



AI Says AI Will Replace Paralegals - But Here's Why Experts Say NO

The buzz about AI paralegals taking over the legal world is everywhere, but the reality is far more nuanced. We'll break down why these predictions miss the mark, what paralegals actually do that AI can't, and how to thrive in an AI-enhanced legal landscape.

When AI Gets It Wrong

Picture this: You're a paralegal, scrolling through your morning coffee break, when you stumble across a headline that makes your heart skip a beat – “Will AI Replace Paralegals?” Predictions are everywhere, with paralegals landing at #5 on a recent “jobs to be eliminated” list.

Before you start updating your resume, take a deep breath. Brett Burney from Nextpoint and Doug Austin from eDiscovery Today recently tackled this scenario in their Key Discovery Points video series. While AI is changing the way we work, both Brett and Doug agree that the human expertise that paralegals provide will always play a crucial role in the legal process. Read on to learn more and hear their thoughts.

The analysis in question came from someone using “Deep Research” (a ChatGPT tool) to identify jobs most likely to be replaced by artificial intelligence. Tax preparers topped the list, followed by data entry clerks, telemarketers, bookkeepers – and then paralegals landed at number five.

The AI's reasoning for why paralegals are supposedly doomed? It claimed that “GPT-style AI can research case law and draft routine filings much faster than humans, handling many paralegal tasks with ease.”

Read the full article here: <https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/ai-says-ai-will-replace-paralegals-but-1658513/>



Paralegal checklists are essential tools for ensuring consistency, efficiency, and accuracy in legal case management, particularly for tasks like client intake, evidence gathering, and court filings. Key components include tracking statutes of limitations, organizing medical records, managing discovery, and preparing for trials.

Check out this book:
The Checklist Manifesto How to Get Things Right by Atul Gawande

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Calendar of Events for 2026

EVENT	DATE & LOCATION
10:00 am Ethics CLE 11:00 am Annual Meeting 12:00 pm Lunch (Provided by the Division) 1:00 pm Board Meeting	Saturday, January 10, 2026 State Bar of New Mexico
12:00 Lunch & Learn Kinship Guardian – Holly Healy	Wednesday, February 11, 2026 Via Zoom
12:00 Lunch & Learn Foreclosure–United South Broadway Corporation	Wednesday, March 11, 2026 Via Zoom
11:00 am Board Meeting 12:30 pm Lunch (provided by the Division)	Saturday, April 4, 2026 State Bar of New Mexico
12:00 Lunch & Learn Fast Case – TJ Diggins/Lisa Smith-Crissey	Wednesday, April 8, 2026 Via Zoom
Law Day CLE 9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Saturday, May 2, 2026 Family Law State Bar of New Mexico
12:00 Lunch & Learn Tribal Law – Casey Martinez	Wednesday, July 8, 2026 Via Zoom
11:00 am Board Meeting 12:30 pm Lunch (provided by the Division)	Saturday, July 11, 2026 State Bar of New Mexico
State Bar Annual Meeting	August 13, 2026 – August 15, 2026
Paralegal Day	August 26, 2026
Paralegal Day Lunch 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Saturday, August 29, 2026 TBD
12:00 pm Lunch & Learn RIO Reentry for Criminal Reintegration Angelica Hall	Wednesday, September 9, 2026 Via Zoom
11:00 am Board Meeting 12:30 pm Lunch (provided by the Division)	Saturday, September 12, 2026 State Bar of New Mexico
12:00 Lunch & Learn National Disaster Litigation –Antonia Roybal-Mack	Wednesday, October 14, 2026 Via Zoom
Paralegal Institute End of Life Planning	Saturday November 14, 2026 State Bar of New Mexico/Zoom
10:00 am Ethics CLE 11:00 am Annual Meeting 12:00 pm Lunch (Provided by the Division) 1:00 pm Board Meeting	Saturday, January 9, 2027 State Bar of New Mexico

Personal Development and Growth

11 Tips to Crush Your Goals as a Paralegal and Grow in Your Career

Published February 04, 2022

<https://www.proofserve.com/learn/paralegal-productivity/tips-to-crush-your-goals-as-a-paralegal-and-grow-in-your-career>



Being a paralegal means you have a lot of responsibility. You have to know how the legal system works, the specifics of every case, and how to make the impossible possible. While you serve your firm and clients, you also have to serve yourself and consider your career goals.

