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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
FOR THE COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO

ALEXANDER GONZALES, individually,
SERGIO MAGALLANES, individually, JOSE
FELIX JR., individually, ENRIQUE SANCHEZ
PUENTES, individually, and on behalf of all
others similarly situated, the State of California,
and other aggrieved persons,

Plaintiffs,

v.

WATTS WATER TECHNOLOGIES, INC., a
California corporation; WATTS REGULATOR
CO., a corporation; and DOES 1 through 10,
inclusive,

Defendants.

Case No.: 24CV017389

*[Assigned for All Purposes to the Honorable
Jill H. Talley, Dept. 8A]*

**DECLARATION OF BENJAMIN H.
HABER IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS'
NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION
FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS
ACTION AND PAGA SETTLEMENT**

Final Approval Hearing:

Date: October 23, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Dept.: 8A

Complaint filed: August 30, 2024

Trial date: Not Set

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1. I am an attorney at law licensed to practice before all of the courts of the State of California. I am a Partner at Wilshire Law Firm, PLC (“WLF” or “Class Counsel”), counsel of record for Plaintiffs Alexander Gonzales, Jose Felix Jr., Enrique Sanchez Puentes, and Sergio Magallanes (collectively, the “Plaintiffs”). I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this declaration and could and would competently testify to them under oath if called as a witness.

3. Plaintiffs are represented by WLF. The attorneys at WLF performed significant work and expended litigation costs in prosecuting this matter with no guarantee of payment.

5. WLF is qualified to handle this Litigation because its attorneys are experienced in litigating Labor Code violations in individual, class action, and representative action cases. WLF has handled, and is currently handling, numerous wage and hour class action lawsuits, as well as class actions involving consumer rights and data privacy litigation.

6. I am a Partner at WLF. I graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles, in 2012 and received my Juris Doctor from the University of California, Hastings College of the Law (now the University of California College of Law, San Francisco) in 2016. During law school, I was a member of the executive board for the *Hastings Law Journal*; a student mediator at the San Francisco Superior Court, Small Claims Division; and a managing editor for *SCOCAblog*, which continues to be a leading online publication for analysis regarding trends and cases before the California Supreme Court. Since graduating from law school, I have focused my legal work primarily on wage-and-hour class and representative action litigation and have helped obtain more

1 than one hundred class and representative action settlements on behalf of tens of thousands of
2 workers in California. I was also selected as a “Southern California Rising Star” in 2024, 2025,
3 and 2026.

4 7. I have been appointed as class counsel in numerous wage-and-hour class and
5 representative action cases throughout California. Below is a non-exhaustive list of cases where I
6 was appointed as class counsel or I and other members of WLF were appointed as class counsel:

- 7 a. *Colter v. Propulsion Controls Engineering*, San Diego County, Case No. 37-2020-
8 00030682-CU-OE-CTL; Motion for Final Approval granted on October 28, 2022.
- 9 b. *Rodriguez v. Modesto Restaurant Group, LLC*, Stanislaus County, Case No. CV-21-
10 000269; Motion for Final Approval granted on January 10, 2023.
- 11 c. *Kingsbury v. Caravan Foods II, Inc.*, Alameda County, Case No. RG21096357;
12 Motion for Final Approval granted on January 31, 2023.
- 13 d. *Frias-Estrada v. Trek Retail Corporation*, Contra Costa County, Case No. MSC20-
14 01916; Motion for Final Approval granted on March 3, 2023.
- 15 e. *Varez v. Valley Connection, LLC dba Carl's Jr.*, Merced County, Case No. 22CV-
16 00985; Motion for Final Approval granted on April 27, 2023.
- 17 f. *Reyes v. Everytable, PBC, et al.*, Los Angeles County, Case No. 21STCV35987;
18 Motion for Final Approval granted on May 3, 2023.
- 19 g. *Ortiz v. Tara Materials, Inc.*, San Diego County, Case No. 37-2021-0001473-CU-
20 OE-CTL; Motion for Final Approval granted on May 30, 2023.
- 21 h. *Cruz-Sanchez v. Eagle Lath & Plaster, Inc.*, Sacramento County, Case No. 34-2021-
22 00293739-CU-OE-GDS; Motion for Final Approval granted on May 30, 2023.
- 23 i. *Garduno v. New Generation Framing, Inc., et al.*, Stanislaus County, Case No. CV-
24 21-000544; Motion for Final Approval granted on August 11, 2023.
- 25 j. *Hernandez, et al. v. Burford Farming Company, Inc.*, Fresno County, Case No.
26 21CECG03817; Motion for Final Approval granted on August 21, 2023.
- 27 k. *Barajas v. Final Phase Construction, Inc.*, San Bernardino County, Case No.
28 CIVSB2118622; Motion for Final Approval granted on September 13, 2023.

