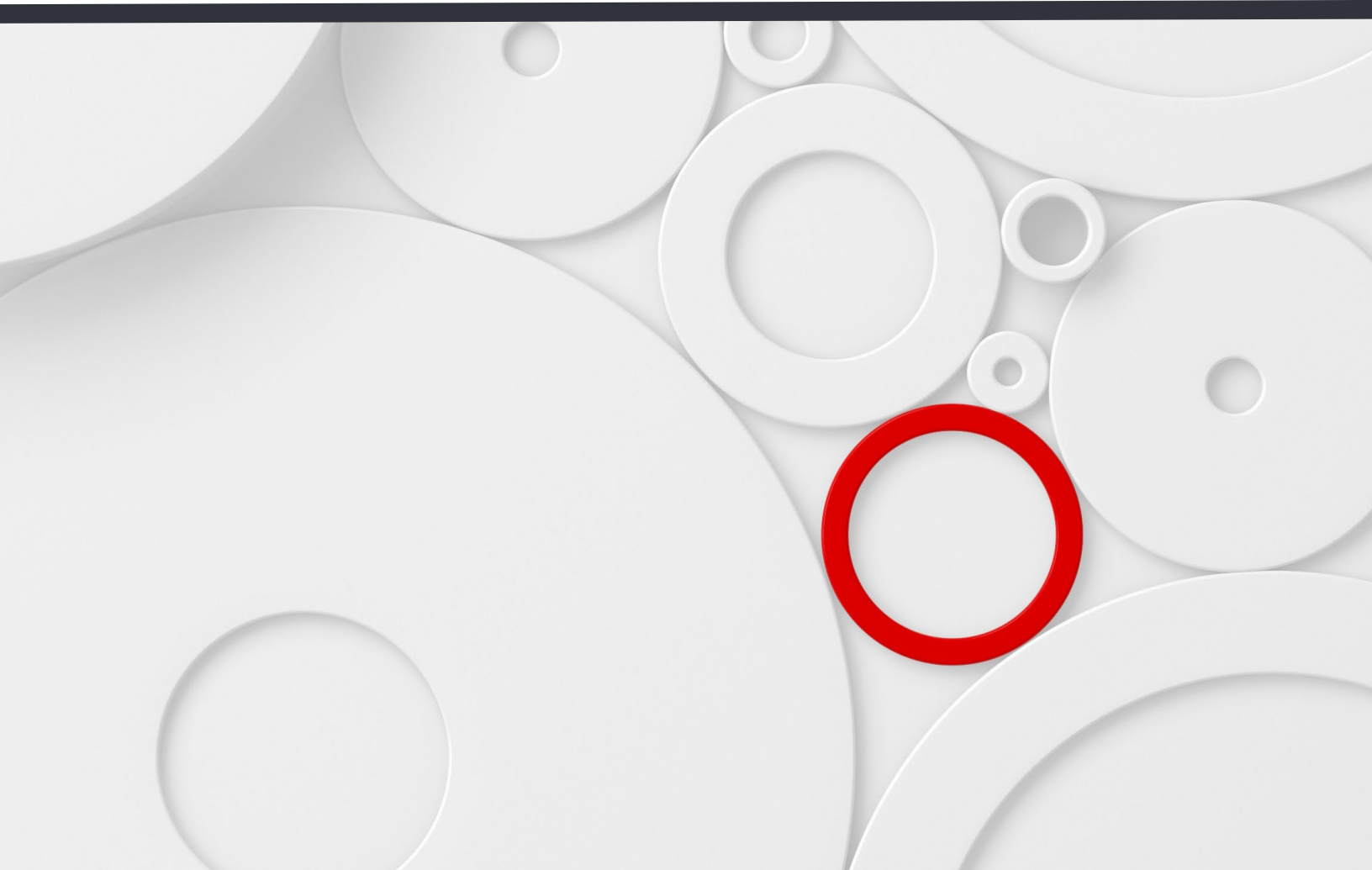


# 2025 In-House Counsel Compensation Report

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April 2025



# Introduction

We are pleased to present BarkerGilmore's 2025 In-House Counsel Compensation Report. This year's analysis was made possible by the many in-house counsel who generously shared their compensation data, enabling us to deliver another robust and insightful report that reflects current market conditions.

Now in its second year, the inclusion of quartile-based compensation data continues to add depth and precision to our reporting. By presenting compensation distributions by quartile for each position, we offer a more nuanced view of market dynamics that captures the diversity of experience, seniority, and responsibilities within each role. This structure enables more strategic benchmarking and empowers both organizations and individuals to make informed, forward-looking decisions.

Access to reliable compensation data remains critical for companies seeking to remain competitive, attract top legal talent, and retain high-performing professionals. While compensation is an essential driver of employee satisfaction, we also recognize the importance of other key factors, including company culture, industry landscape, and the complexity and influence of the legal function within an organization.

We hope this report serves as a valuable resource. Whether you are evaluating your own compensation, establishing team benchmarks, or shaping broader law department strategy, the insights provided are intended to support your success.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this year's report possible.



Bob Barker, Managing Partner



John Gilmore, Managing Partner

BarkerGilmore's services include:

- [In-House Legal Executive Search](#)
- [Compliance Executive Search](#)
- [Leadership Development](#)

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# Compensation Highlights

**In-house counsel salaries increased by 2.8% in 2025, a decline from 4.4% in 2024.**

Increases for individual in-house positions were General Counsel (2.5%), Managing Counsel (3.0%), and Senior Counsel (2.9%).

**Public company GC compensation far outpaced pay at other types of organizations.**

Top compensation at public companies was greater than \$4.5 million, compared with \$3.3 million at privately owned, \$2.8 million at Private Equity-backed portfolio companies, and \$2.0 million at non-profit organizations.

**Public company compensation varied widely based on the in-house legal role.**

Compared to top compensation for public company General Counsel, which exceeds \$4.5 million, top pay was significantly lower for Managing Counsel at \$979,000 and for Senior Counsel at \$528,000.

**Cash bonuses for in-house counsel were paid at 93% of their target, relatively unchanged from the prior year's average.**

General Counsel were paid 88% of their target, Managing Counsel and Senior Counsel were both paid 95%.

**General Counsel compensation gender gap widened to 5.4% in 2024, reversing course.**

The difference between male and female General Counsel pay had decreased to 4.3% in 2023 from 4.9% in 2022.

**Life Sciences industry paid the highest total compensation for all in-house positions at \$474,000.**

The Energy industry came in second highest at \$442,000 and Consumer at \$424,000 for total compensation across all positions.

**A significant portion of all in-house counsel have been in their current positions for 5 years or less.**

Only 13% of General Counsel, 11% of Managing Counsel, and 12% of Senior Counsel have 10 or more years of experience in their current positions.

**60% of all in-house counsel are considering a job search in the coming year, for various reasons.**

The most widely cited reason for searching (24.6%), across all positions, was for better compensation and benefits. General Counsel are less likely to leave than Managing Counsel or Senior Counsel.

**Many are either somewhat or very concerned regarding job security.**

It's notable that, at 39%, this sentiment was expressed in early March 2025, in advance of major disruption related to government restructuring or financial market volatility.

**The majority of General Counsel say their opinions on business issues are always sought and respected.**

While 64% of General Counsel hold this "Trusted Advisor" role, only 49% of Managing Counsel and 37% of Senior Counsel have earned that internal status.

**Most in-house counsel report their performance is often resource constrained.**

81% said their performance was either sometimes or always affected by lack of resources or staffing. Despite the work environment, 65% reported they were satisfied with their current work / life balance.

# Survey Design

BarkerGilmore conducted an online survey in March 2025 to assess in-house counsel compensation trends. The survey was administered to a random sample of in-house counsel at various seniority levels within different-sized public and private organizations across the United States. The following table presents the data categories captured by the survey through multiple-choice and open-ended questions answered by more than 2,700 individuals from various industries and practice areas. The data is self-reported.

## Key Survey Terms

Term	Description
<i>Position</i>	<b>General Counsel</b> – the lead in-house lawyer in an organization <b>Managing Counsel</b> – an in-house lawyer with at least one direct report <b>Senior Counsel</b> – an in-house lawyer who is an individual contributor
<i>Base Salary</i>	Current base salary in U.S. Dollars for the 2025 fiscal year
<i>Cash Bonus</i>	Target cash bonus in U.S. Dollars for the 2025 fiscal year
<i>Long-Term Incentive (LTI)</i>	Estimated value of most recent long-term incentive award in U.S. Dollars for the 2024 fiscal year
<i>Total Compensation</i>	The sum of the current 2025 base salary, 2025 target cash bonus, and 2024 estimated long-term incentive value in U.S. Dollars
<i>Salary Increase Rate</i>	Percent increase in base salary from 2024 to 2025
<i>Industry</i>	The industry sector that best describes the nature of the organization’s business activities
<i>Organization Revenue</i>	Annual organization revenue in U.S. Dollars for the 2024 fiscal year
<i>Organization Type</i>	Specifies whether the organization is a publicly listed, privately owned, private equity portfolio company, or operates as a non-profit



# Data Methods & Analysis

## Measure of Central Tendency

This report uses the median as the primary measure of central tendency to standardize compensation survey data. The median represents the middle value in a dataset, meaning that half of the observations fall above it and half fall below. For datasets with an even number of values, the median is calculated as the average of the two central values. Unless otherwise noted, all numerical data in this report is presented using the median to provide an accurate reflection of typical compensation while minimizing the impact of outliers.

## The Use of Quartiles

To offer deeper insights into compensation by role, this report uses quartiles—dividing the data into four equal parts.

- The 1st quartile (25th percentile) marks the point below which 25% of values fall.
- The 2nd quartile (50th percentile) is the median or midpoint.
- The 3rd quartile (75th percentile) indicates where 75% of values fall below.
- The 4th quartile covers the top 25% (75th–100th percentile).

This analysis also highlights the 90th percentile, showing compensation levels exceeded by only the top 10%.

## Missing Data

While our survey data is nearly complete, we recognize that some responses were missing or unusable due to non-response or misinterpretation. For instance, some participants skipped questions or provided answers that could not be included in the analysis. Because instances of missing data were minimal, we applied list-wise deletion on a question-by-question basis. This means that only responses with complete and valid data for each specific question were included in its analysis, ensuring data integrity without significantly affecting sample size.

## Using Compensation Data Wisely

BarkerGilmore recognizes the value of detailed compensation data for organizations developing pay strategies and for lawyers seeking to expand their roles or pursue new opportunities. While this report offers a comprehensive analysis of legal department compensation structures, it is important to note that compensation is influenced by numerous variables beyond the data presented here. These include an individual's experience, skills, and interpersonal strengths, as well as the organization's financial health and the broader economic environment.

To ensure the accuracy and relevance of this report, BarkerGilmore has leveraged its deep expertise in executive legal search and leadership development, alongside extensive survey data, to present a broad spectrum of in-house counsel compensation. This report is intended to serve as a general guide. While the data are highly detailed, readers are encouraged to interpret the findings within context and focus on overarching trends rather than isolated figures.

## Additional Compensation Data for GCs at Public Companies

In addition to the compensation data for General Counsel at public companies contained in this report, we encourage you to read our [2024 General Counsel Pay Trends](#) report produced in partnership with Equilar. The source data for this report is derived from SEC filings of the largest U.S.-headquartered companies, ranked by reported revenue, and that trade on one of the two major U.S. stock exchanges.

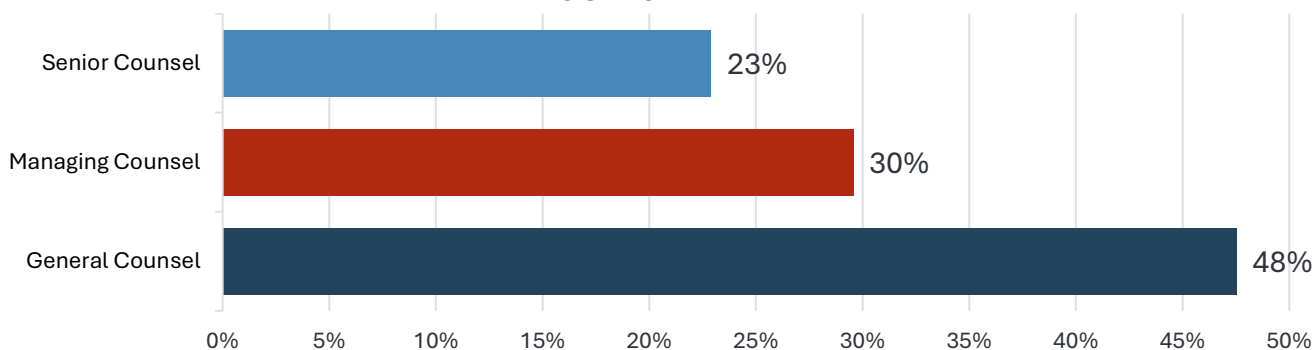
## Confidentiality

BarkerGilmore is committed to safeguarding the privacy of all compensation survey participants, recognizing that confidentiality is a cornerstone of our firm's integrity. All responses are kept strictly anonymous and will never be shared or disclosed to any third party.