To ensure you stay on the track toward advancement in a [service of process](#) field, we've curated 11 tips to help you reach your goals.

1. Commit to continuous learning.

No matter where you are in your career, you can always learn new things and develop new skills. By embracing a growth mindset, it's possible to become more effective in your role, which can lead to advancement in your paralegal career.

There are several ways you can foster continuous learning. You can finish or begin a new degree program. You can also choose to focus on specific training that can help you transition to a new legal specialty. The National Association for Legal Support Professionals (NALs) offers [specialty certifications](#) for paralegals in 21 areas. Those include bankruptcy, business, civil litigation, employment law, family law, and more.

The National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) offers a broad portfolio of educational classes, including [leadership development](#). These resources and targeting prepare paralegals for managing teams.

By pursuing these types of learning, you make yourself more valuable to your organization and enrich your skills for the future.

2. Learn about legal tech.

Technology is critical to every industry, and its adoption in the legal field is accelerating. These tools help paralegals be more productive, streamline workflows, and automate manual tasks. With the right tools in place, it's possible to work smarter, not harder.

There's a wide range of legal tech, from e-discovery software to practice management to activity-specific platforms such as Proof. To hone your legal tech skills, you can earn a [certificate in legal technology](#) from the National Society for Legal Technology (NSLT). They also have a specific class on [eDiscovery technology](#). Other ways to become proficient in legal tech are trainings the software company provides and courses through universities and community colleges.

We built Proof to help paralegals [serve legal documents nationwide as efficiently](#) as possible. With Proof, you can reclaim all the time you previously spent searching for process servers and put it toward accomplishing more in your day.

3. Become a more effective communicator.

Communication skills are critical when it comes to a successful legal career. By improving your written and verbal communication skills, you can become a [more effective paralegal](#).

You communicate in many ways to various stakeholders. From official letters to status updates with clients, each type of communication is unique. When you work to strengthen your communication skills, you can identify areas of weakness and work toward conveying messages in the right tone and manner.

Becoming a better communicator requires developing skills. Through NALA, you can take a free class on communication. There are other specialty classes, as well. Pryor Learning has specific classes on [email and memo writing](#) and [proofing](#).

Consider the edX self-paced [Communication Skills and Teamwork](#) class. The University of Michigan Law offers a course through Coursera on [Writing and Editing: Word Choice and Word Order](#).

Remember, practice makes perfect. Next time you find yourself in a tricky conversation, try to put yourself in your counterpart's shoes and see things from their perspective.

4. Visualize your dream job.

If there were no limitations or barriers, what would your ideal job be? Visualizing what it would look like is the first step to developing a career path. Once you have determined this, you can chart the course to get there. That will include skill sets, experience, and education you need. If you know where you want to go, planning for the future isn't so overwhelming.

5. Don't be afraid to say 'yes.'

Whenever someone asks for help—whether it's a superior, a colleague, or even a direct report—don't be afraid to say "yes" as often as possible, assuming you have the bandwidth and expertise to offer the support. Often, we hold ourselves back from saying "yes" because of worries about stepping on toes or not having all the answers.

If someone asks you for help, they genuinely believe you can offer it. So, believe in yourself too. Being a resource to others can increase the chances of recognition for your efforts. It will also enhance your confidence.

6. Show up on time.

Here's an easy way to impress that doesn't require money or hours of work: Show up on time. This simple act demonstrates your dedication and work ethic. All other things being equal, would you rather work with someone who's always there on time or someone who's late to meetings and appointments? Most are going to answer the former.

Being on time isn't just about not wasting other people's time. The legal field is time-sensitive and full of deadlines. If you're punctual and prepared for every meeting, it further demonstrates your reliability.

7. Develop better organizational skills.

Being organized isn't just for the Marie Kondos of the world. It's a key attribute that most successful people have. It's also not as simple as having a neat desk. Organizational skills help you manage your mind and everything else. Learning to be more organized starts with developing ways to keep things easy to access. Even if you're prone to misplace things, you can employ digital tools, such as project management software, to make it easier. The better organized you become, the more efficient you'll be.