1. *Jaimes, et al. v. Infiniti Health LLC*, Los Angeles County, Case No. 22STCV07261; Motion for Final Approval granted on October 17, 2023.
- m. *Nunez v. Gabriel Container*, Los Angeles County, Case No. 21STCV09787; Motion for Final Approval granted on November 2, 2023.
- n. *Gutierrez v. Next Level Door & Millwork, Inc.*, Riverside County, Case No. CVRI2105455; Motion for Final Approval granted on January 11, 2024.
- o. *Lupercio v. Western CNC, Inc.*, San Diego County, Case No. 37-2021-00010314-CU-OE-CTL; Motion for Final Approval granted on January 26, 2024.
- p. *Jackson, et al. v. Apple Valley Communications, Inc., et al.*, San Bernardino County, Case No. CIVSB2124721; Motion for Final Approval granted on February 1, 2024.
- q. *Cuadras, et al. v. Guinn Corporation*, Kern County, Case No. BCV-21-101520; Motion for Final Approval granted on February 22, 2024.
- r. *Canton, et al v. John B. Sanfilippo & Sons, Inc.*, Merced County, Case No. 22-CV-01145; Motion for Final Approval granted on March 15, 2024.
- s. *Williams v. Total Longterm Care, Inc., et al.*, San Bernardino County, Case No. CIVSB2213347; Motion for Final Approval granted on April 2, 2024.
- t. *Espinoza v. Delallo's Italian Foods, Inc.*, Butte County, Case No. 21CV02640; Motion for Final Approval granted on April 24, 2024.
- u. *Meza v. Argus Management Company, LLC, et al.*, Los Angeles County, Case No. 21STCV31612; Motion for Final Approval granted on May 20, 2024.
- v. *Wade v. Mallory Safety and Supply LLC*, Siskiyou County, Case No. 23CV00951; Motion for Final Approval granted on July 11, 2024.
- w. *Abarca-Rueda, et al. v. Foley Family Wines, Inc., et al.*, Sonoma County, Case No. S-CV-268148; Motion for Final Approval granted on August 21, 2024.
- x. *Aguilar v. American Pasteurization Company, Inc., et al.*, Sacramento County, Case No. 34-2021-00312027-CU-OE-GDS; Motion for Final Approval granted on September 3, 2024.
- y. *Hayes, et al. v. Gonzales Park, LLC, et al.*, Butte County, Case No. 21CV02456;

1 Motion for Final Approval granted on May 1, 2024.

2 z. *Hernandez v. KW California, et al.*, Kern County, Case No. BCV-23-100346;

3 Motion for Final Approval Granted on December 4, 2024.

4 aa. *Arias v. The Shyft Group GTB, LLC, et al.*, Los Angeles County, Case

5 No.22STCV37390; Motion for Final Approval granted on December 3, 2024.

6 bb. *Barajas Maya v. United Facilities Group, Inc., et al.*, Santa Clara County, Case No.

7 22CV397353; Motion for Final Approval granted on November 22, 2024.

8 8. Daniel J. Kramer is a tenth-year Senior Attorney at Wilshire Law Firm, PLC. He
9 was admitted to practice law in the State of California and the Central, Eastern, Southern, and
10 Northern Districts of California. He graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor of
11 Arts in History and Political Science, and received his Juris Doctor from Loyola Law School,
12 Los Angeles in 2016. During law school, he was a research editor for the *Loyola of Los Angeles*
13 *International and Comparative Law Review*. Before joining Wilshire Law Firm, he practiced
14 briefly at a firm that focused on municipal law and code enforcement and then moved to a
15 respected plaintiff-side firm to practice wage and hour class and representative action litigation.
16 Mr. Kramer currently bills at an hourly rate of \$850.00.

17 9. Mr. Kramer has spent the majority of his legal career prosecuting wage and hour
18 class and representative actions, and has been appointed as class counsel in numerous cases,
19 including inter alia:

20 a. *Hayes, et al. v. Gonzales Park, LLC, et al.*, Butte County, Case No. 21CV02456;

21 Motion for Final Approval granted on May 1, 2024.

22 b. *Hernandez v. KW California, et al.*, Kern County, Case No. BCV-23-100346;

23 Motion for Final Approval granted on December 4, 2024.

24 c. *Petrossian v. The Testing Company LLC*, Los Angeles County, Case No.

25 22STCV34526; Motion for Final Approval granted on December 23, 2024.

26 d. *Conchas Jimenez v. The Castine Group*, Santa Clara County, Case No.

27 21CV375173; Motion for Final Approval granted on February 6, 2025.

28 e. *Svay v. Certainteed, LLC*, Madera County, Case No. MCV093066; Motion for

Final Approval granted on May 20, 2025.

f. *Chavira, et al. v. Mark III Construction, Inc.*, Sacramento County, Case No. 34-2021-00308972-CU-OE-GDS; Motion for Final Approval granted on January 30, 2026.

g. *Mendoza, et al. v. OSI Industries, LLC*, Riverside County, Case No. CVRI2203101; Motion for Final Approval granted on February 27, 2026.

10. Chase Stern is an Attorney at WLF. He has more than a decade of complex litigation experience, which has been largely dedicated to representing individual and corporate entity plaintiffs in complex class action and commercial litigation in state and federal courts throughout the country. He was admitted to practice law in the State of California in 2013 and he currently is admitted to practice before all courts in the State of California, the United States District Courts for the Northern, Southern, and Central Districts of California, and the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Over the course of his career, he has been appointed as class counsel in numerous class action matters throughout California, including wage-and-hour cases. He holds a B.S. in Finance and Entrepreneurship & Emerging Enterprises from Syracuse University and a J.D. from California Western School of Law, graduating from both institutions with honors. Mr. Stern bills at an hourly rate of \$800.00.

11. Giancarlo A. Recinos is a Senior Attorney at WLF. He was admitted to practice law in the State of California in 2012 and is an active member in good standing with the State Bar of California. Mr. Recinos graduated from San Francisco State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and received his Juris Doctor from Southwestern Law School. For over a decade, his practice has focused on employment law and wage-and-hour compliance. Mr. Recinos currently bills at an hourly rate of \$950.00.

12. Conor J.D. Gomez was an Attorney at WLF. Mr. Gomez was responsible for finalizing resolved class action and PAGA matters, ensuring that they were carried through the approval and distribution process in an efficient manner and in compliance with court orders. He graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law in May 2020. Mr. Gomez passed the California Bar Examination on his first attempt and was admitted to practice in May

2021. He is admitted to practice law in the State of California and before the Northern District of California. Mr. Gomez billed at an hourly rate of \$575.