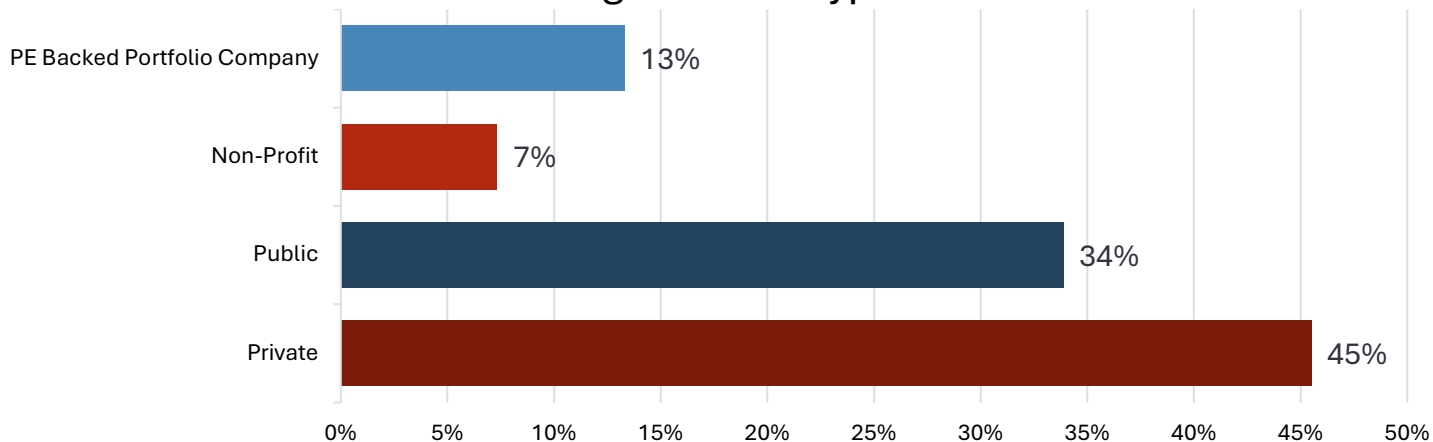
## Demographics:

