




**An In-House
Salary Survey –
Does a Decade Make a
Difference?**



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Introduction



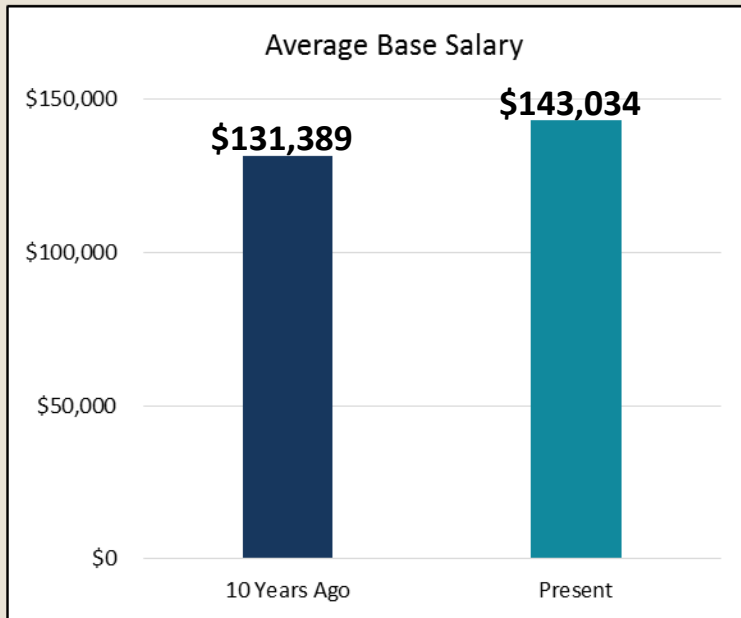
The most commonly posed questions - by in-house clients and candidates alike - have a common theme: **Compensation**. What are we seeing in the market? How has the market changed in recent years? What is fair compensation for a position?

With the exception of data for public company GC-level positions, access to in-house compensation information is fairly limited. For that reason, McCormack Schreiber conducted a brief survey using our own recruiting/placement data to determine changes in base salaries and bonuses in Chicago over the last 10 years.*

To perform this survey, we divided salary data into junior-level positions (primarily 1 to 7 years of legal experience) and senior-level positions (8 plus years of experience, excluding public GC roles). The following is a review of what we found.

*Survey conducted on salary data from in-house placements made from 2005 to 2015.

Junior-Level In-House Compensation

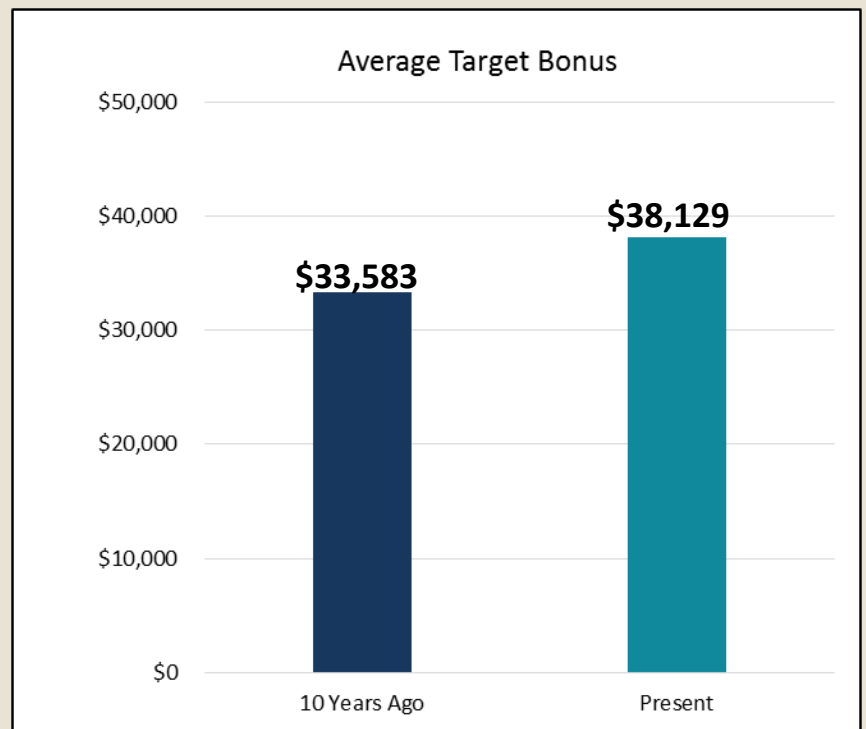


Base Salary

For junior-level attorneys, base salary increases were modest in the last decade, but there was, nonetheless, an increase of roughly **9%**.