13. WLF's hourly rates are comparable to those charged by other class action plaintiffs' counsel and the firms defending class actions. WLF's rates are well within the range of hourly rates that the Los Angeles legal marketplace would compensate counsel for similar services accomplishing similar results. For example, in *Bronshteyn v. State of California*, Los Angeles County Superior Ct. No. 19SMCV00057, Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion for Statutory Attorneys' Fees and Costs filed March 30, 2023, an employment action brought by two law firms (Levy, Vinick, Burrell & Hyams LLP and Law Offices of Wendy Musell), the court found that counsel's 2022 hourly rates of \$1,100 and \$1,000 per hour were reasonable for the plaintiff's five senior attorneys, including \$850 per hour for a senior associate. These rates were then augmented by a 1.75 lodestar multiplier and affirmed by the California Court of Appeals. The rates (and multiplier) requested here are well in line with those found reasonable in *Bronshteyn*. In *Tran v. Golden State FC LLC, et al.* (LASC Case No. BC699931), Fee Order filed 4/8/2022, the court found hourly rates of \$1,300 per hour reasonable for plaintiff's 32-year attorney and \$1,000 per hour reasonable for a 14-year attorney.

14. In support of the reasonableness of WLF's hourly rates, attached as **Exhibit 1** is a true and correct excerpt from the *2025 Real Rate Report* published by Wolters Kluwer. The Real Rate Report is widely relied upon in the legal industry because it is derived from anonymized billing data taken from actual law firm invoices that were submitted to clients and approved for payment, rather than from voluntary surveys or self-reported rates. Although the report refers to "2025" rates, the data reflects rates charged by law firms during the first half of 2024 and therefore represents the most recent available objective evidence of prevailing market rates.

a. The report provides rate information filtered by geographic market, practice type, and timekeeper role. Page 26 reports third-quartile rates for attorneys handling litigation matters in San Francisco and San Jose, which are the primary Northern California legal markets and serve as the dominant rate-setting centers for complex litigation throughout the region. In San Francisco, the dataset shows third-quartile hourly rates of \$1,378 for litigation partners and \$875

1 for associates. In San Jose, the report shows third-quartile hourly rates of \$1,250 for litigation
2 partners and \$1,030 for associates. The report's in-depth city analyses for San Francisco and San
3 Jose further confirm that these markets consistently reflect some of the highest billing rates in the
4 country for experienced litigators and serve as the benchmark markets for Northern California legal
5 services. Courts evaluating fee requests in Sacramento routinely look to the prevailing rates in the
6 nearest major metropolitan markets as benchmarks when assessing reasonableness. The closest and
7 most relevant comparison markets for Sacramento litigation are San Francisco and San Jose, where
8 experienced partners routinely bill well above \$1,200 per hour based on rates actually charged to
9 clients.

10 b. The 2025 Real Rate Report's practice-area-specific data further supports this
11 conclusion. Page 81 provides third-quartile rates for the detailed practice category "Employment
12 and Labor: Other Litigation," which is directly analogous to the type of work performed in this
13 case. That dataset includes 24 partners and 14 associates and shows a third-quartile rate of \$1,252
14 per hour for partners and \$564 per hour for associates. These figures demonstrate that even within
15 the specialized employment litigation market, partners regularly bill well above \$1,200 per hour
16 based on rates actually charged to clients. When this practice-specific benchmark is considered
17 together with the broader regional market data, it confirms that WLF's hourly rate for highly
18 experienced counsel in a representative employment action falls within the upper range of
19 prevailing market rates rather than outside it.

20 c. The Real Rate Report does not provide 1st quartile or 4th quartile rates,
21 presumably to provide a sense of the average attorney billing rates. Importantly, the third quartile
22 represents the point below which 75% of rates fall; it is not a cap on reasonable rates. By definition,
23 a substantial portion of partners in the relevant benchmark market routinely bill above that level,
24 particularly those with extensive experience, specialized expertise, or leadership roles in complex
25 litigation. Courts evaluating fee requests recognize that leading counsel in complex or
26 representative actions may reasonably bill above median or third-quartile benchmarks where their
27 experience, results obtained, and responsibilities justify higher rates. We firmly believe WLF
28 belongs in the 4th quartile of attorney billing rates in Northern California. As previously discussed,

WLF is a nationally recognized employment litigation firm that has been named one of the nation's *Best Law Firms* by U.S. News & World Report and Best Lawyers since 2020, and its attorneys regularly litigate complex wage-and-hour class and representative actions throughout California.

15. In an article entitled "Big Law Rates Topping \$2,000 Leave Value 'In Eye of Beholder,'" written by Roy Strom and published by Bloomberg Law on June 9, 2022, the author describes how Big Law firms have crossed the \$2,000-per hour rate. The article also notes that law firm rates have been increasing by just under 3% per year. A true and correct copy of this article is attached hereto as **Exhibit 2**.

16. WLF has performed significant work and incurred litigation costs in prosecuting this matter with no guarantee of any payment. The efforts expended by Class Counsel to achieve this result include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. the investigation of the matter, including meeting with Plaintiffs, reviewing Defendants' Watts Water Technologies, Inc. and Watts Regulator Co. (collectively, the "Defendants") policies, and requesting and reviewing Plaintiffs' time and pay records, personnel file, and exploring the corporate structure of Defendants;
- b. filing the Action;
- c. attending status conferences and meeting and conferring with Defendants regarding the case;
- d. meeting and conferring with Defendants regarding mediation, exchange of informal discovery beforehand, and negotiating with opposing counsel regarding the parameters thereof;
- e. selecting a mediator and mediation date;
- f. working with opposing counsel for the receipt of a representative sampling and analyzing the same with the aid of an expert consultant and Plaintiffs to perform analyses of liability and exposure prior to attendance of the mediation in this matter;
- g. reviewing policy documents from Defendants and researching applicable

defenses;

h. preparing the mediation brief and damages model for use at mediation;

i. attending the mediation;

j. communicating with Plaintiffs;

k. negotiating, finalizing and fully executing the settlement agreement;

l. preparing and filing the Motion for Preliminary Approval and supporting documents;

m. attending the hearing on Motion for Preliminary Approval;

n. communicating with any Class Members who sought additional information regarding the settlement; and

o. preparing the instant Motion for Final Approval and supporting documents.

