and regulatory requirements that come with their respective fields.

US market report and salary guide

In summary

2025 is poised to be a remarkable year for the legal recruitment market in tier-one cities, driven by the surge in private equity exits and the continued momentum in PE dealmaking. With a high demand for experienced legal talent to support exits and pre-IPO preparations, the market is brimming with opportunities. Senior legal candidates in the US are aligning their expectations with client offerings, particularly valuing long-term incentive plans and equity from the outset.

Despite a preference for hybrid work models, the market remains robust with candidates eager to advance their careers. The rise in demand for commercial and employment counsels highlights the critical need for expertise in business transactions and workplace compliance.

Industries such as tech startups, hospitality, and private equity are actively hiring, while sectors like media and energy face challenges. Companies that adapt to these trends and prioritize innovative and flexible work arrangements will be well-positioned to attract and retain top legal talent, ensuring their success in the dynamic and competitive landscape of 2025.



Commerce and industry salary table

Commerce and industry | retail

Tier one cities: New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington DC

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	140,000 - 200,000	15 - 20%
4 - 6 years experience	170,000 - 220,000	18 - 20%
6 - 10 years experience	200,000 - 250,000	20 - 25%
10+ years experience	200,000 - 300,000	20 - 30%
Head of Legal	230,000 - 300,000	25 - 40%
General Counsel	350,000 - 600,000+	40 - 60%

Commerce and industry | Telecomms, media and technology

Tier one cities: New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington DC

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	140,000 - 200,000	15 - 20%
4 - 6 years experience	170,000 - 220,000	18 - 20%
6 - 10 years experience	200,000 - 250,000	20 - 25%
10+ years experience	200,000 - 300,000	20 - 30%
Head of Legal	230,000 - 300,000	25 - 40%
General Counsel	350,000 - 600,000+	40 - 60%

Commerce and industry | Heavy industries

Tier one cities: New York, San Francisco, Boston, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington DC

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	187,500 - 212,500	10 - 30%
4 - 6 years experience	200,000 - 250,000	30%
6 - 10 years experience	250,000 - 375,000	35%
10+ years experience	312,500 - 437,500	40%
Head of Legal	437,500 - 625,000	100%
General Counsel	350,000 - 600,000+	40 - 60%

Commerce and industry | Tier two locations

We're witnessing a surge in international businesses establishing themselves outside of the core US cities. Although the market was sluggish during 2024, it is gaining pace as we move through 2025. Versus last year, there is a distinct increase in the number of in-house legal opportunities coming to market.

In primary markets, in-house legal roles are highly competitive but attracting and securing top talent in secondary and tertiary markets poses a challenge for companies. Those that adapt to remote and hybrid working conditions, provide growth opportunities, and offer appealing compensation packages, especially equity, are in a favorable position to overcome these challenges.

Market conditions for in-house talent remain robust, particularly in regulated industries. Investments in healthcare, technology, telecommunications, and AI have bolstered the market's strength. In-house practice appeals to professionals at all experience levels, leading to fierce competition for these positions.

Candidate expectations

Equity remains a vital component of compensation packages for senior candidates, particularly in public versus private sectors and during IPOs. Recent trends show a shift in compensation for remote roles, typically offering lower pay, contributing to a rebalancing in the market.

As hybrid working becomes standard practice, there's a noticeable expectation for a regular office presence. While corporate and investment sectors adhere to set hybrid working days, this approach isn't drastically different from previous years. Employees who previously worked fully remotely, are now seeking more in-person interactions. Most clients are content with the hybrid model and will reap the benefits. However, where clients are requiring people to be in the office full-time, they are struggling to hire, especially if they are based

in a small or more remote locations. These clients need to adopt more flexible working arrangements and manage expectations accordingly

What are hiring managers looking for?

We have seen a significant influx of candidates transitioning from Big Law at the 4–8 year associate level, to in-house. There is consistent interest in candidates with strong law school backgrounds and experience in Big Law environments. There is also a substantial demand for individuals with M&A, private equity, and data IP privacy backgrounds, especially as numerous deals that were previously delayed are now moving forward. Additionally, candidates with expertise in legal technology companies are highly sought after within the industry.

What businesses are hiring legal professionals?

