THE WELL

TOP 10 WEALTH MANAGEMENT ROLES

Detailed Salaries, Job Descriptions, and Regional Insights to Stay Competitive in 2025

2025 EDITION

In the rapidly evolving wealth management landscape, securing top-tier talent has become the cornerstone of sustainable growth and competitive advantage. With an unprecedented wave of advisor retirements on the horizon—an estimated 100,000 advisors expected to retire within the next decade—the industry faces both significant challenges and remarkable opportunities.

This comprehensive guide provides independent Registered Investment Advisors (RIAs) with the critical insights needed to navigate today's competitive talent market. Specifically designed for growing firms with 5-100 employees and $3-100 million in revenue.

Executive Summary

The wealth management industry's transformation extends beyond simple succession planning. Firms are simultaneously managing complex transitions including mergers and acquisitions, regulatory evolution, technological advancement, and changing client expectations.

Industry Growth Trends

8-12% Annual AUM Growth	**3.1%** RIA Increase in 2023
100K Advisors Retiring	**94%** Client Retention

Key Finding: Our analysis reveals significant regional variations in compensation packages, with premium markets like New York and San Francisco commanding substantially higher base salaries and bonus structures.

What's Inside This Guide

Core Advisory Roles

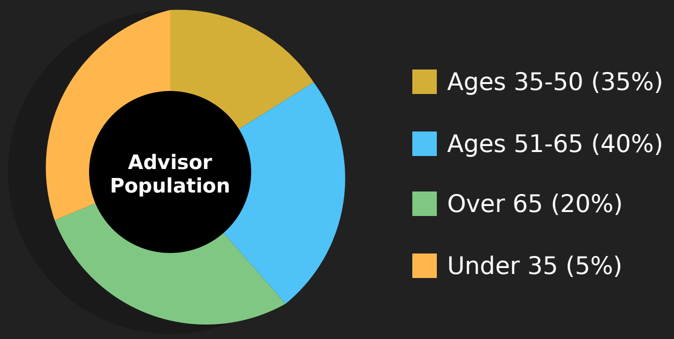
- Financial Advisor/Planner - The client-facing cornerstone
- Portfolio Manager - Strategic investment oversight
- Investment Analyst - Research-driven insights

Market Context: The Current Talent Landscape

As traditional wirehouses continue to face challenges with advisor retention and regulatory pressures, independent RIAs have emerged as the preferred destination for top-tier talent seeking autonomy, better client service capabilities, and more attractive compensation structures.

Industry AUM by Channel ($ Trillions)

Advisor Demographics Breakdown



1. Financial Advisor/Planner

The Client-Facing Cornerstone of Wealth Management

The Financial Advisor/Planner represents the primary client relationship and revenue generation engine for independent RIA firms. Modern advisors serve as trusted counselors, helping clients navigate retirement planning, tax optimization, estate planning, business succession, and intergenerational wealth transfer.

Core Responsibilities

- **Client Assessment:** Comprehensive financial analysis and planning
- **Portfolio Management:** Ongoing monitoring and strategic adjustments
- **Client Communication:** Regular meetings and educational workshops
- **Business Development:** Organic growth through referrals

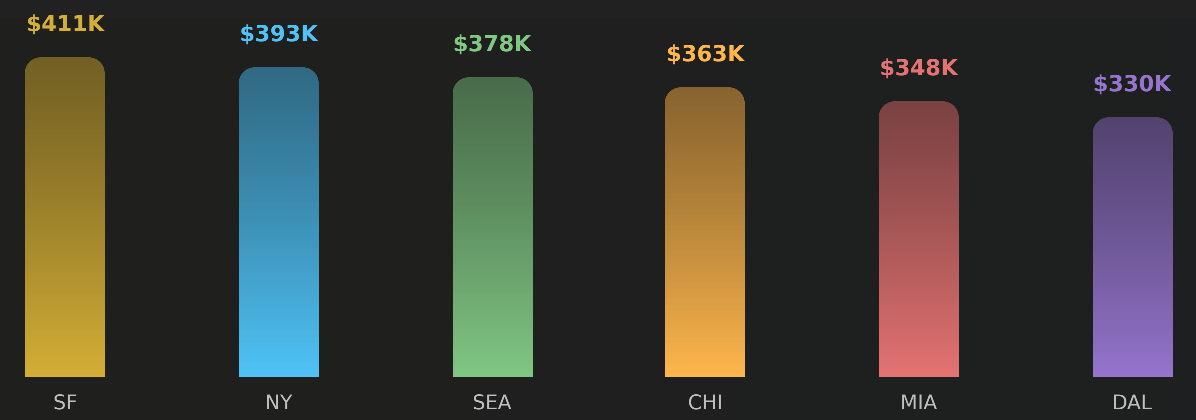
Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in Finance, Economics, or related field
- CFP®, CFA, or equivalent professional certification
- Series 7, 65/66 licenses; insurance licenses preferred
- 5+ years in financial advisory with proven track record

Performance Expectations: Achieve $10-20M in new AUM annually • Maintain 95%+ client retention • Mentor junior staff

Financial Advisor - Regional Compensation

2025 Regional Compensation Analysis



NEW YORK, NY	$192K - $393K
SAN FRANCISCO, CA	$199K - $411K
CHICAGO, IL	$176K - $363K
DALLAS, TX	$161K - $330K
MIAMI, FL	$168K - $348K
SEATTLE, WA	$183K - $378K

Compensation Structure: Base salary typically represents 40-60% of total compensation, with performance bonuses based on AUM growth, client retention, and revenue generation. Top performers in premium markets can exceed $500K in total compensation.