8. Join a paralegal network.

[Another tip](#) for advancing your career is to network with your peers. Joining a paralegal organization is an excellent way to do this. The [National Federation of Paralegal Associations](#) (NFPA) and the [National Association of Legal Assistants](#) (NALA) are two organizations to consider.

By joining these groups, you'll hear new ideas, have access to educational opportunities, and stay abreast of the latest legal tech tools that can save you time.

Additionally, you'll be able to build your personal network. Someone you meet through an organization could help you land your dream job in the future.

9. Consider starting your own business.

If you love your job and are ready to expand your opportunities, starting your own business could be your next move. Your skills are in high demand, so organizations and firms are looking for freelance paralegals.

You can begin by taking on a few extra hours a week. Over time, you might discover you can build a successful freelance business that eventually becomes your own business and a full-time job!

10. Hold yourself accountable.

You are responsible for setting and reaching your career goals at the end of the day.

Establish a game plan for yourself, create goals, set dates for accomplishing these goals, and overall, make yourself and your career a priority.

If you dedicate the same amount of effort to accomplishing your goals as you do to your job every day, you'll surely set yourself up for success.

11. Stay updated on trends, law changes, legal tech, and more.

The legal field is dynamic. There are always changes to laws, trends on the horizon, and innovation around technology. If you want to accelerate your career goals, you'll need to stay current on what's happening.

Make it a habit to read industry publications. That can include content that's just for paralegals or about the wider legal industry. There are also practice-specific resources that can provide more information. Consider subscribing to these blogs and publications:

[Lawyerist](#)

[The Paralegal Society](#)

[Paralegal Associates](#)

[ABA Journal](#)

[The Legal Intelligencer](#)

[JD Supra](#)

[The Estrin Report](#)

[The Researching Paralegal](#)

Pro Bono events

The Paralegal Division provides opportunities for you, our members, to volunteer at various pro bono events sponsored by the State Bar and other programs throughout the state. Sponsors of these events rely on our members to provide paralegal services to attorney volunteers. Volunteering is a great way to give back to the community and earn CLE credits at the same time. Volunteers can earn up to 5 hours of CLE credit per year by volunteering with Pro Bono Committee Events. The Pro Bono Committee will email volunteer opportunities to Division members.

Upcoming events:

Albuquerque Law-La-Palooza

Sponsored by the Volunteer Attorney Program of New Mexico Legal Aid and the Second Judicial District Pro Bono Committee

Friday March 13, 2026

Henry “Kiki” Saavedra Community Center

201 Prosperity Ave SE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Family Law

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Divorce Custody Visitation Child Support

Spousal Support Parentage

Kinship Guardianship

Civil Law

1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Landlord/Tenant Creditor/Debtor Wills/Probate

Powers of Attorney

Employment

Contracts

Help is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Bilingual attorneys and staff will be available.

For additional information or to request an ASL interpreter, please call 1-877-266-9861 or email legalclinics@nmlegalaid.org

****Help is contingent on volunteer attorney availability and area of practice.**

Financial eligibility criteria apply. Fairs are for persons with household income at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level who meet our asset limits.**



The Young Lawyers Division is seeking 18 volunteer attorneys for its Wills for Heroes event for Chaves County first-responders on:

March 21

8:30 a.m. (MT)

Roswell Fire Department - Fire Station 1

200 S. Richardson Ave.

Roswell, N.M. 88201

Committee Spotlight— Kimberly Zufelt

1. Tell us a little about yourself, including, what you enjoy when you are not working, or volunteering.
I enjoy reading and watching movies. My goal is to have one weekend day where I have nothing scheduled and don't leave the house so I can recharge for the week.
2. Tell us about your job.
I currently work in family law. I love the people I work with and firm is awesome. They really take care of their employees. The work can be challenging as it is so emotionally driven and it can be difficult to detach from that. I honestly find it more difficult than criminal law!
3. What made you decide to become a Paralegal? What do you enjoy about it and what don't you enjoy?
I was told once that my personality would fit well in a supporting role to a professional such as a doctor or lawyer. So, I did some time as a veterinary technician to satisfy my curiosity about medicine, and when I was ready for an office job, I transferred to a lawyer to satisfy my curiosity about the law!