# Survey Respondents

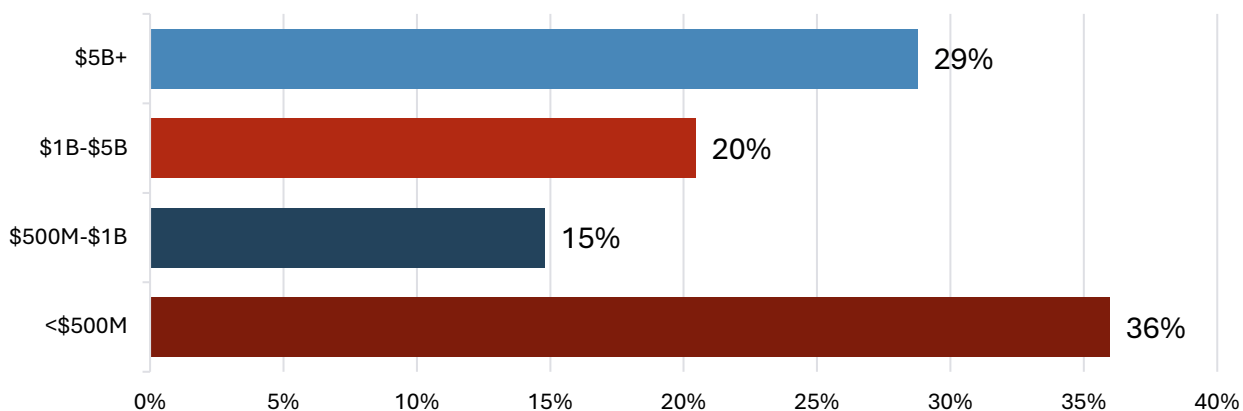
### Position



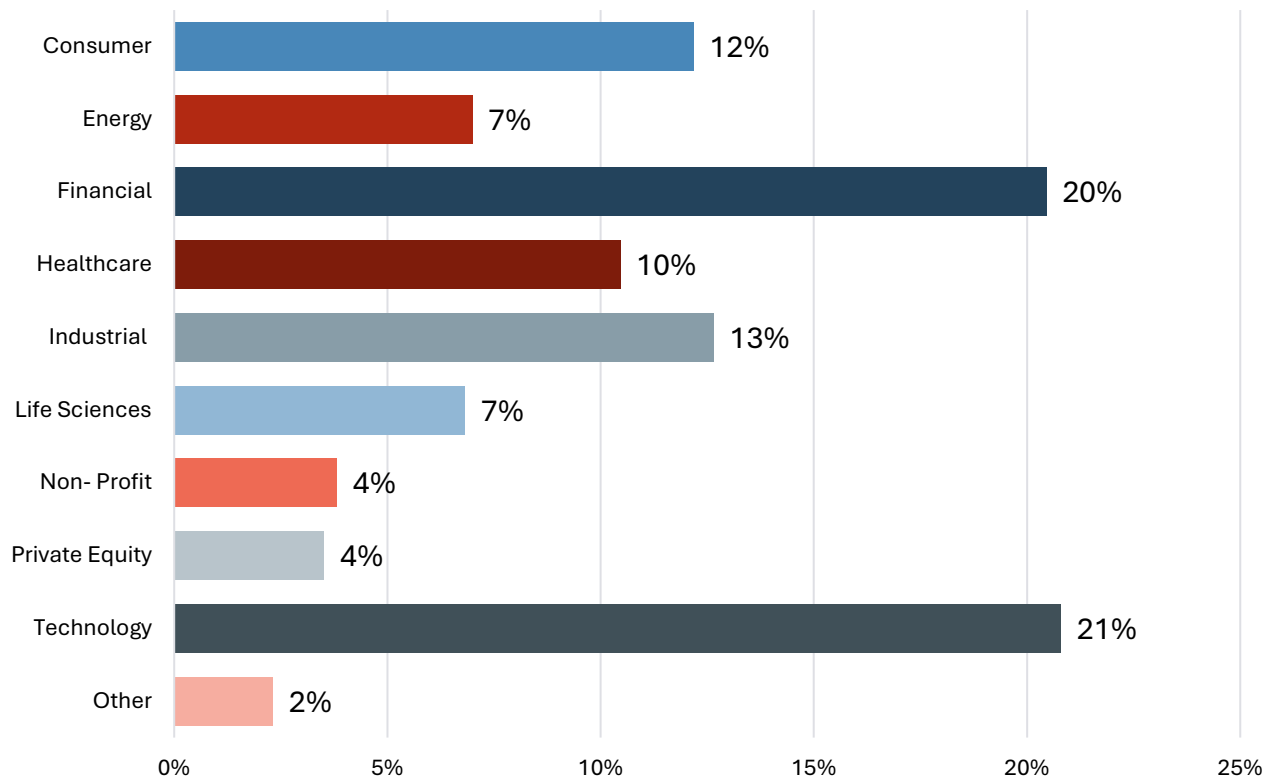
### Organization Type



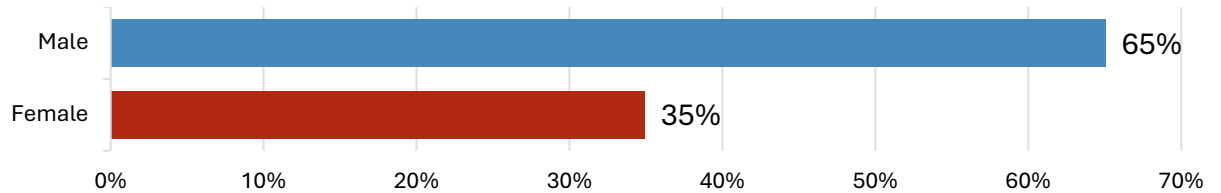
### Organization Revenue



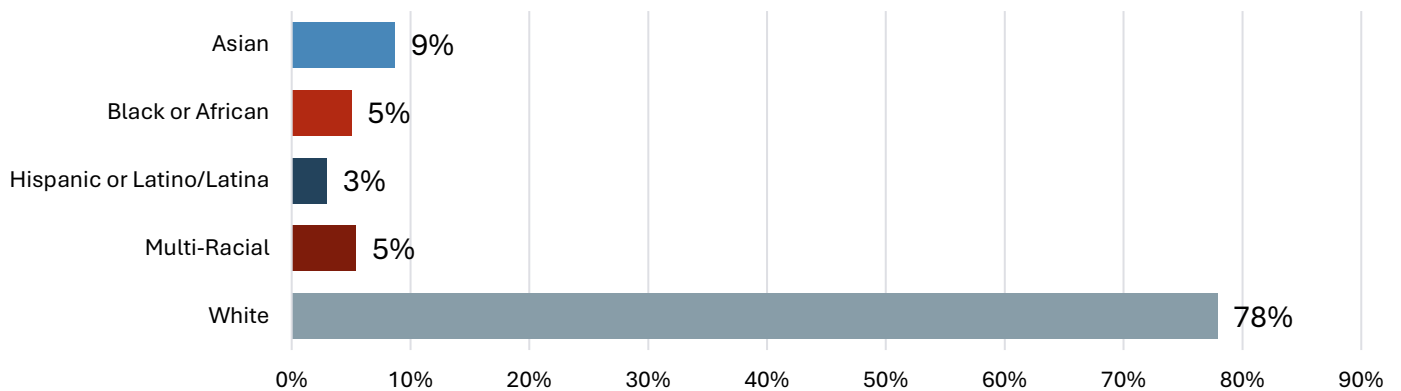
## Industry



## Gender



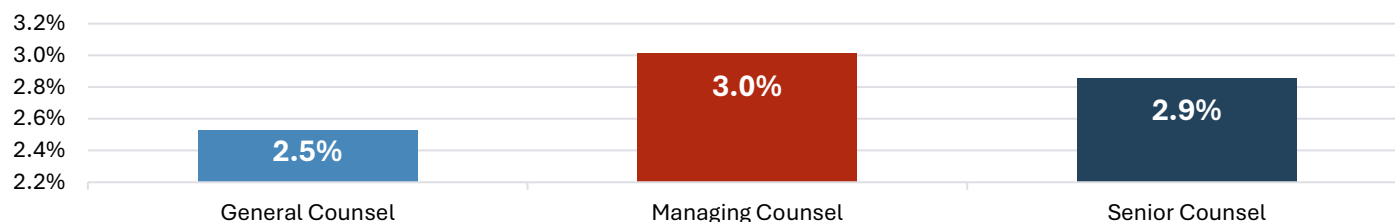
## Race



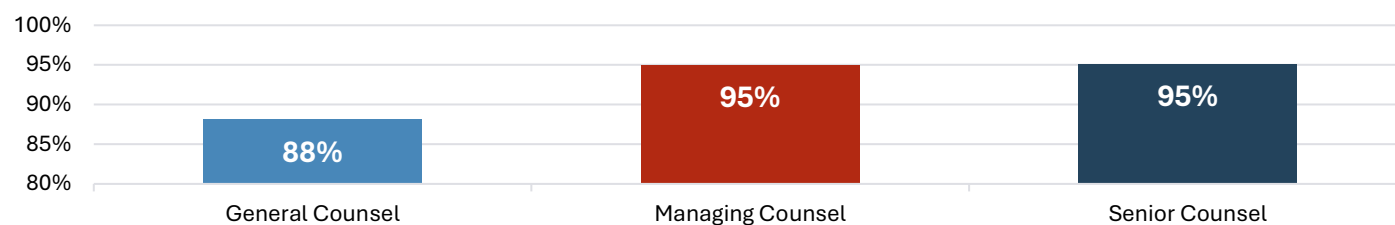


# Collective Insights

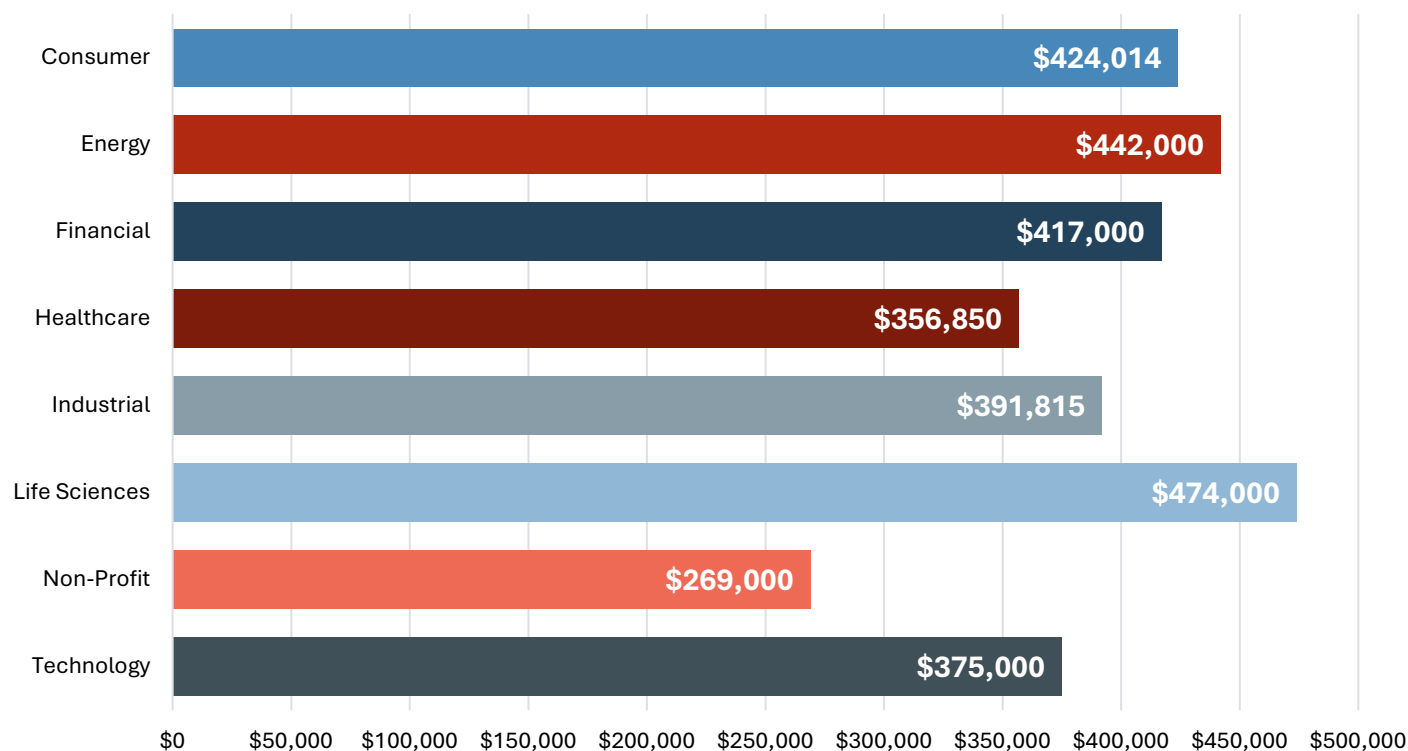
## Median Salary Increase by Position



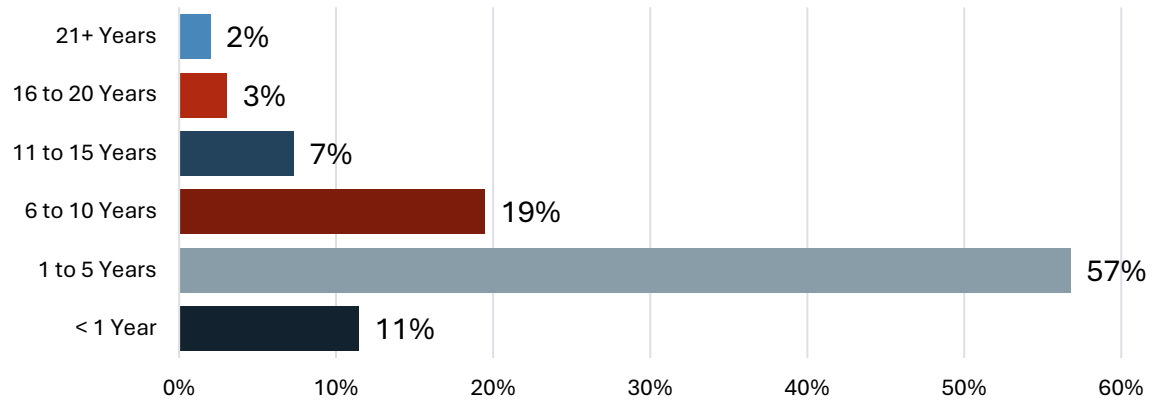
## Bonus Payout as a Percentage of Target (Average)



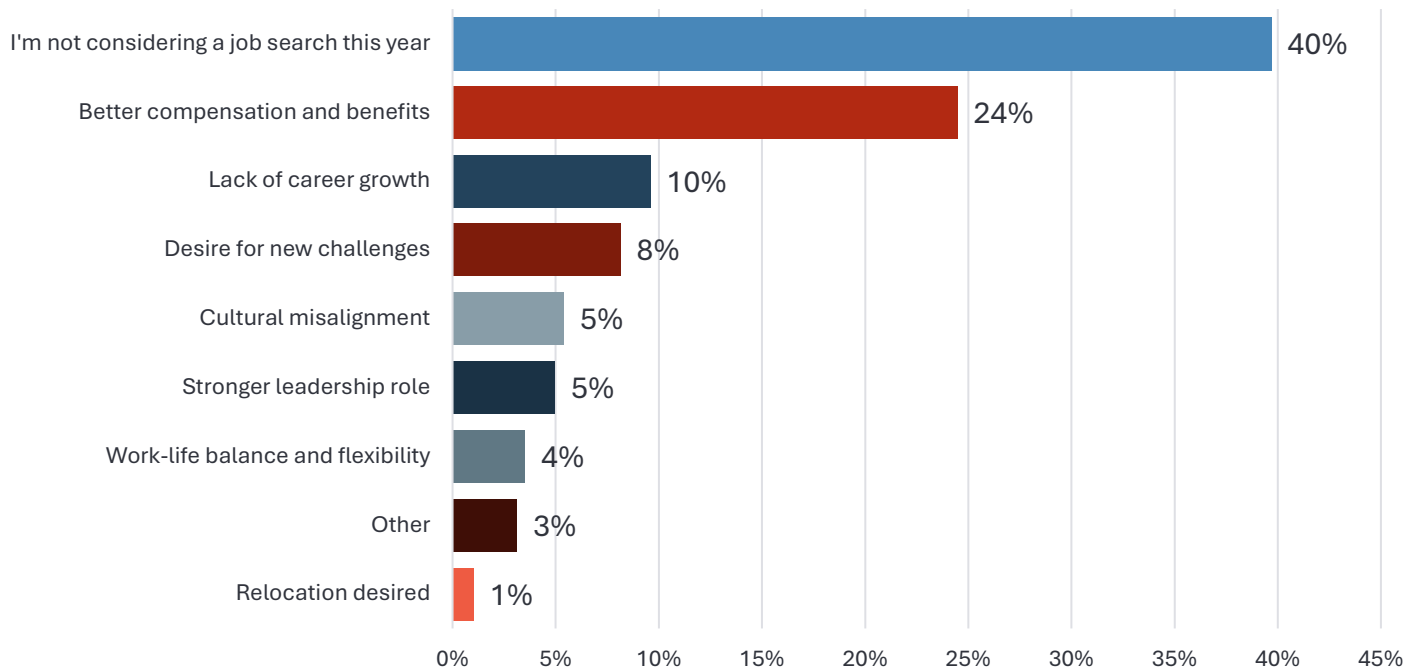
## Total Median Compensation by Industry (All Positions)



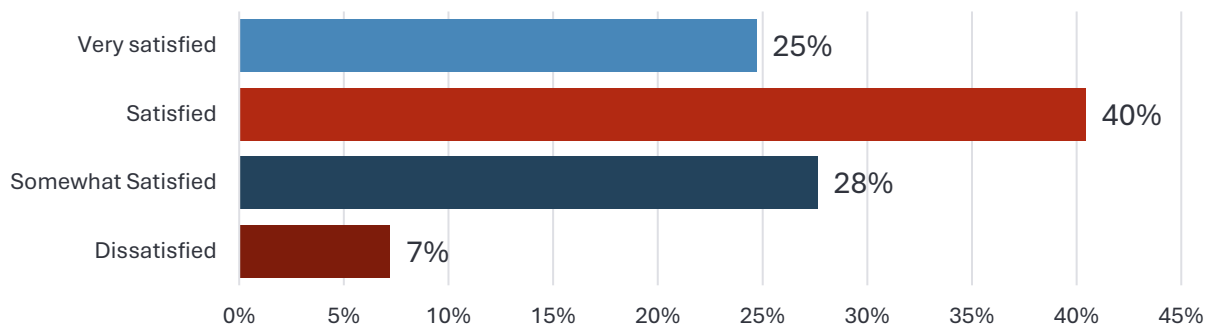
## Years in Current Position (All Positions)



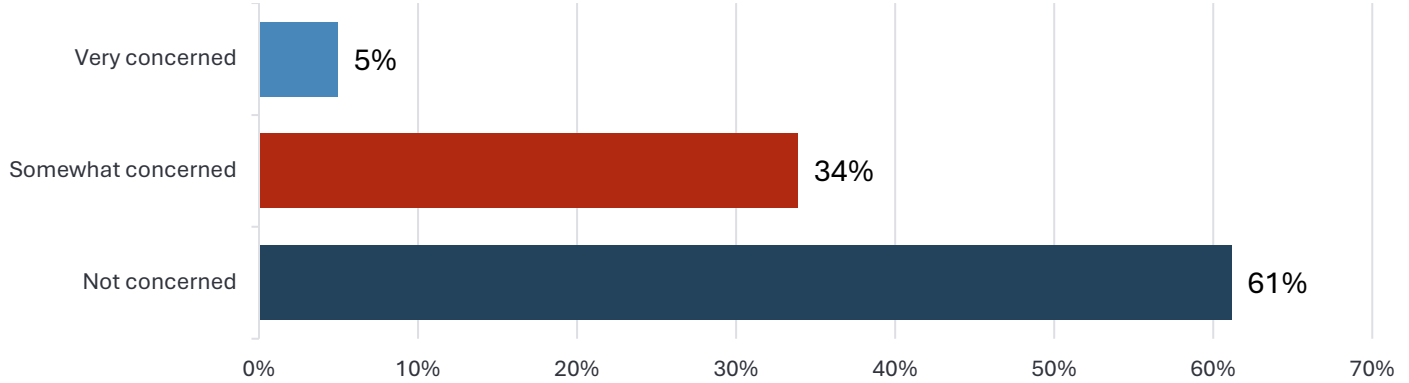
## Job Search Motivation



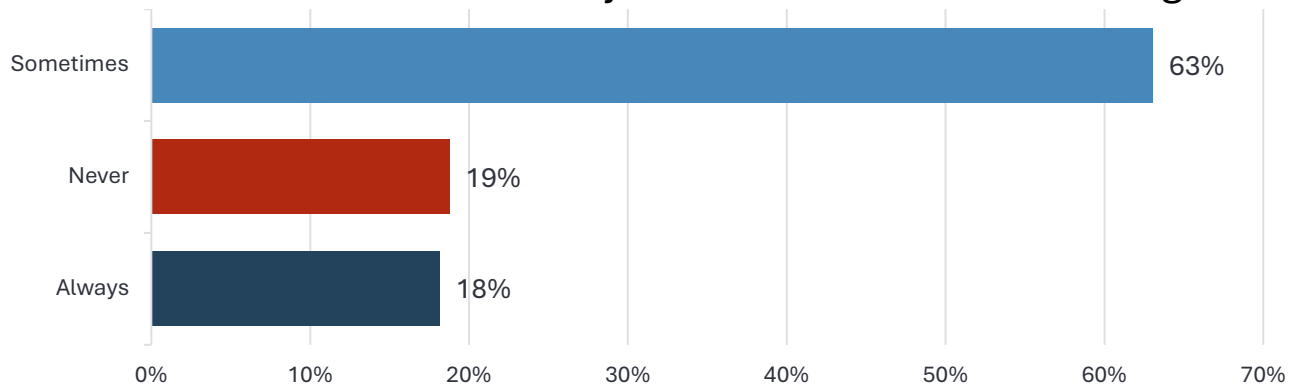
## Satisfaction with Current Work-Life Balance