17. WLF's current lodestar reflects the efficiencies achieved by attorneys experienced in this field with at least **161.8** hours of work resulting in at least **\$134,177.50** in fees. The chart below shows the calculation of hours spent by each of WLF's attorneys on this case:

Attorney	Hours	Hourly Rate	Total
Benjamin H. Haber	36.5	\$950.00	\$36,290.00
Daniel J. Kramer	15.7	\$850.00	\$13,345.00
Chase M. Stern	89.5	\$800.00	\$71,600.00
Giancarlo A. Recinos	6.3	\$950.00	\$5,985.00
Conor J.D. Gomez	12.1	\$575.00	\$6,957.50
TOTAL	161.8		\$134,177.50

18. This amount surpasses the requested fee award of \$98,333.33, resulting in a negative multiplier. Class Counsel's lodestar does not include the time Class Counsel will spend at the Final Approval Hearing and assisting the Settlement Administrator following final approval. Class Counsel dedicated significant resources to this case by dividing the tasks required according to

1 skill level. The hours expended by each attorney were not duplicative and reflect the extensive
2 investigation and analysis that was required to achieve this Settlement. This time could have been
3 spent on other potentially lucrative cases. Class Counsel's lodestar reflects the efficiencies
4 achieved by attorneys experienced in this field. Moreover, Class Counsel has singularly assumed
5 the risk and costs of litigation purely on a contingency basis. And, while Plaintiffs are confident in
6 the merits of their claims, a legitimate controversy exists as to each cause of action, posing an
7 actual risk that Plaintiffs may not succeed at class certification and/or trial. Any of these obstacles
8 could have prevented recovery completely, meaning Class Counsel would have been left with no
9 compensation for all the time and money invested in litigating this case. Despite these risks, Class
10 Counsel took this case on a contingency basis so that Class Members (a particularly vulnerable
11 group of hourly paid workers) could be compensated for their unpaid wages. Consequently, Class
12 Counsel was precluded from focusing on, or taking on, other cases which could have resulted in a
13 larger, and less risky, monetary gain.

14 19. In litigation costs, Wilshire Law Firm, PLC, has spent \$18,947.66 on items such as
15 filing fees, service fees, mediation fees, and expert fees. A true and correct copy of a breakdown
16 of costs incurred by my office is attached hereto as **Exhibit 3**. Additionally, we anticipate incurring
17 \$300.00 in future costs for filing fees and service fees for a total of \$19,247.66 in costs. Since Class
18 Counsel's costs did not reach the maximum of \$25,000.00, the remaining \$5,752.34 will revert to
19 and increase the Net Settlement Amount. These costs were reasonable and necessary to prosecute
20 this case and obtain the results achieved.

21 20. Class Counsel has negotiated a settlement here that they believe is fair, reasonable,
22 and adequate based on their prior experience litigating these type of cases.

23 21. To date, the LWDA has not responded to or objected to the Settlement in this matter.

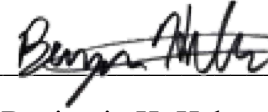
24 22. Class Counsel has reviewed the Checklist for Approval of Class Action and/or
25 Private Attorneys' General Act ("PAGA") Settlements found in Local Rule 2.99.05 and the
26 briefing complies with the Checklist.

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1 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing
2 is true and correct.

3 Executed on September 30, 2026 at Los Angeles, California.

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6 Benjamin H. Haber
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EXHIBIT 1



ELM Solutions

2025 Real Rate Report[®] powered by LegalVIEW[®] DynamicInsights

The industry's leading
analysis of law firm rates,
trends, and practices

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NOTE:

You may experience an issue that can sometimes occur in PDF viewer. Thin lines (like table borders) may appear to “disappear” or look broken when zoomed out in a PDF viewer. This is usually a display/rendering issue rather than a problem with the actual content of the PDF.

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- Open the PDF in Acrobat and go to Edit > Preferences > Page Display.
- Uncheck Enhance thin lines (if it's checked).
- Restart Acrobat and reopen the PDF.

A Letter to Our Readers

Welcome to the latest edition of the Real Rate Report®, the legal industry's most trusted benchmark for legal billing rates.

Since 2010, the Real Rate Report has helped legal departments and law firms make smarter decisions about pricing, resourcing, and vendor management. That hasn't changed. What has changed is how we deliver those insights.

This year, the Real Rate Report is powered by LegalVIEW® DynamicInsights—our new digital-first platform that brings the same trusted LegalVIEW data to life in a more interactive, flexible, and timely way. Leveraging Wolters Kluwer's LegalVIEW database, with over \$200B in anonymized, approved, invoice data, LegalVIEW DynamicInsights offers dynamic filters, quarterly updates, and calendar-year alignment to help users tailor benchmarks to their unique needs, on demand.

The Real Rate Report remains a vital snapshot of the market, and we know many of you rely on it as a reference tool. But DynamicInsights goes further. It enables deeper exploration of rate trends by role, experience, geography, practice area, industry, and more. Whether you're negotiating rates, evaluating law firm performance, or planning budgets, DynamicInsights gives you the agility and precision today's legal environment demands.

As always, we welcome your feedback and thank our data contributors for making this work possible. We're proud to be your partner in legal analytics and look forward to continuing to deliver insights that drive better business outcomes.

Sincerely,



Brian Jorgenson

Vice President, Product Management
Wolters Kluwer ELM Solutions

Real Rate Report Overview

The Real Rate Report is powered by LegalVIEW DynamicInsights, a web-based solution that delivers dynamic, invoice-backed insights through approved legal billing rates. It enables legal professionals to analyze rate trends by role, experience, industry, geography, practice area, and more using the world's largest repository of legal spend data.

DynamicInsights leverages the same trusted LegalVIEW database that has powered the Real Rate Report for years, now encompassing over \$200B+ in anonymized, approved legal invoice data. As with previous Real Rate Reports, our data is sourced from corporations' and law firms' e-billing and time management solutions. We have included lawyer and paralegal rate data filtered by specific practice and sub-practice areas, metropolitan areas, and types of matters. This level of granularity gives legal departments and law firms the precision they need to identify areas of opportunity.