Market Dynamics: The significant range in compensation reflects experience levels, book size, and regional cost of living. Firms in competitive markets often enhance packages with equity participation, deferred compensation, and comprehensive benefits.

2. Portfolio Manager

Strategic Investment Oversight and Performance Optimization

The Portfolio Manager role represents the investment expertise cornerstone of sophisticated RIA firms, responsible for constructing and managing investment portfolios that optimize returns while managing risk in alignment with client profiles and market conditions.

Portfolio Manager Performance Metrics

$200M+	3-5%
Typical AUM Managed	Expected Outperformance

Strategic Responsibilities

- ▶ **Portfolio Construction:** Design sophisticated asset allocation models
- ▶ **Investment Research:** Comprehensive due diligence on opportunities
- ▶ **Performance Analysis:** Detailed reports with attribution analysis
- ▶ **Risk Management:** Advanced quantitative analysis and ESG factors

Performance Expectations: Manage $200M+ AUM • Outperform benchmarks by 3–5% • Deliver accurate monthly/quarterly reviews • Mentor analysts • Contribute to investment committee

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK	SAN FRANCISCO	CHICAGO
$281K - $500K	$293K - $520K	$259K - $460K
DALLAS	**MIAMI**	**SEATTLE**
$236K - $420K	$248K - $440K	$270K - $480K

3. Client Service Associate

Essential Support for Seamless Client Experiences

Objective: Provide administrative and operational support to advisors, ensuring seamless client experiences and compliance.

Core Responsibilities

- Manage client communications and scheduling via phone, email, and secure portals
- Prepare client reports and performance reviews using Tamarac/Orion
- Assist with onboarding, ACATs, transfers, and documentation
- Coordinate with custodians (Fidelity, Schwab) for transactions and tax reporting
- Maintain CRM data accuracy and privacy compliance
- Support marketing materials and client events/webinars

Essential Qualifications

- Associate’s/Bachelor’s in Business, Finance, or related field
- 2+ years in financial services or client-facing roles
- Series 65 or 7 preferred; proficiency with MS Office, CRM (e.g., Redtail)
- Strong organization, communication, and problem-solving skills

Expectations: 100+ monthly interactions at 98% satisfaction • Reduce advisor admin time by 30% • Achieve licensing milestones in year one

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY **$93.5K - $135K**	SAN FRANCISCO, CA **$97.2K - $140.4K**	CHICAGO, IL **$86K - $124.2K**
DALLAS, TX **$78.5K - $113.4K**	MIAMI, FL **$82.3K - $118.8K**	SEATTLE, WA **$89.8K - $129.6K**

4. Investment Analyst

Research-Driven Insights for Superior Investment Decisions

Objective: Conduct rigorous research and analysis to inform investment decisions across asset classes.

Core Responsibilities

- Analyze markets, securities, and economic indicators using Python, R, and Bloomberg
- Build models to forecast returns, risks, and scenarios
- Prepare reports and recommendations for portfolio managers
- Monitor global events and provide real-time insights
- Assist due diligence for alternatives and ESG strategies

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor’s in Finance/Economics; CFA Level II+ preferred
- 3+ years in investment analysis; strong programming/data skills

Expectations: Produce 20+ reports/month at 95% accuracy • Contribute to benchmark outperformance • Ongoing education

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY **$127.5K - $201.25K**	SAN FRANCISCO, CA **$132.6K - $209.3K**	CHICAGO, IL **$117.3K - $185.15K**
DALLAS, TX **$107.1K - $169.05K**	MIAMI, FL **$112.2K - $177.1K**	SEATTLE, WA **$122.4K - $193.2K**

5. Operations Manager

Streamlined Processes for Scalable Growth

Objective: Optimize operational processes, technology, and controls to support scale and compliance.

Core Responsibilities

- Oversee trading, settlements, and reconciliation with custodians
- Implement and manage fintech stack (e.g., Black Diamond, Advent)
- Lead training on best practices and new systems
- Facilitate integrations and data migrations during M&A
- Track KPIs; reduce errors and costs; coordinate cybersecurity

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor’s in Business/Operations; 5+ years in financial ops
- Knowledge of RIA tech stack and regulations; strong PM skills

Expectations: Reduce ops costs by 10–15% YoY • 99%+ accuracy at volume • Support 25% growth via process improvements

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY $130.9K - $227.5K	SAN FRANCISCO, CA $135.85K - $236.6K	CHICAGO, IL $120.175K - $209.3K
DALLAS, TX $109.725K - $191.1K	MIAMI, FL $114.95K - $200.2K	SEATTLE, WA $125.4K - $218.4K

6. Compliance Officer

Regulatory Excellence and Risk Mitigation

Objective: Oversee regulatory compliance to mitigate risks and ensure ethical practices.