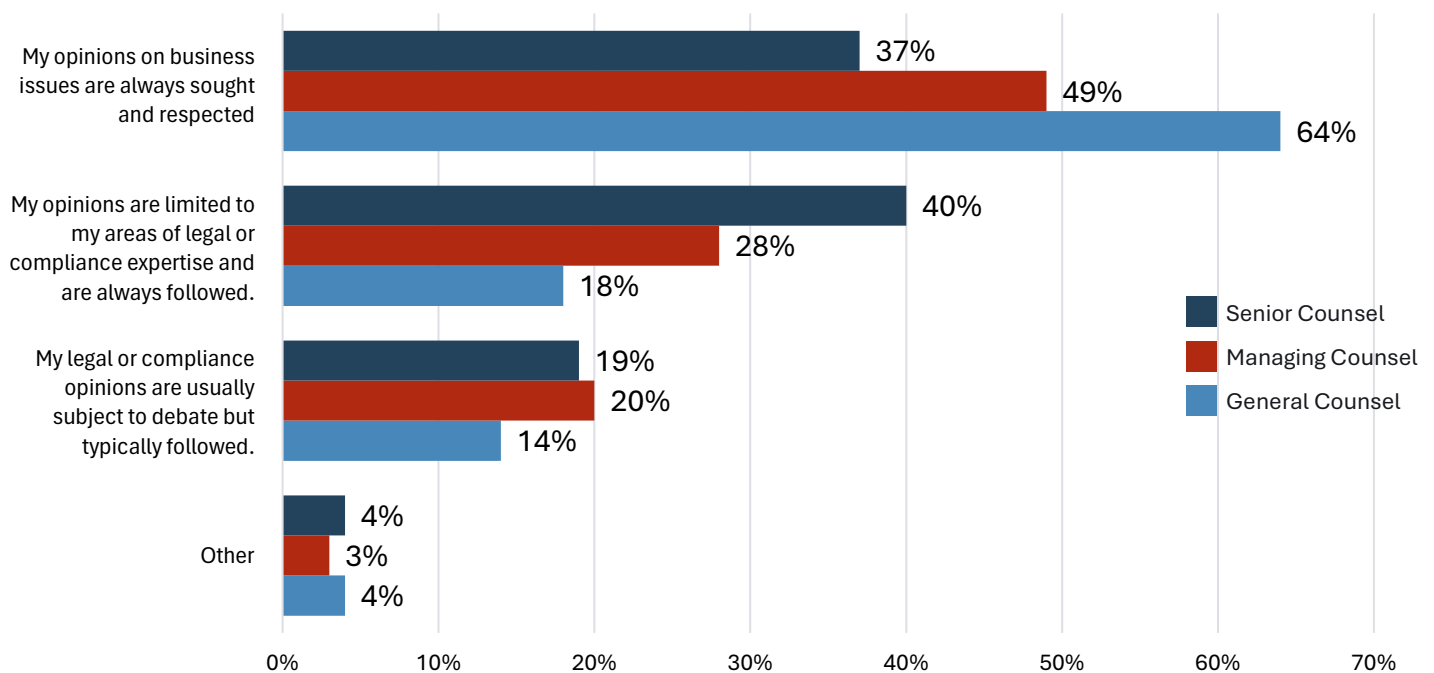
## Level of Concern Regarding Job Security



## Extent Performance is Affected by Lack of Resources or Staffing



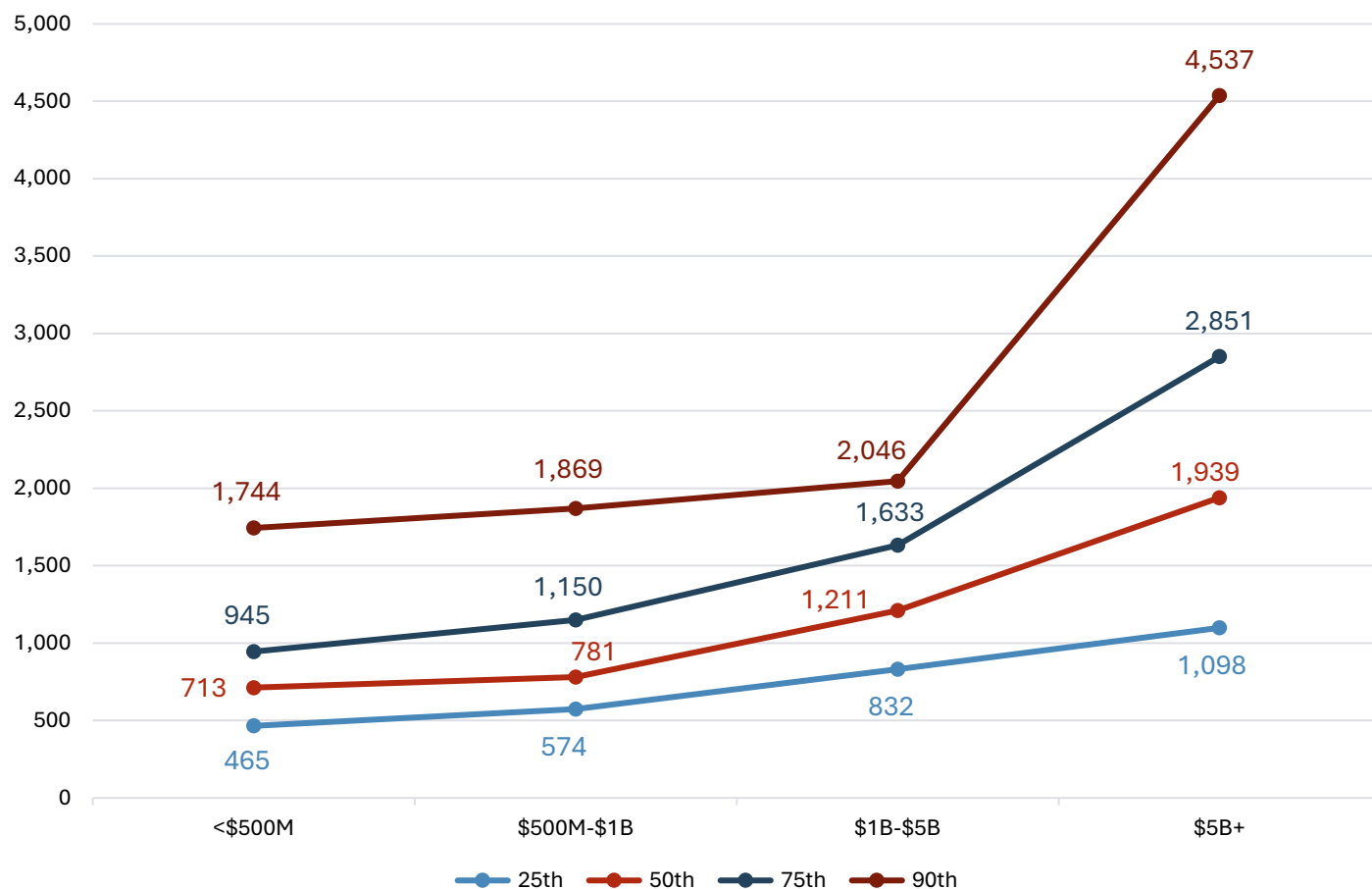
## Stature as a Trusted Advisor to Management



## Compensation Trends:

# General Counsel

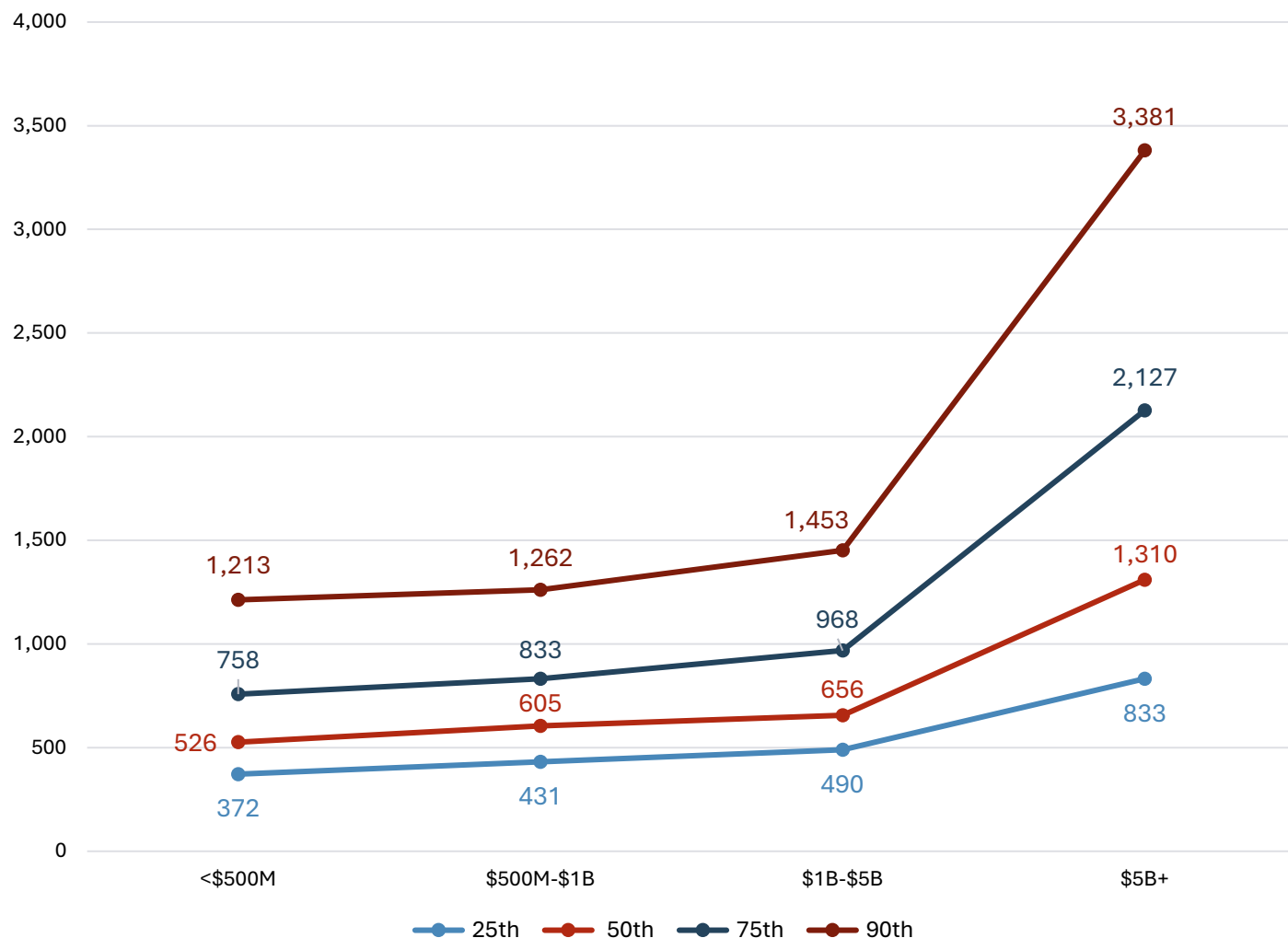
General Counsel at Public Companies by Revenue, Quartiles  
Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR GENERAL COUNSEL AT PUBLIC COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	299	350	414	461	91	150	195	270	75	213	336	1,013	465	713	945	1,744
\$500M-\$1B	327	371	400	449	132	200	283	370	115	210	467	1,050	574	781	1,150	1,869
\$1B-\$5B	405	465	500	546	233	305	376	500	194	441	757	1,000	832	1,211	1,633	2,046
\$5B+	431	557	667	741	304	452	614	900	363	930	1,570	2,897	1,098	1,939	2,851	4,537