What's different with DynamicInsights?

Same source, same methodology: DynamicInsights uses the same rigorous data validation and methodology as the Real Rate Report.

- **Enhanced flexibility:** With dynamic filters, DynamicInsights enables users to tailor benchmarks to their unique needs and on demand.
- **Full year data:** DynamicInsights now aligns to a calendar year view—January through December—replacing the previous July-to-June format used in the Real Rate Report, reducing confusion and improving consistency across reporting periods.
- **More up to date:** Unlike the annual and static Real Rate Report, DynamicInsights is refreshed quarterly, offering more timely insights.
- **Digital-first access:** Delivered via a secure online interface, users can interact with the data, bookmark views, and share insights in real time.

DynamicInsights provides the same level of credibility and analytical power long trusted in the Real Rate Report with more agility and transparency for today's legal environment.

2025 Real Rate Report use considerations

- Examines law firm rates over time
- Identifies rates by location, experience, firm size, areas of expertise, industry, and timekeeper role (i.e., partner, associate, and paralegal)
- Itemizes variables that drive rates up or down

All the analyses included in DynamicInsights and this report are derived from the actual rates charged by law firm professionals as recorded on invoices submitted and approved for payment.

Examining real, approved rate information, along with the ranges of those rates and their changes over time, highlights the role these variables play in driving aggregate legal cost and income. The analyses can energize questions for both corporate clients and law firm principals.

Legal departments might ask whether they are paying the right amount for different types of legal services, while law firm principals might ask whether they are charging the right amount for legal services and whether to modify their pricing approach.

Examples of data to consider when reviewing rates:

- **Industry** – Compare spend and rate trends across various industries
- **Practice area** – Analyze cost variations in different legal practice areas
- **Detailed practice area** – Drill down into niche legal specialties for precise benchmarking
- **Am Law** – Benchmark against top-ranked law firms for competitive rate analysis
- **City** – Understand rate trends in specific metropolitan areas
- **Country** – Gain a global perspective on legal costs and spend management
- **Role** – Assess legal spend distribution across different law firm roles

Real Rate Report Overview

Understanding key statistical terms

To help interpret the legal rate data presented in DynamicInsights and this report, it's important to understand the statistical measures used. Below are definitions of the core metrics:

- **Mean (average):** The sum of all rate values divided by the total number of values added. It provides a general sense of the central tendency of the rates but can be influenced by extreme values (outliers).
- **Median:** The middle value when all rates are arranged in ascending order. If there is an even number of rates being analyzed, the median is the average of the two middle rates. It is a robust measure of central tendency of rates that is less affected by outliers.
- **First quartile (Q1):** The value below which 25% of the rates fall. It marks the lower boundary of the middle 50% of the rates and helps identify the lower range of typical values.
- **Third quartile (Q3):** The value below which 75% of the rates fall. It marks the upper boundary of the middle 50% of the rates and helps identify the upper range of typical values.
- **n:** The number of unique timekeepers contributing to the data.

These metrics are used to provide a more nuanced view of legal rates, helping users identify trends, outliers, and benchmarks across various dimensions.

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Step into the future of legal spend management with responsibly developed AI-powered solutions.



Our innovative Total Spend Management approach leverages AI-powered capabilities to empower intelligent workflows and improved outcomes.



Up to 10% savings on legal spend



Up to 20% improvement in billing guideline compliance



Increased efficiencies free up time for more value-add work

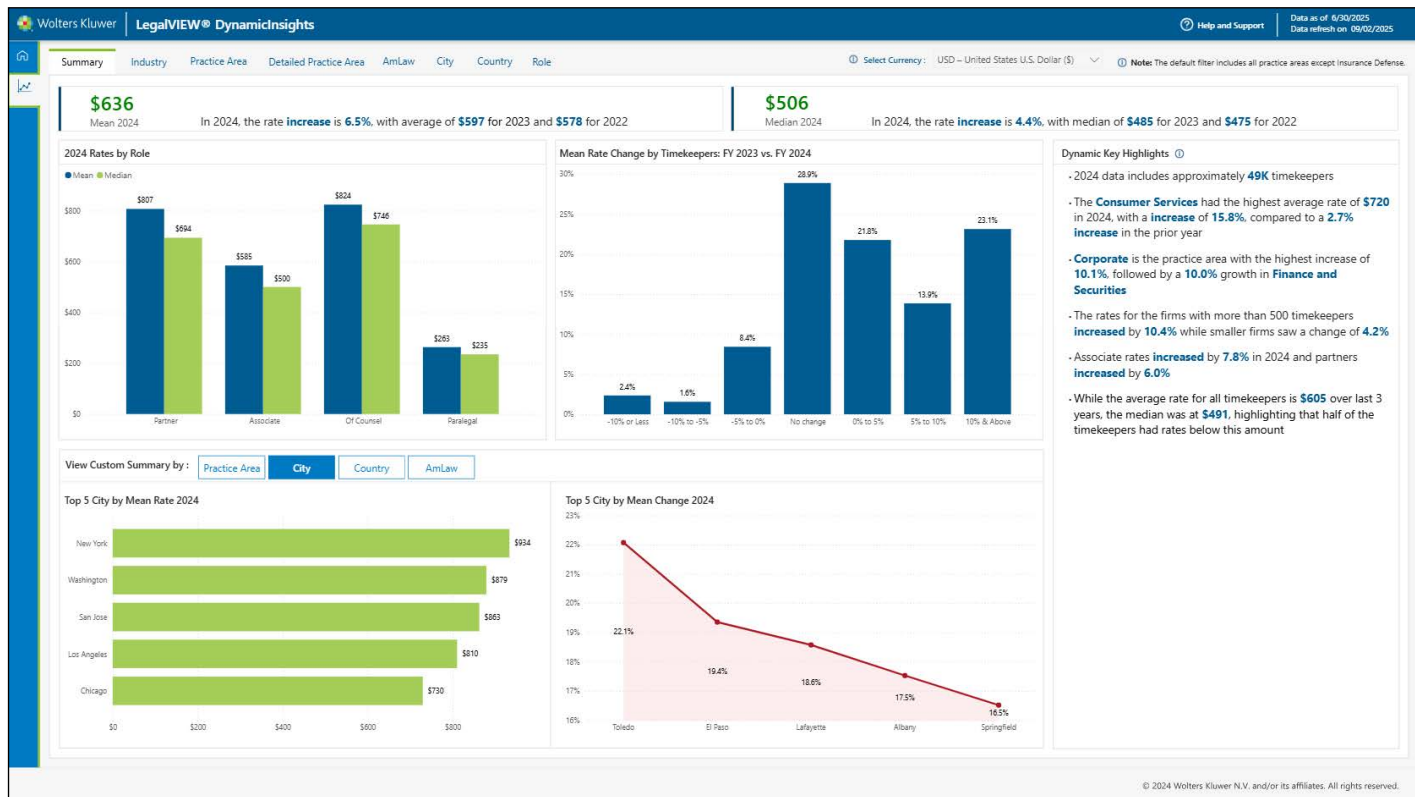
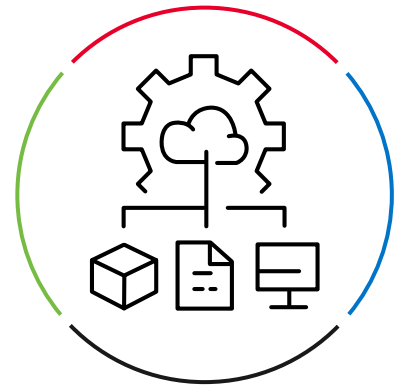