I love everything about the law and have a never-ending need to know more. I have worked in several areas and have really enjoyed learning all the different aspects of each category.
4. What made you decide to specialize in Family Law?
I'm not sure I ever decided to specialize in any kind of law. I'm happy to learn it all. Family law can be challenging for me as there are so many different types of cases that are included under that umbrella. I do love a challenge and I'm slowly adjusting to the colorful array of needs each area requires.
5. How long have you been a member of the Paralegal Division? Why did you join?
I began in the paralegal division in 2023. I joined for two reasons. One is networking. Being a paralegal is my chosen career and I think it's important to have as many contacts as possible. It is always helpful to have someone to go to when you have questions, especially if they are in a different area of law.

Second, I wanted to be able to tell people "Oh, I'm a member of the State Bar" in that superior tone, as if I were the same as an attorney. LOL. I like to pretend I'm impressive.
6. Explain to our members the purpose of the Continuing Legal Education Coordination subcommittee.
CLEs are so much more than a requirement we must meet. There is so much information out there that we don't have access to or know where we can look for it. Knowledge is something we should all strive for, and I feel like the division is like-minded considering the education we prize so highly. We can learn from everything. Many times, in the law, we do have clients that will spill into different areas with different cases and sometimes we can gain that additional knowledge from a CLE and have answers for them, or advice on where they can go to get help they need.

Continued on next page.

7. What do you think the Division could do to better inform the legal community about the use of paralegals?
I think the best way to do that is make sure everyone you meet knows that you are a member of the division. When people see your superior work to those that do not qualify for membership, it is obvious how much the community can benefit from encouraging their staff to be members.

8. How do you stay organized with a large, high-volume caseload?
I'm lucky that organization is my greatest skill in life. I am obsessed with office supplies and calendars. The two things that help me most are my calendars, one through our management software, and one physical book I fill out myself. I use a different color for each type of entry (hearings, deadlines, meetings, etc.) and I paper the whole thing with stickers.

Second, I just found a recording device that will make a transcript of the audio. I started using it when I do case reviews with my attorneys to ensure I don't miss anything, and I can easily read back through it and check off what I've done. It is amazing!

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR - ELLICE GOLDSTEIN



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Richard Spinello
Executive Director,
State Bar of New Mexico

February 11, 2026

Dear Members:

My name is Ellice Goldstein, and I am the Chair of the Paralegal Division for 2026. I am excited to share with you the schedule of events for the year and all the benefits the Division has to offer. The Division is an excellent place to network and grow professionally through volunteer opportunities. I would like to remind our members that the Division is dependent on volunteers. We have several committees that are in need of Committee Chairs and members. Volunteering for a Committee is a great way to introduce yourself to how the Division works without the full commitment of chairing a committee. To volunteer for a committee please visit the website: <https://www.sbnm.org/Leadership/Divisions/Paralegal/Member-Resources> and click on Committee Sign-up at the bottom of the page.

We have a full year of Division provided Continuing Legal Education ("CLE's") for our members offered free of charge. The Lunch and Learn calendar is available on the website <https://www.sbnm.org/Leadership/Divisions/Paralegal/CLE-Resources> with a link to register. This year the Division is offering all the CLE's remotely via Zoom. The Division will again offer Law Day and Paralegal Institute free of charge for the members. The full calendar of events is also posted to the website <https://www.sbnm.org/Leadership/Divisions/Paralegal/News-Calendar> listing all upcoming Board meetings and Division events.

Finally, I am honored to serve as the Chair of the Paralegal Division and want to share some things I am working on to benefit the members. I am looking into innovative ways to allow the members from across the State to connect with each other, ask questions and network. Please watch your email for future announcements.

I encourage everyone to get involved in the Division, volunteer for the numerous Pro Bono opportunities and attend the CLE's provided by the Division.

If you have any suggestions, comments or questions, please contact me or the Division at pd@nmbar.org

Ellice Goldstein

Ellice Goldstein
Paralegal Division Chair, 2026