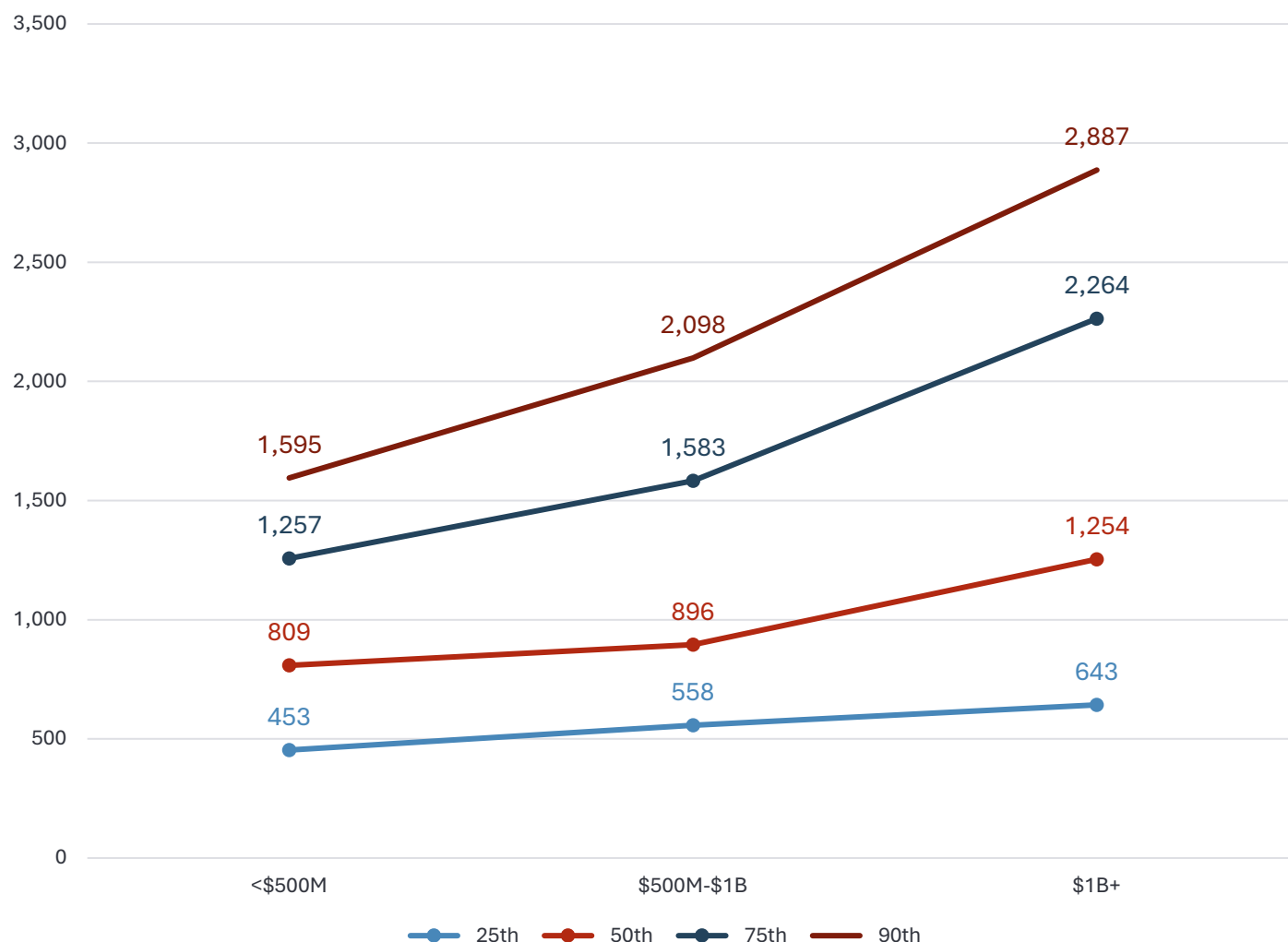
## General Counsel at Private Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR GENERAL COUNSEL AT PRIVATE COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	260	312	386	463	62	114	187	355	50	100	185	395	372	526	758	1,213
\$500M-\$1B	284	350	400	463	93	150	200	271	54	105	233	528	431	605	833	1,262
\$1B-\$5B	289	357	456	558	86	139	257	500	115	160	255	395	490	656	968	1,453
\$5B+	365	460	600	680	200	350	450	701	268	500	1,077	2,000	833	1,310	2,127	3,381

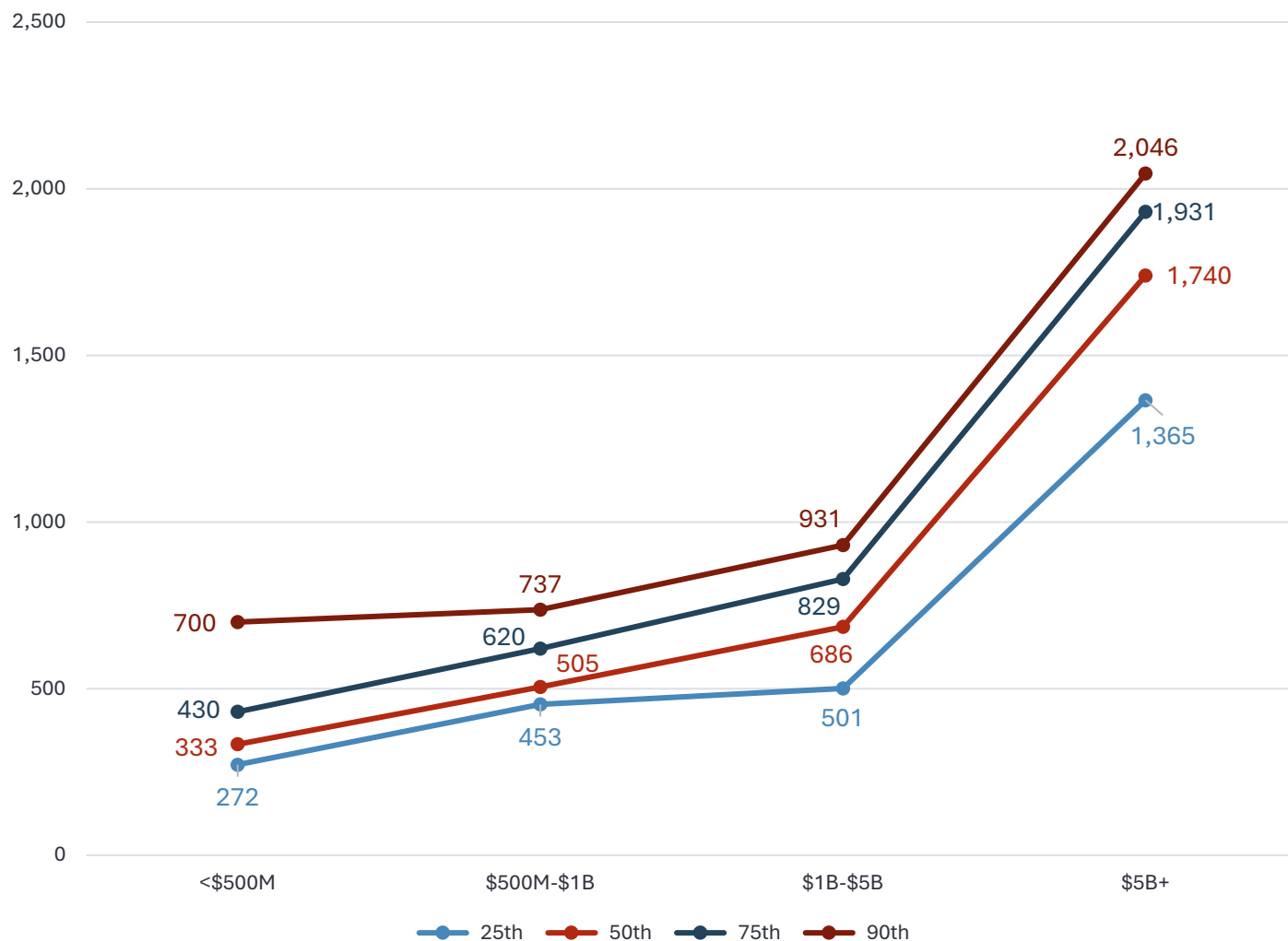
## General Counsel at Portfolio Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR GENERAL COUNSEL AT PORTFOLIO COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	275	300	339	400	71	109	150	195	108	400	769	1,000	453	809	1,257	1,595
\$500M-\$1B	302	350	379	465	122	166	197	285	134	380	1,008	1,348	558	896	1,583	2,098
\$1B-\$5B	343	400	464	500	150	204	300	387	150	650	1,500	2,000	643	1,254	2,264	2,887

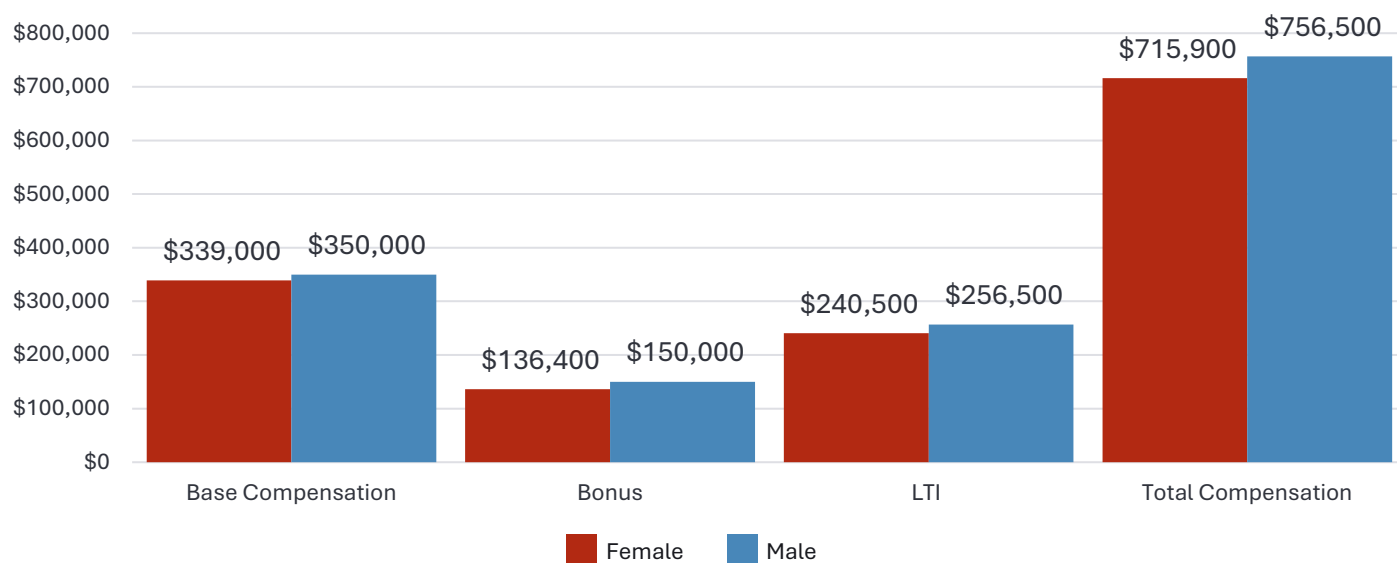
## General Counsel at Non-Profit Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



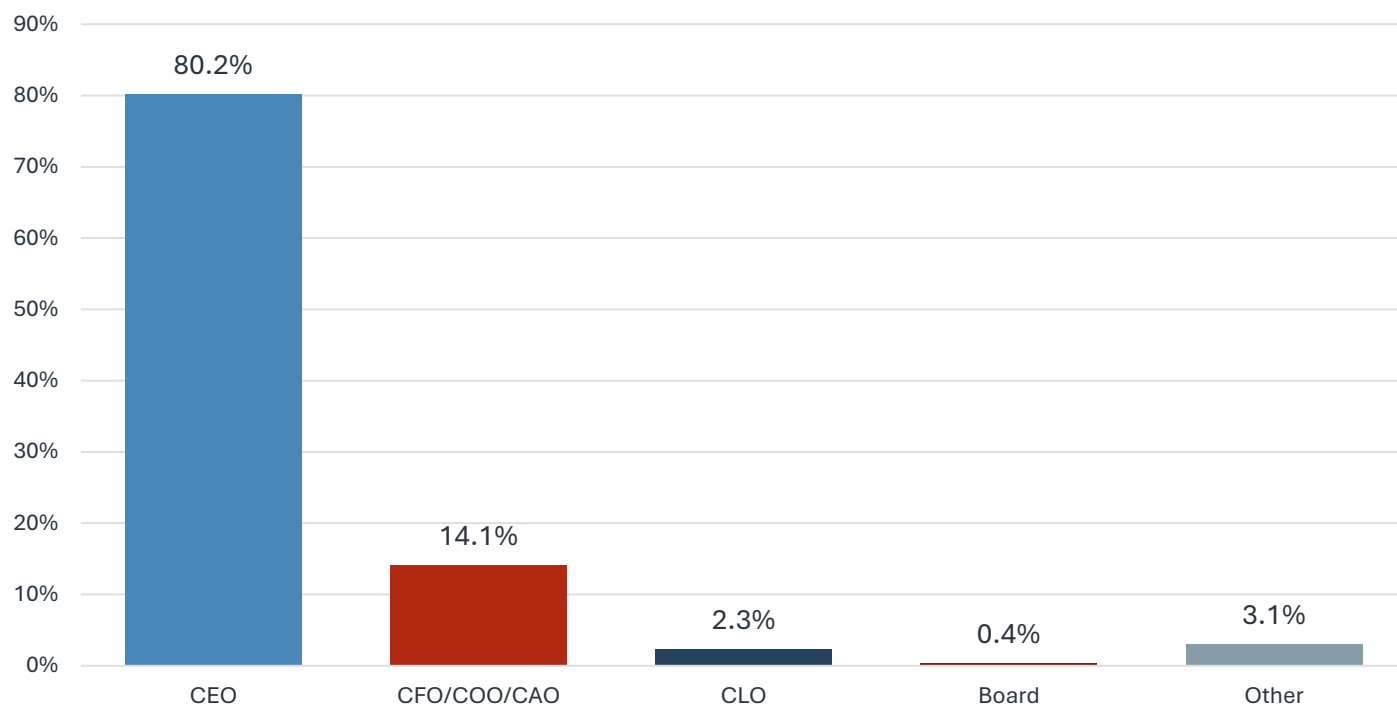
### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR GENERAL COUNSEL AT NON-PROFIT COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	220	261	315	379	31	48	73	185	21	25	43	135	272	333	430	700
\$500M-\$1B	288	320	415	504	105	125	145	174	60	60	60	60	453	505	620	737
\$1B-\$5B	344	474	570	643	97	135	169	192	61	77	91	96	501	686	829	931
\$5B+	680	750	786	808	415	459	504	530	271	531	642	708	1,365	1,740	1,931	2,046