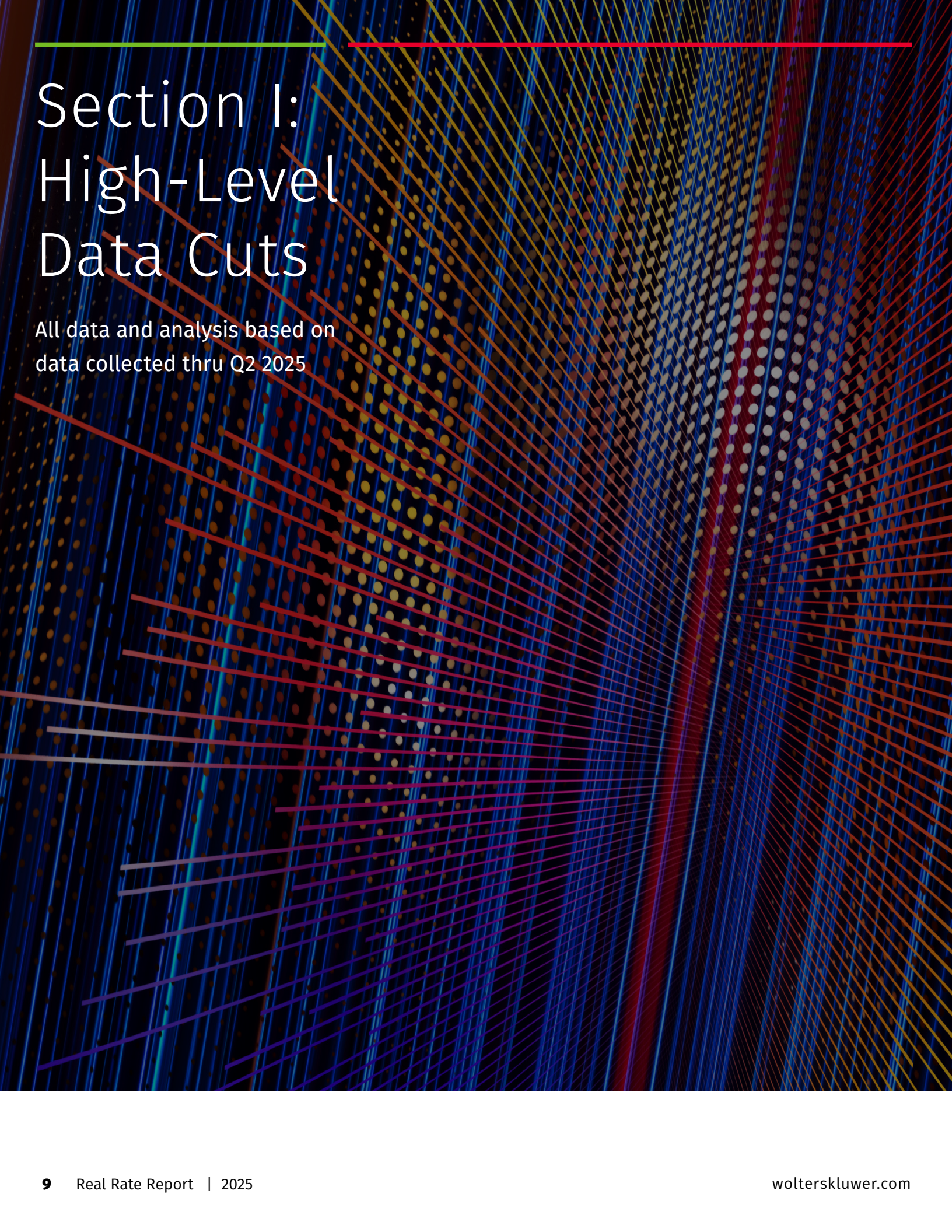
LegalVIEW® DynamicInsights

Legal rates keep climbing and 2026 will be no exception. Stay ahead with award-winning insights designed to give your team the edge in every negotiation.

Data that wins awards...and rate negotiations

- **Unmatched Data Power:** Leverages over **\$200B** in invoice-backed legal spend data to deliver deep, actionable insights.
- **Strategic Legal Spend Management:** Empowers legal teams to negotiate smarter, plan more effectively, and control costs with greater precision.
- **Enhanced Transparency & Collaboration:** Strengthens law firm-client relationships through data-driven transparency and benchmarking.
- **Insight-Driven Decision Making:** Enables analysis across key dimensions to support strategic negotiations and financial optimization.