In the tier two locations, there are several key areas hiring at pace. These include:

TMT (Technology, media, telecommunications)

The TMT industry is rapidly evolving with technological advancements and regulatory changes. Legal professionals are crucial in addressing issues related to intellectual property, data privacy, cybersecurity, and telecommunications regulations. Legal expertise helps companies navigate these complexities, protect their assets, and avoid legal disputes.

AI

Artificial intelligence is transforming the legal landscape by improving efficiency, accuracy, and compliance. Legal professionals are essential for guiding the ethical use of AI, ensuring compliance with regulations, and mitigating risks. They help companies integrate AI responsibly while safeguarding against potential legal pitfalls.

Start-ups/SMEs

Start-ups and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) often make their first or second legal hires as they grow. Legal professionals help establish the foundation for business operations, from incorporation to handling intellectual property and regulatory compliance⁸. Their expertise is essential for navigating the legal landscape and supporting business growth.

Real estate

The real estate sector is consistently active, requiring legal expertise to handle transactions, leases, zoning laws, and property disputes. Legal professionals ensure that real estate deals are executed smoothly, contracts are upheld, and regulatory requirements are met, making them indispensable in this busy industry.

Tech/software

The tech and software industry are expanding rapidly, with legal professionals needed to manage intellectual property rights, licensing agreements, and data protection. They provide guidance on tech-related laws and policies, helping companies innovate while staying compliant with legal standards.

In summary

2025 is showing a promising rebound for in-house legal opportunities in tier two locations. With an increasing number of international businesses establishing themselves outside core US cities, companies need to adapt to the evolving market dynamics. Embracing remote and hybrid work models, offering growth opportunities, and providing appealing compensation packages, particularly with equity incentives, will be crucial in attracting and retaining top talent.

The market for in-house talent remains strong, especially in regulated industries such as healthcare, technology, telecommunications, and AI, bolstered by significant investments. Candidate expectations are shifting towards hybrid work environments, with a need for regular office presence becoming more prevalent.

Hiring managers are particularly interested in candidates transitioning from Big Law, especially those with experience in M&A, private equity, and data IP privacy. The demand for legal professionals in dynamic sectors like TMT, AI, real estate, tech/software, and start-ups/SMEs is on the rise, highlighting the critical role of legal expertise in navigating complex regulatory landscapes.

Ultimately, companies that adapt to these trends and manage expectations effectively will be well-positioned to thrive in the competitive and evolving market of 2025.

Commerce and industry salary table

Commerce and industry | Retail

Tier two cities: Philadelphia, Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Tampa and Nashville

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	120,000 - 140,000	10 - 20%
4 - 6 years experience	140,000 - 180,000	20 - 30%
6 - 10 years experience	170,000 - 220,000	25 - 30%
10+ years experience	200,000 - 300,000	25 - 40%
General Counsel	300,000 - 500,000+	30%+

Commerce and industry | Telecomms, media and technology

Tier two cities: Philadelphia, Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Tampa and Nashville

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	130,000 - 160,000	10 - 20%
4 - 6 years experience	150,000 - 180,000	20 - 30%
6 - 10 years experience	180,000 - 250,000	25 - 40%
10+ years experience	200,000 - 350,000	30 - 50%
General Counsel	250,000 - 500,000+	35%+

Commerce and industry | Heavy industries

Tier two cities: Philadelphia, Atlanta, Austin, Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Tampa and Nashville

Experience level	Salary range (USD)	Bonus range
0 - 3 years experience	150,000 - 170,000	10 - 20%
4 - 6 years experience	160,000 - 200,000	20 - 30%
6 - 10 years experience	200,000 - 300,000	25 - 40%
10+ years experience	250,000 - 350,000	30 - 50%
General Counsel	350,000 - 500,000+	35%+

Get in touch

For more information on the legal hiring market or to discuss a potential new role, please get in touch with our in-house legal recruitment team.