## General Counsel Median Compensation Breakdown by Gender



## Reporting Structure

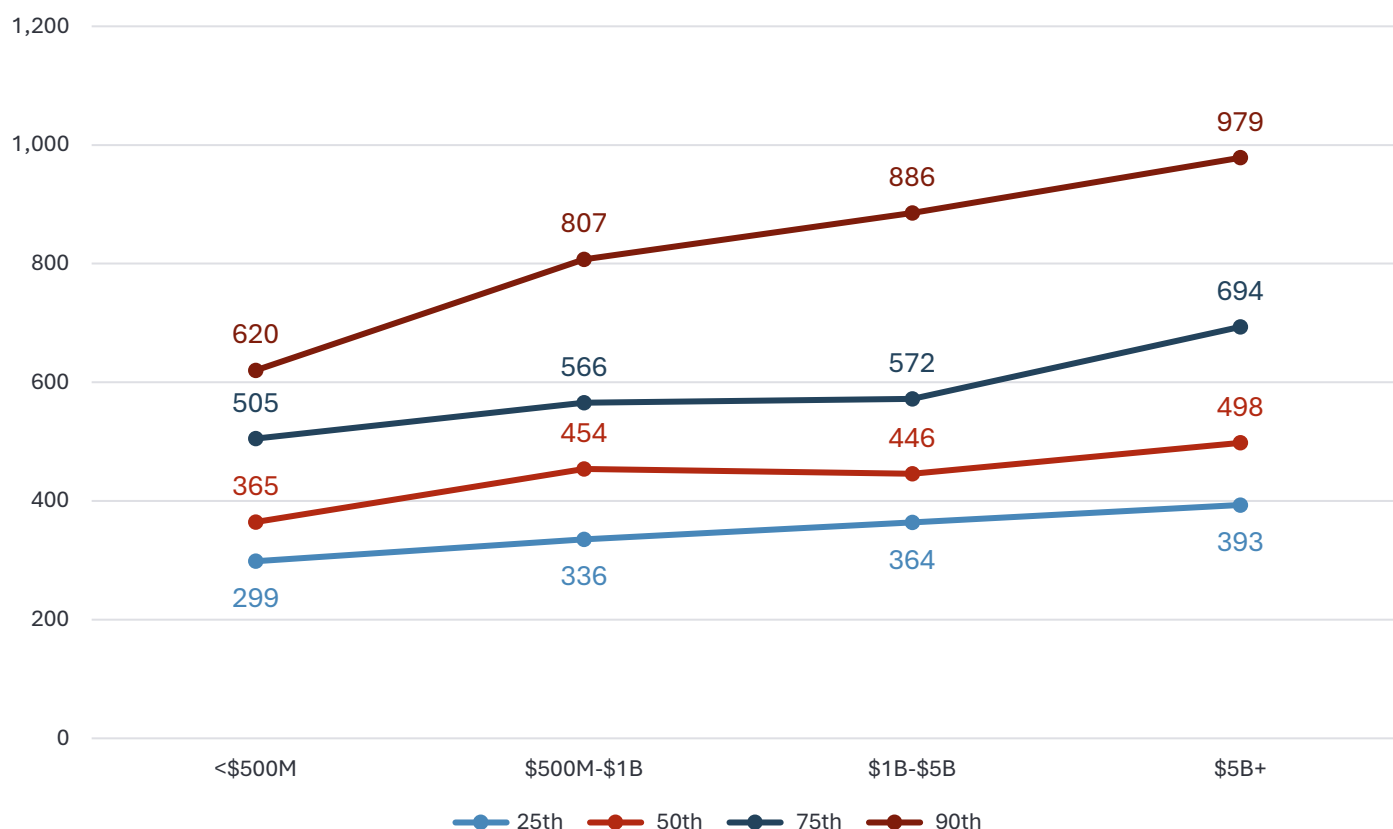




## Compensation Trends:

# Managing Counsel

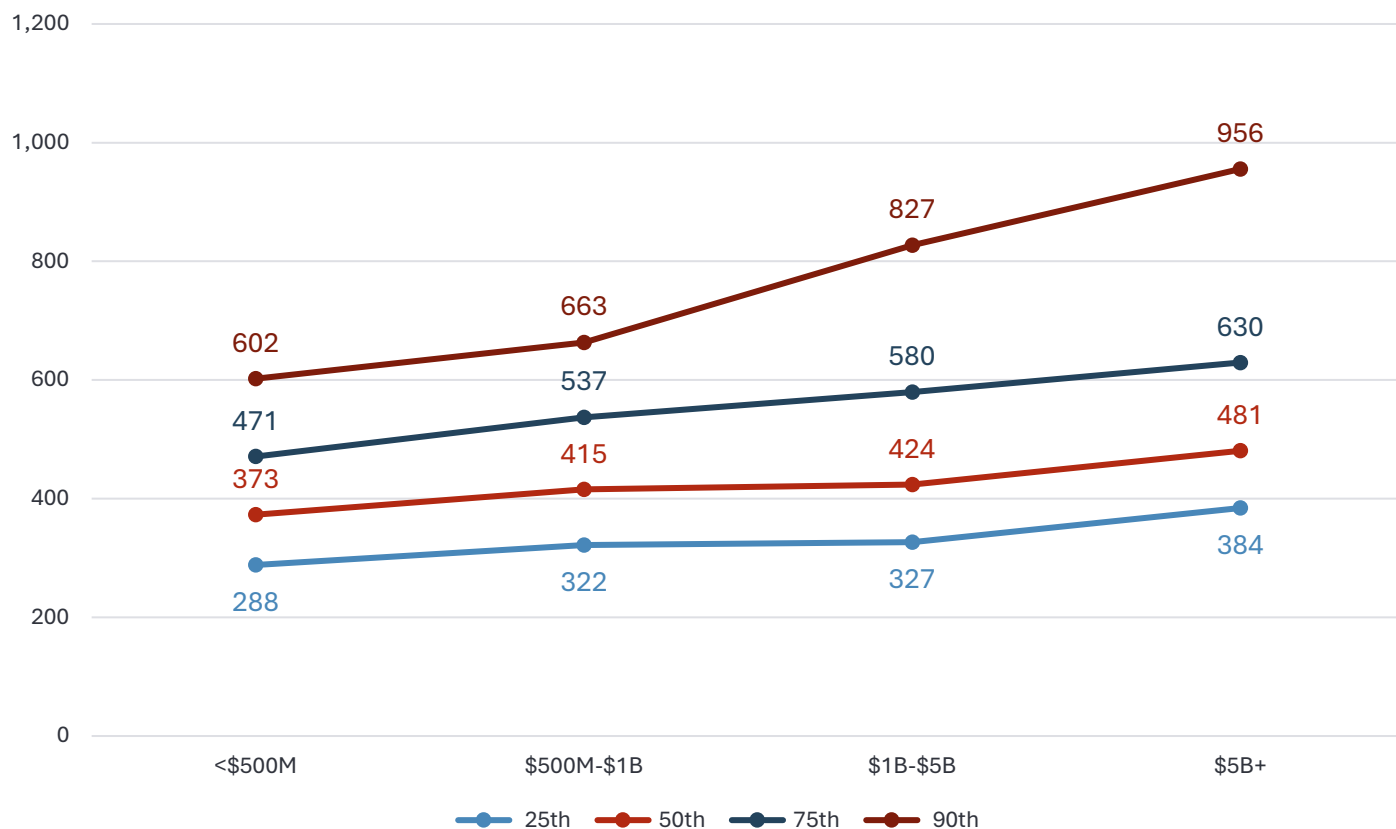
Managing Counsel at Public Companies by Revenue, Quartiles  
Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR MANAGING COUNSEL AT PUBLIC COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	221	257	268	287	52	71	102	120	25	36	135	214	299	365	505	620
\$500M-\$1B	228	270	300	344	60	74	116	162	48	110	150	302	336	454	566	807
\$1B-\$5B	243	280	305	355	61	81	117	147	60	85	150	384	364	446	572	886
\$5B+	260	298	349	419	73	100	146	210	60	100	199	350	393	498	694	979

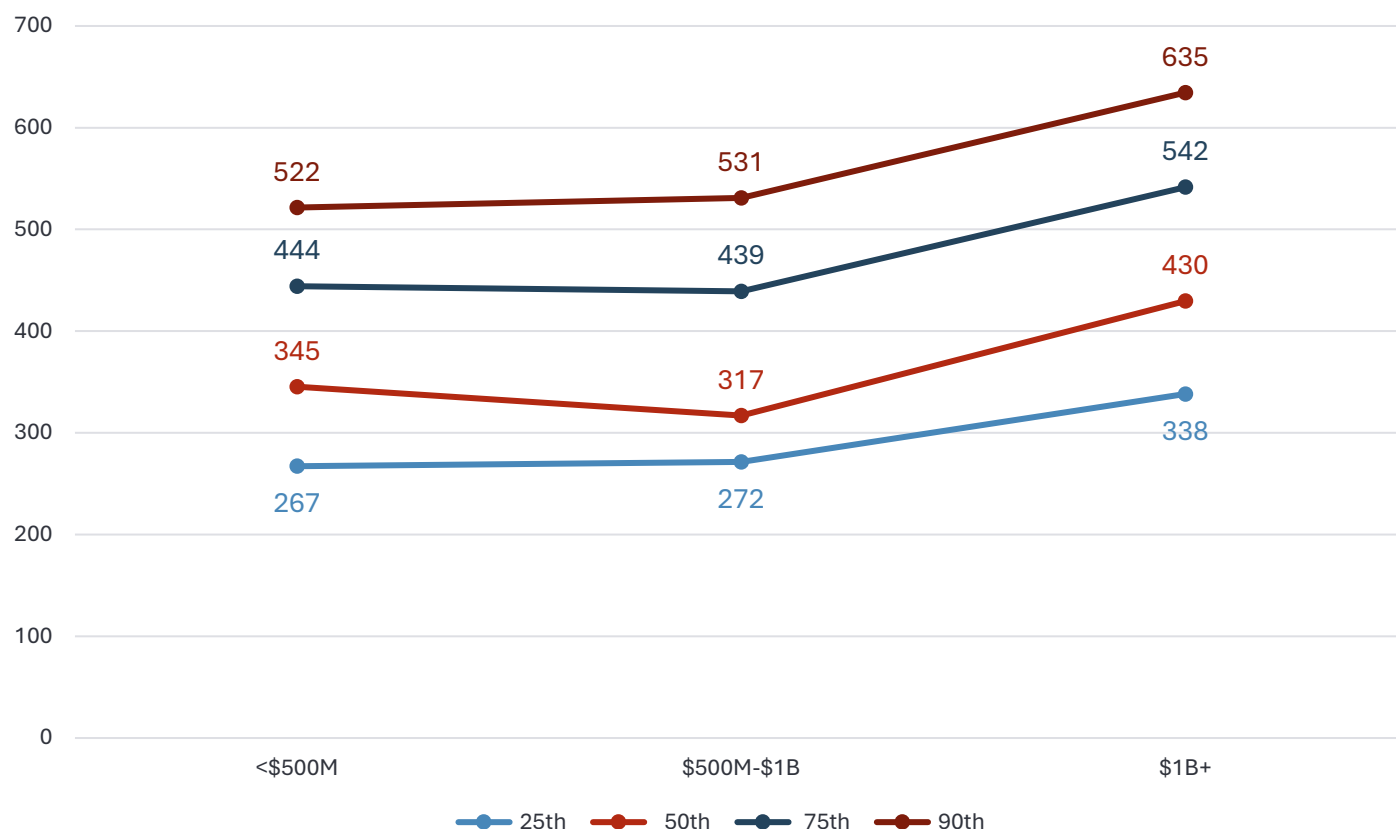
## Managing Counsel at Private Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR MANAGING COUNSEL AT PRIVATE COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	223	266	310	326	45	73	111	171	21	35	50	105	288	373	471	602
\$500M-\$1B	224	274	300	338	48	76	149	230	50	65	89	95	322	415	537	663
\$1B-\$5B	225	264	309	347	52	89	121	250	50	70	150	230	327	424	580	827
\$5B+	264	302	330	391	70	100	145	265	50	79	155	300	384	481	630	956