Section I: High-Level Data Cuts

All data and analysis based on
data collected thru Q2 2025

Section I: High-Level Data Cuts

Cities

By Matter Type

2025 Real Rates for Associate and Partner

Trend Analysis - Mean

City	Matter Type	Role	n	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	2025	2024	2023
San Francisco CA	Litigation	Partner	106	\$400	\$718	\$1,378	\$908	\$819	\$803
		Associate	80	\$385	\$666	\$875	\$683	\$652	\$614
	Non-Litigation	Partner	132	\$445	\$689	\$1,249	\$856	\$868	\$788
		Associate	97	\$335	\$550	\$922	\$640	\$664	\$593
San Jose CA	Litigation	Partner	23	\$650	\$800	\$1,250	\$998	\$1,024	\$1,011
		Associate	20	\$625	\$815	\$1,030	\$852	\$802	\$721
	Non-Litigation	Partner	33	\$745	\$950	\$1,266	\$1,033	\$1,104	\$1,108
		Associate	27	\$527	\$610	\$966	\$718	\$709	\$701
Seattle WA	Litigation	Partner	57	\$520	\$902	\$925	\$790	\$719	\$628
		Associate	29	\$425	\$653	\$700	\$586	\$518	\$475
	Non-Litigation	Partner	119	\$402	\$615	\$925	\$694	\$635	\$652
		Associate	79	\$307	\$445	\$676	\$496	\$484	\$467



Section II: Industry Analysis

All data and analysis based on
data collected thru Q2 2025

Section II: Industry Analysis

Consumer Services

By Detailed Practice Area and
Matter Type

2025 - Real Rates for Associate and Partner

Trend Analysis - Mean

Practice Area	Matter Type	Role	n	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	2025	2024	2023
Employment and Labor: Discrimination, Retaliation and Harassment / EEO	Litigation	Partner	27	\$393	\$495	\$613	\$509	\$463	\$436
		Associate	19	\$400	\$475	\$493	\$437	\$387	\$370
Employment and Labor: Other	Litigation	Partner	24	\$564	\$692	\$1,252	\$956	\$782	\$683
		Associate	14	\$384	\$469	\$564	\$553	\$484	\$458
	Non-Litigation	Partner	25	\$450	\$574	\$695	\$579	\$573	\$548
		Associate	25	\$397	\$450	\$525	\$465	\$472	\$456
Intellectual Property: Patents	Non-Litigation	Partner	41	\$350	\$595	\$691	\$605	\$652	\$634
		Associate	51	\$208	\$373	\$517	\$382	\$378	\$389
Real Estate: Leasing	Non-Litigation	Partner	17	\$410	\$539	\$865	\$616	\$664	\$667
		Associate	10	\$278	\$404	\$617	\$482	\$444	\$478
Real Estate: Other	Non-Litigation	Partner	58	\$480	\$626	\$940	\$694	\$612	\$540
		Associate	39	\$320	\$460	\$733	\$503	\$468	\$415

EXHIBIT 2

Free Newsletter Sign Up

Business & Practice

Big Law Rates Topping \$2,000 Leave Value ‘In Eye of Beholder’

By Roy Strom

Column

June 9, 2022, 2:30 AM

Welcome back to the Big Law Business column on the changing legal marketplace written by me, Roy Strom. Today, we look at a new threshold for lawyers' billing rates and why it's so difficult to put a price on high-powered attorneys. Sign up to receive this column in your inbox on Thursday mornings. Programming note: Big Law Business will be off next week.

Some of the nation's top law firms are charging more than \$2,000 an hour, setting a new pinnacle after a two-year burst in demand.

Partners at Hogan Lovells and Latham & Watkins have crossed the threshold, according to court documents in bankruptcy cases filed within the past year.

Other firms came close to the mark, billing more than \$1,900, according to the documents. They include Kirkland & Ellis, Simpson Thacher & Bartlett, Boies Schiller Flexner, and Sidley Austin.

Simpson Thacher & Bartlett litigator Bryce Friedman, who helps big-name clients out of jams, especially when they're accused of fraud, charges \$1,965 every 60 minutes, according to a court document.

In need of a former acting US Solicitor General? Hogan Lovells partner Neal Katyal bills time at \$2,465 an hour. Want to hire famous litigator David Boies? That'll cost \$1,950 an hour (at least). Reuters was first to report their fees.

Eye-watering rates are nothing new for Big Law firms, which typically ask clients to pay higher prices at least once a year, regardless of broader market conditions.

"Value is in the eye of the beholder," said John O'Connor, a San Francisco-based expert on legal fees. "The perceived value of a good lawyer can reach into the multi-billions of dollars."

Kirkland & Ellis declined to comment on its billing rates. None of the other firms responded to requests to comment.

Charge It Up

Big Law firms are crossing the \$2,000-an-hour threshold after two years of surging rates driven by an increase in demand for lawyers.

Firm	Highest Billing Rate
Hogan Lovells	\$2,465
Latham & Watkins	\$2,075
Kirkland & Ellis	\$1,995
Simpson Thacher & Bartlett	\$1,965
Boies Schiller Flexner	\$1,950
Sidley Austin	\$1,900

Source: Court documents

Bloomberg Law

Law firms have been more successful raising rates than most other businesses over the past 15 years.

Law firm rates rose by roughly 40 percent from 2007 to 2020, or just short of 3 percent per year, Thomson Reuters Peer Monitor data show. US inflation rose by about 28% during that time.

The 100 largest law firms in the past two years achieved their largest rate increases in more than a decade, Peer Monitor says. The rates surged more than 6% in 2020 and grew another 5.6% through November of last year. Neither level had been breached since 2008.

The price hikes occurred during a once-in-a-decade surge in demand for law services, which propelled profits at firms to new levels. Fourteen law firms reported average profits per equity partner in 2021 over \$5 million, according to data from The American Lawyer. That was up from six the previous year.