Target Bonus

The average bonus ranges for junior-level positions represented a slightly larger increase of approximately **13.5%**.



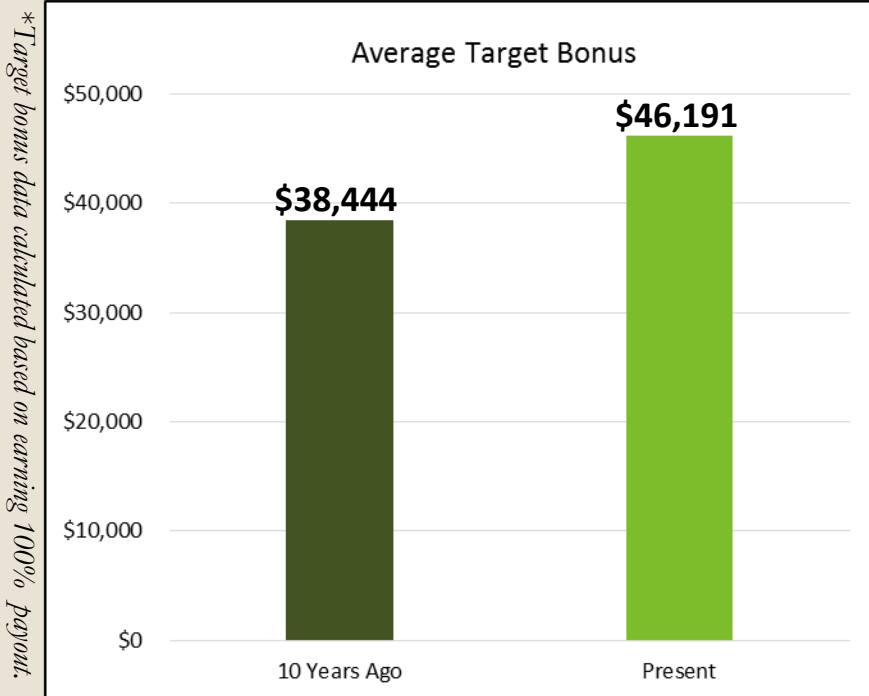
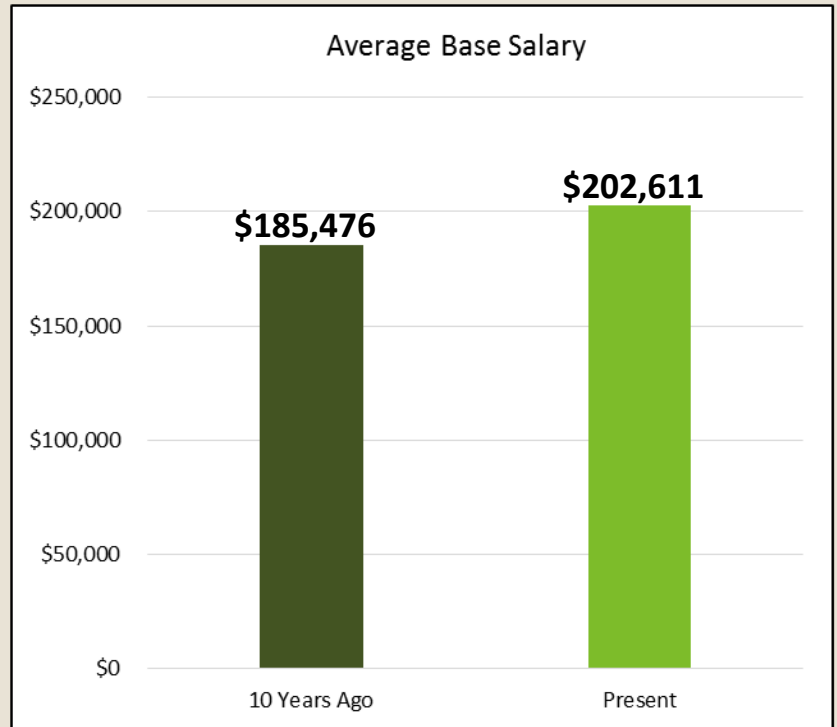
*Target bonus data calculated based on earning 100% payout.

The increase in total cash compensation for junior-level attorneys was just under **10%**.

Senior-Level In-House Compensation

Base Salary

Base salaries for senior-level in-house attorneys in the last decade showed a modest increase of just over **9%**.