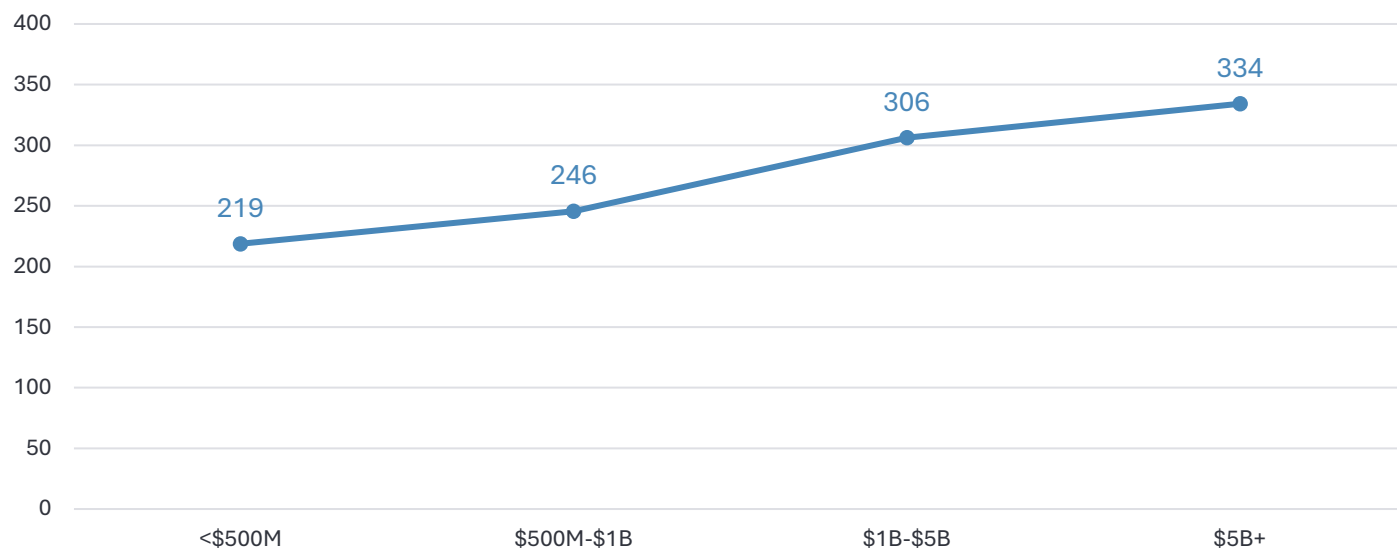
## Managing Counsel at Portfolio Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR MANAGING COUNSEL AT PORTFOLIO COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	203	244	276	303	32	46	91	128	83	155	228	271	267	345	444	522
\$500M-\$1B	210	237	283	285	37	45	84	115	25	35	73	131	272	317	439	531
\$1B-\$5B	236	265	304	343	52	92	110	120	50	72	128	171	338	430	542	635

## Managing Counsel at Non-Profit Companies by Revenue, Median Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)

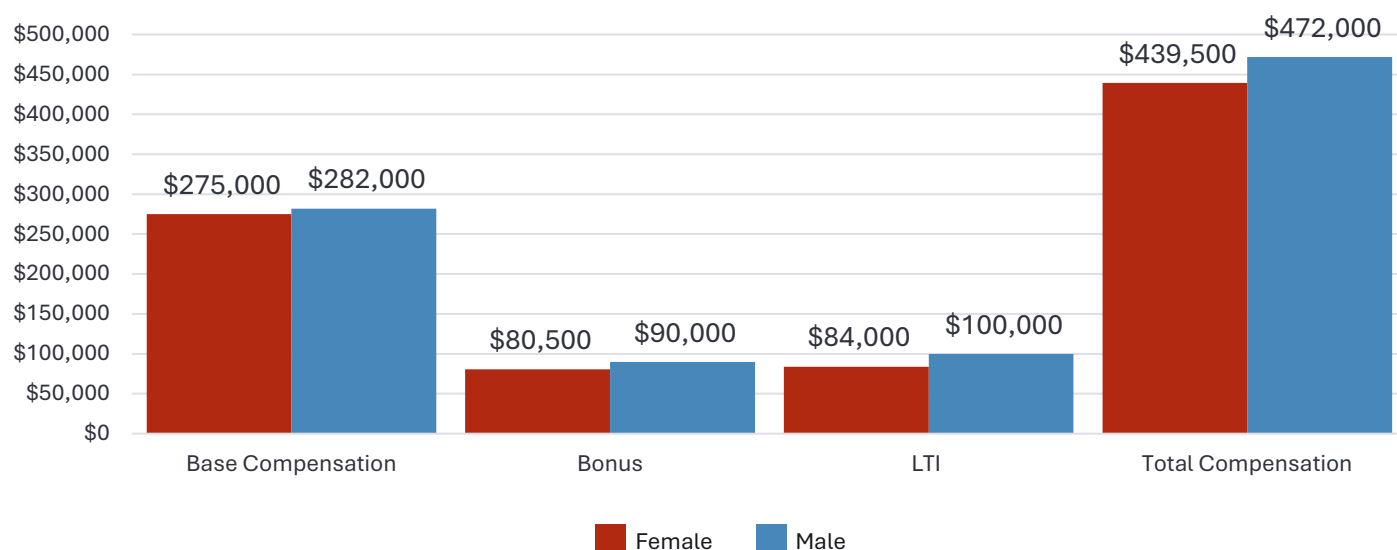


### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR MANAGING COUNSEL AT NON-PROFIT COMPANIES (USD, MEDIAN)

Revenue	Salary	Bonus	LTI	Total Compensation
<\$500M	\$194,750	\$24,000	\$36,000	\$218,750
\$500M-\$1B	\$217,500	\$28,000	--	\$245,500
\$1B-\$5B	\$266,227	\$40,000	\$36,000	\$306,227
\$5B+	\$274,000	\$60,237	--	\$334,237

Note: Quartiles were not included due to the limited number of respondents in the data set.

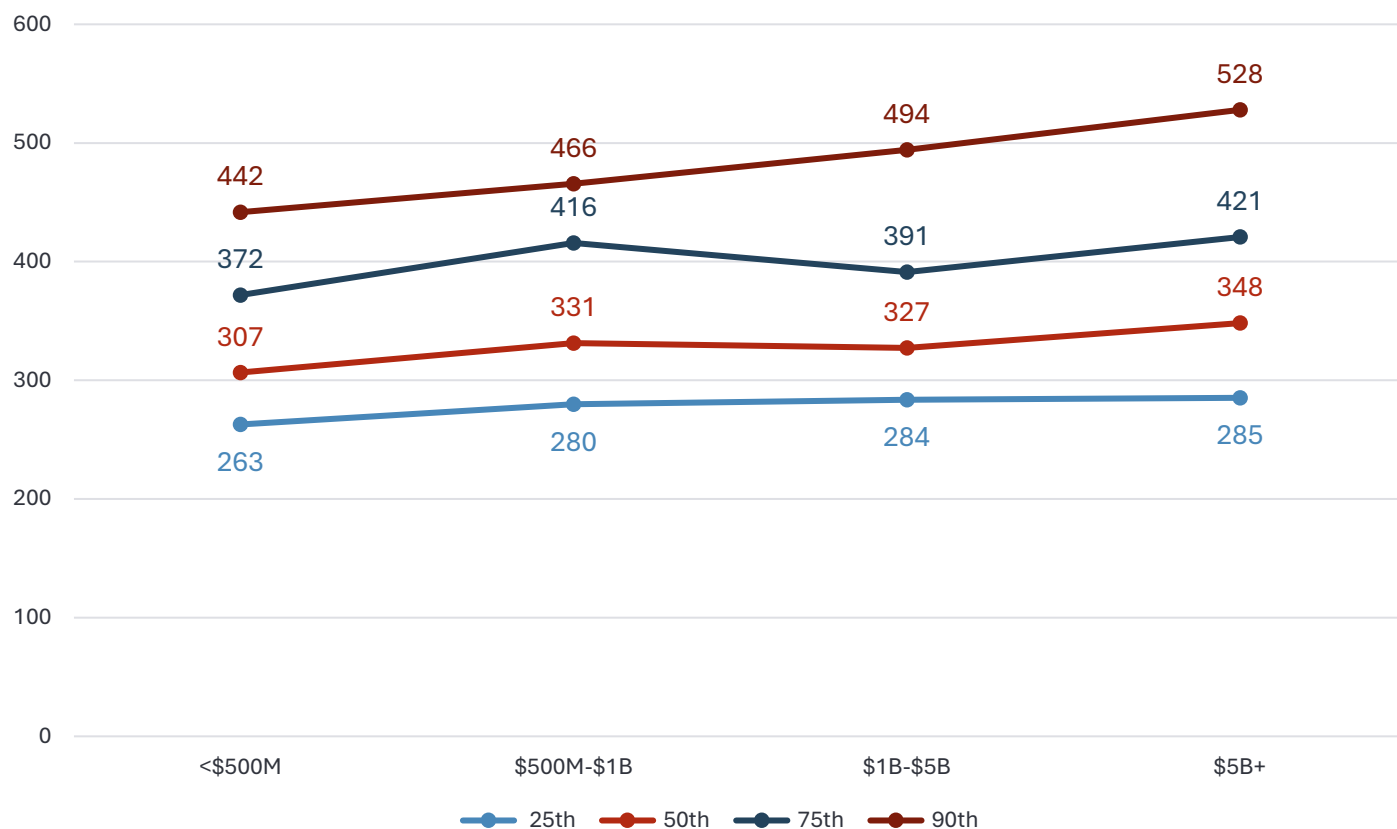
## Managing Counsel Median Compensation Breakdown by Gender



## Compensation Trends:

# Senior Counsel

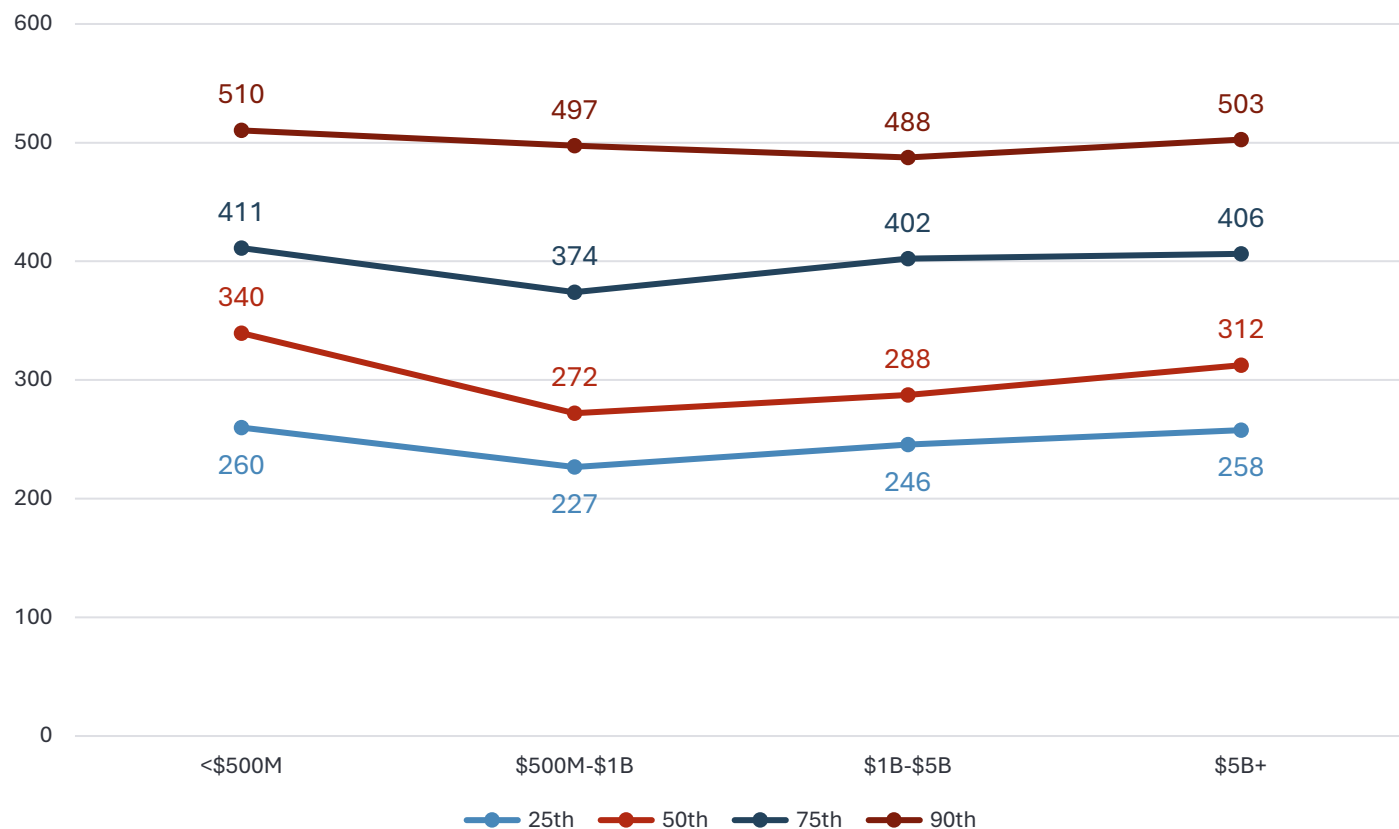
Senior Counsel at Public Companies by Revenue, Quartiles  
Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR SENIOR COUNSEL AT PUBLIC COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	203	225	250	270	44	52	69	84	15	30	53	88	263	307	372	442
\$500M-\$1B	198	210	250	264	44	61	81	88	38	60	86	114	280	331	416	466
\$1B-\$5B	208	226	256	288	42	51	73	85	34	50	63	122	284	327	391	494
\$5B+	211	240	265	301	45	59	76	105	30	49	80	123	285	348	421	528