The highest-performing firms, where lawyers charge the highest prices, have outperformed their smaller peers. Firms with leading practices in markets such as mergers and acquisitions, capital markets, and real estate were forced to turn away work at some points during the pandemic-fueled surge.

Firms receive relatively tepid pushback from their giant corporate clients, especially when advising on bet-the-company litigation or billion-dollar deals.

The portion of bills law firms collected—a sign of how willingly clients pay full-freight—rose during the previous two years after drifting lower following the Great Financial Crisis. Collection rates last year breached 90% for the first time since 2009, Peer Monitor data show.

Professional rules prohibit lawyers from charging “unconscionable” or “unreasonable” rates. But that doesn’t preclude clients from paying any price they perceive as valuable, said Jacqueline Vinaccia, a San Diego-based lawyer who testifies on lawyer fee disputes.

Lawyers’ fees are usually only contested when they will be paid by a third party.

That happened recently with Hogan Lovells’ Katyal, whose nearly \$2,500 an hour fee was contested in May by a US trustee overseeing a bankruptcy case involving a Johnson & Johnson unit facing claims its talc-based powders caused cancer.

The trustee, who protects the financial interests of bankruptcy estates, argued Katyal’s fee was more than \$1,000 an hour higher than rates charged by lawyers in the same case at Jones Day and Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom.

A hearing on the trustee’s objection is scheduled for next week. Hogan Lovells did not respond to a request for comment on the objection.

Vinaccia said the firm’s options will be to reduce its fee, withdraw from the case, or argue the levy is reasonable, most likely based on Katyal’s extensive experience arguing appeals.

Still, the hourly rate shows just how valuable the most prestigious lawyers’ time can be—even compared to their highly compensated competitors.

“If the argument is that Jones Day and Skadden Arps are less expensive, then you’re already talking about the cream of the crop, the top-of-the-barrel law firms,” Vinaccia said. “I can’t imagine a case in which I might argue those two firms are more reasonable than the rates I’m dealing with.”

Worth Your Time

On Cravath: Cravath Swaine & Moore is heading to Washington, opening its first new office since 1973 by hiring former heads of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Meghan Tribe reports the move comes as Big Law firms are looking to add federal government expertise as clients face more regulatory scrutiny.

On Big Law Promotions: It’s rare that associates get promotions to partner in June, but Camille Vasquez is now a Brown Rudnick partner after she shot to fame representing Johnny Depp in his defamation trial against ex-wife Amber Heard.

On Working From Home: I spoke this week with Quinn Emanuel’s John Quinn about why he thinks law firm life is never going back to the office-first culture that was upset by the pandemic. Listen to the podcast [here](#).



That's it for this week! Thanks for reading and please send me your thoughts, critiques, and tips.

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Documents

[Trustee's Objection](#)

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Dec. 9, 2021, 3:00 AM

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Aug. 12, 2021, 3:00 AM

Law Firms

Simpson Thacher
Hogan Lovells
Jones Day
Skadden
Sidley Austin
Quinn Emanuel
Cravath Swaine & Moore
Latham & Watkins
Kirkland & Ellis
Boies Schiller Flexner

Topics

expert fees
compensation of bankruptcy attorney
acquisitions
U.S. trustees
financial markets
client-paid legal fees
data breaches

Companies

Johnson & Johnson
Thomson Reuters Corp

EXHIBIT 3

Wilshire Law Firm, PLC
Transaction Detail by Account
All Transactions

Accrual Basis

<u>Type</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Num</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Mediation Fees						
	4/30/2025	99E1299	Mediation Fee - Alternative Resolution Centers	50% Mediation fees	\$7,825.00	\$7,825.00
Total MEDIATION FEES					\$7,825.00	\$7,825.00
Consultant Fees						
	09/04/2025	13728	Consulting Fee - Berger Consulting Group LLC	12.70 hours of work	\$8,572.50	\$8,572.50
Total CONSULTANT FEES					\$8,572.50	\$8,572.50
Filing Fees						
	09/03/2024	23642666	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Complaint Filing	\$1,496.33	\$1,496.33
	09/23/2024		Filing Fee - Department of Industrial Relations	PAGA Notice	\$75.00	\$1,571.33
	09/25/2024	82113	Service Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Serve Watts Regulator Co	\$143.00	\$1,714.33
	09/26/2024	82134	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	POS	\$45.00	\$1,759.33
	09/26/2024	82112	Service Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Serve Watts Water	\$243.00	\$2,002.33
	09/30/2024	82320	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	POS	\$45.00	\$2,047.33
	03/20/2025	24971428	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	CMS	\$21.11	\$2,068.44
	04/07/2025	25085047	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Jury Fees	\$177.02	\$2,245.46
	04/08/2025	25098627	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Notice	\$21.11	\$2,266.57
	07/28/2025	CC073125TA-3266	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Notice	\$21.11	\$2,287.68
	08/14/2025	CC083125TA-1631	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Stip and Order	\$42.80	\$2,330.48
	08/21/2025	CC083125TA-1855	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Notice	\$21.11	\$2,351.59
	10/17/2025	CC103125TA-1667	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	CMS	\$21.11	\$2,372.70
	04/27/2026	CC043026TA-2587	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Stip and Order	\$43.94	\$2,416.64
	04/30/2026	CC043026TA-3086	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	MPA	\$85.34	\$2,501.98
	05/05/2026	CC053126TA-0288	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Declaration	\$22.20	\$2,524.18
	05/06/2026	CC053126TA-0308	Filing Fee - Valpro Attorney Services, LLC	Amended Complaint	\$22.20	\$2,546.38
Total FILING FEES					\$2,546.38	\$2,546.38
Other Costs						
	6/22/2024	E-3229859	Docusign		\$1.89	\$1.89
	7/18/2024	E-3234355	Docusign		\$1.89	\$3.78
Total OTHER COSTS					\$3.78	\$3.78
TOTAL					\$18,947.66	\$18,947.66

EXHIBIT 4