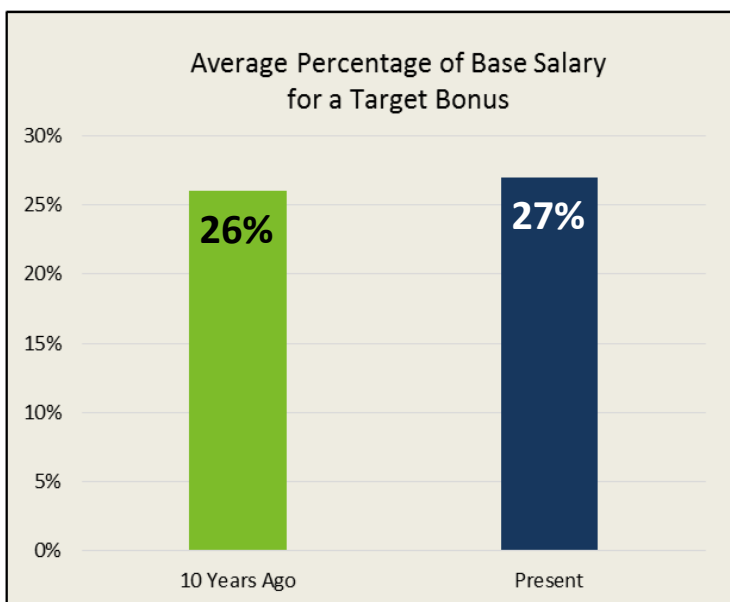
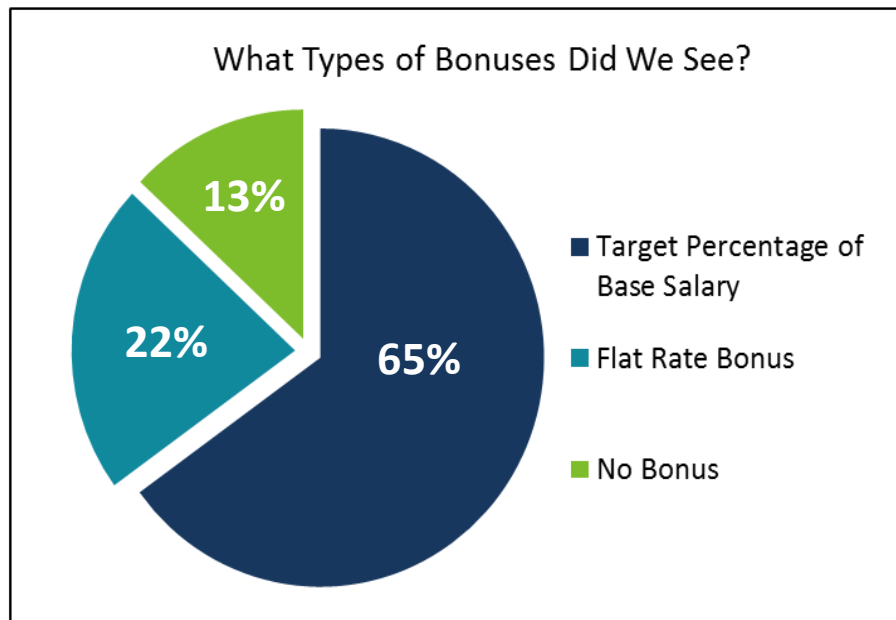
*Target bonus data calculated based on earning 100% payout.

Target Bonus

The average bonus for senior-level attorneys in the last decade had an increase of about **20%**.

The increase in total cash compensation for senior-level attorneys was nearly **11%**.

Target Bonus Breakdown



65%
of in-house attorney positions for the past 10 years offered a target bonus based on a percentage of base salary.

Conclusion



Based exclusively on our in-house placement data, our survey suggests that while average salaries and bonuses increased over the decade, the increases were relatively modest and did not keep pace with the increase in cost of living.*

Some important factors to remember:

1. In the 10 years studied, there was an enormous recession that strongly impacted attorney compensation, at both law firms and companies. Recovery is taking time.
2. The work/life balance of an in-house role can significantly impact compensation - and may bring down average compensation numbers. For those in-house positions that more closely resemble the time commitment of attorneys at large law firms, the target cash compensation may be significantly higher than these numbers represent.
3. The sheer number of in-house searches that we conduct has increased more than 100% in the past decade. Whether it is a buyer's market or candidate driven market depends largely on practice area and specialty expertise.

At McCormack Schreiber we will continue to monitor in-house compensation, and we hope for continued in-house salary growth!

*According to AIER (American Institute for Economic Research) the Cost of Living Calculator (<https://aier.org/cost-living-calculator>) showed a cost of living increase of 21.54% from 2005 to 2015.

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