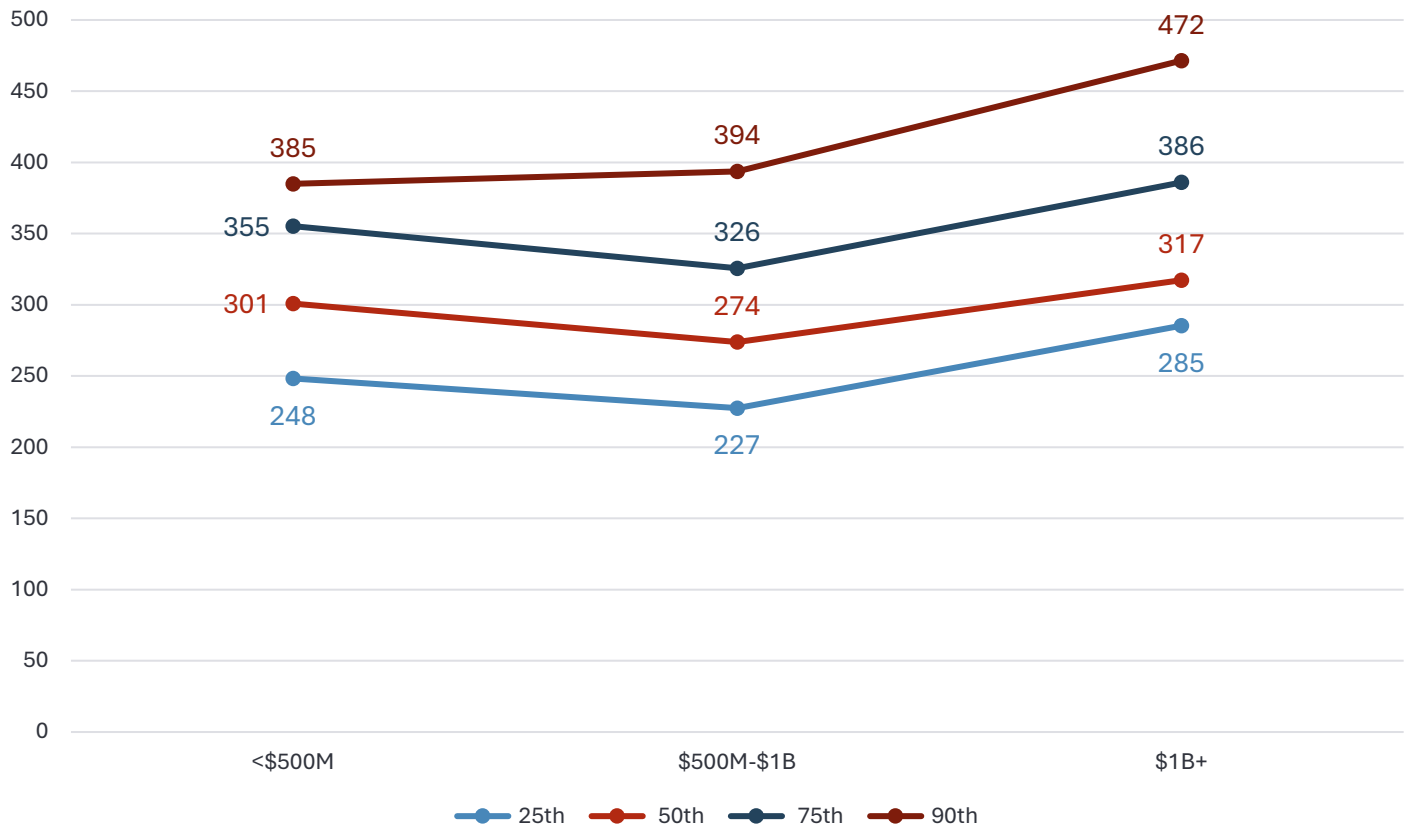
## Senior Counsel at Private Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR SENIOR COUNSEL AT PRIVATE COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	176	218	250	272	28	42	61	108	55	80	100	130	260	340	411	510
\$500M-\$1B	182	212	250	260	29	40	61	123	16	20	63	115	227	272	374	497
\$1B-\$5B	186	207	229	275	31	45	93	125	29	36	81	88	246	288	402	488
\$5B+	202	228	275	300	36	51	67	87	20	33	65	116	258	312	406	503

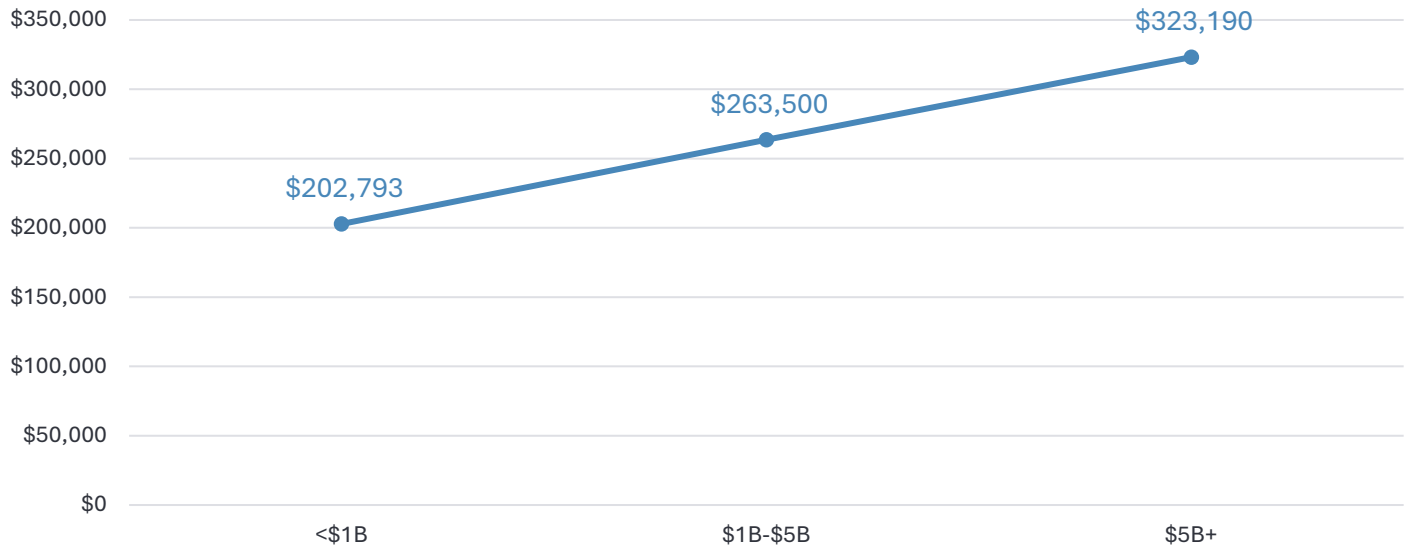
## Senior Counsel at Portfolio Companies by Revenue, Quartiles Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)



### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR SENIOR COUNSEL AT PORTFOLIO COMPANIES (USD, THOUSANDS)

Revenue	Salary				Bonus				LTI				Total Compensation			
	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th	25th	50th	75th	90th
<\$500M	195	225	246	246	22	26	34	49	32	50	75	90	248	301	355	385
\$500M-\$1B	185	209	224	242	22	35	51	90	20	30	50	62	227	274	326	394
\$1B-\$5B	207	212	250	306	35	43	55	73	44	63	81	93	285	317	386	472

## Senior Counsel at Non-Profit Companies by Revenue, Median Total Compensation (USD, Thousands)

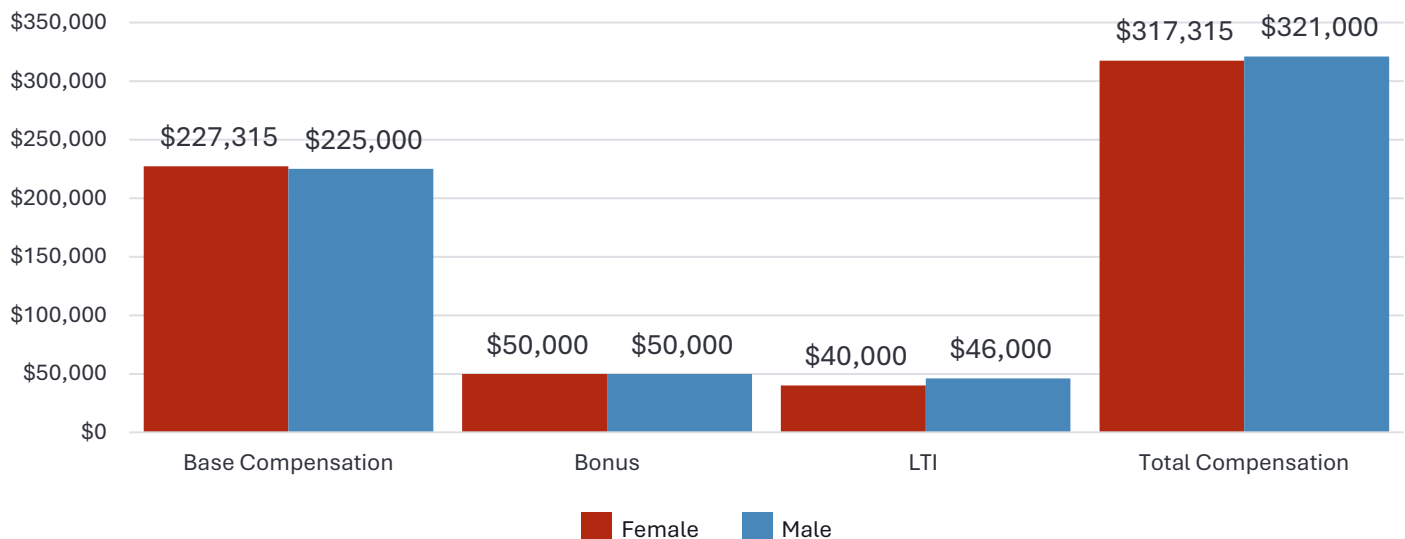


### COMPENSATION BREAKDOWN FOR MANAGING COUNSEL AT NON-PROFIT COMPANIES (USD, MEDIAN)

Revenue	Salary	Bonus	LTI	Total Compensation
<\$500M	\$180,000	\$22,793	\$-	\$202,793
\$500M-\$1B	\$240,000	\$23,500	\$12,000	\$263,500
\$1B-\$5B	\$256,500	\$32,690	\$34,000	\$323,190
\$5B+	\$180,000	\$22,793	\$-	\$202,793

Note: Quartiles were not included due to the limited number of respondents in the data set.

## Senior Counsel Median Compensation Comparison by Gender





## Services

Below are some of the services available to advance your career and organization's success.



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## Resources

Whether you aspire to become a General Counsel or seek to overcome challenges facing in-house legal teams, our thought leadership, industry research, and GC Advantage<sup>SM</sup> webinars equip you with the knowledge and tools needed to thrive.



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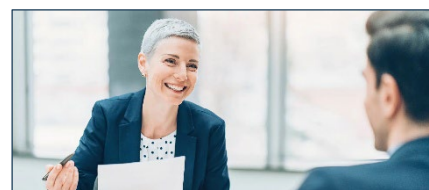
## Selected Resources



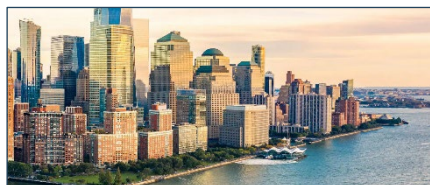
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## About BarkerGilmore

Founded in 2006, BarkerGilmore is recognized as an industry-leading executive search, coaching, and leadership development firm dedicated to building high-performing in-house legal and compliance teams that drive business success.

BarkerGilmore's professional team, which combines highly skilled executive search consultants with distinguished former General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officers, sets us apart and enables our firm to serve as a strategic advisor, delivering integrated, comprehensive solutions to the recruitment and long-term impact and success of in-house legal and compliance talent.

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