Contact a consultant

Request a call back



About Taylor Root

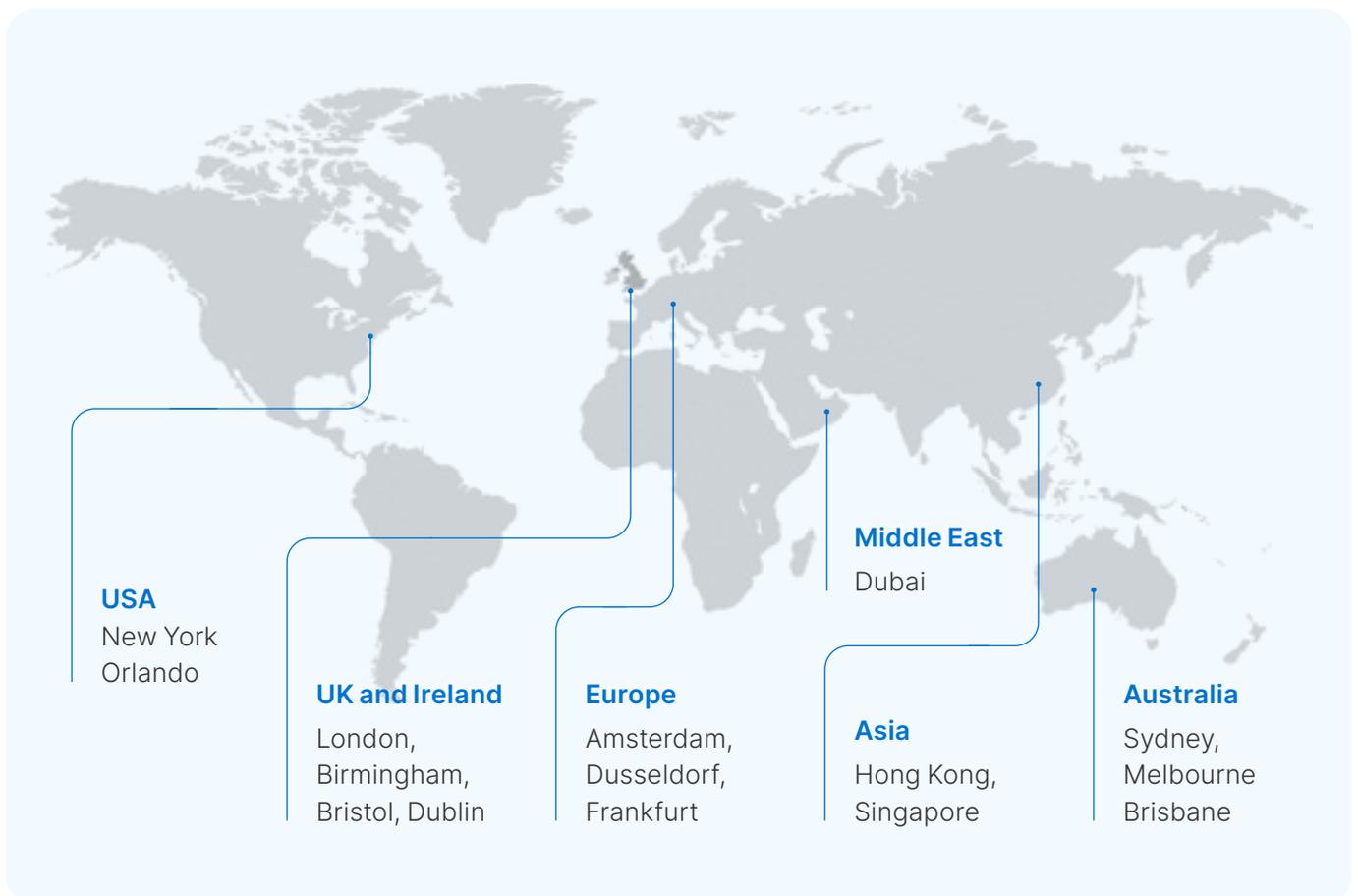
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	<p>Carter Murray is a global search and recruitment consultancy dedicated to marketing and sales.</p> <p>cartermurray.com</p>	<p>Through deep expertise within our markets, we're consistently able to fulfil even the most complex briefs and match the best specialist to every role.</p>
	<p>Frazer Jones is a global HR executive search and recruitment consultancy.</p> <p>frazerjones.com</p>	<p>We help HR professionals thrive and empower HR leaders to put people and culture at the heart of their business – creating a more progressive future, for everyone.</p>
	<p>Keller West is a global IT specialist search and recruitment consultancy.</p> <p>kellerwest.com</p>	<p>We partner with employers to find transformative IT talent that will shape the future of their business.</p>
	<p>Taylor Root is a global legal, risk and compliance search and recruitment consultancy.</p> <p>taylorroot.com</p>	<p>Forming lasting partnerships with our clients and candidates, we are constantly evolving and continue to shape the world's legal, risk and compliance markets.</p>