Core Responsibilities

- Monitor SEC, FINRA, and state rules via audits and reviews
- Develop policies, training, and risk assessments
- Review marketing materials and client communications
- Manage Form ADV, U4 filings, AML monitoring, and exams
- Advise on data privacy/security; coordinate external audits

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor’s in Finance/Law/Business; CRCP preferred
- 5+ years compliance in financial services; RIA rules & tools

Expectations: 100% audit compliance • Quarterly staff training • Reduce risk exposure 15% YoY

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY **$110K - $162.5K**	SAN FRANCISCO, CA **$114.4K - $169K**	CHICAGO, IL **$101.2K - $149.5K**
DALLAS, TX **$92.4K - $136.5K**	MIAMI, FL **$96.8K - $143K**	SEATTLE, WA **$105.6K - $156K**

7. Wealth Management Associate

Foundational Support and Growth Path to Advisory

Objective: Assist advisors with research, planning, and client support to build foundational skills.

Core Responsibilities

- Support financial plan prep, research, and client presentations
- Handle data entry, account setup, and reporting
- Participate in business development and events
- Aid onboarding and transitions; monitor portfolios

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor’s in Finance/Business; internships preferred
- 0–2 years experience; eagerness to learn

Expectations: 75+ tasks weekly • Obtain Series 7/65 within 12 months • Contribute to team productivity

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	CHICAGO, IL
$68.75K - $105K	$71.5K - $109.2K	$63.25K - $96.6K
DALLAS, TX	**MIAMI, FL**	**SEATTLE, WA**
$57.75K - $88.2K	$60.5K - $92.4K	$66K - $100.8K

8. Financial Paraplanner

Analytical Support for Complex Planning

Objective: Assist in developing and maintaining client financial plans.

Core Responsibilities

- Gather/analyze client data; run scenarios in MoneyGuidePro
- Prepare compliance-checked reports and update client files
- Support advisors in meetings and follow-ups
- Contribute to transitions with data analysis and plan adjustments

Essential Qualifications

- Associate’s/Bachelor’s in Finance; CFP coursework preferred
- 2+ years paraplanning; proficiency in planning tools

Expectations: 25+ plans/month • 100% data accuracy • Reduce advisor workload by 30%

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	CHICAGO, IL
$89.375K - $112.5K	$92.95K - $117K	$82.225K - $103.5K
DALLAS, TX	**MIAMI, FL**	**SEATTLE, WA**
$75.075K - $94.5K	$78.65K - $99K	$85.8K - $108K

9. Business Development Manager

Growth Leadership and Market Expansion

Objective: Lead client acquisition and partnerships to increase AUM.

Core Responsibilities

- Develop BD strategies targeting HNWI and referral sources
- Network via events and digital campaigns; build relationships
- Prepare proposals and tailored pitches; track metrics and ROI
- Support M&A sourcing and integration

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor’s in Business/Marketing; 5+ years financial sales
- Proven record of meeting/exceeding targets

Expectations: $15M+ new AUM/yr • 25% lead conversion • 75+ new relationships/yr

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY	SAN FRANCISCO, CA	CHICAGO, IL
$187.5K - $375K	$195K - $390K	$172.5K - $345K
DALLAS, TX	**MIAMI, FL**	**SEATTLE, WA**
$157.5K - $315K	$165K - $330K	$180K - $360K

10. Marketing Specialist

Brand Growth and Demand Generation

Objective: Develop and execute marketing strategies to elevate brand visibility and generate leads.

Core Responsibilities

- Create content for web, social, newsletters, thought leadership
- Manage SEO/PPC and analytics in HubSpot/GA
- Coordinate events, webinars, partnerships
- Analyze campaign ROI and optimize
- Support rebranding and transitions post-M&A

Essential Qualifications

- Bachelor's in Marketing/Communications; 3+ years in financial marketing
- Expertise in digital tools and analytics

Expectations: +25% leads quarterly • 6+ campaigns/yr • Expand RIA community presence

2025 Regional Compensation

NEW YORK, NY **$82.5K - $127.5K**	SAN FRANCISCO, CA **$85.8K - $132.6K**	CHICAGO, IL **$75.9K - $117.3K**
DALLAS, TX **$69.3K - $107.1K**	MIAMI, FL **$72.6K - $112.2K**	SEATTLE, WA **$79.2K - $122.4K**

Transform Your Talent Challenges into Growth Opportunities

Partner with The Well Recruiting Solutions for elite, white-glove sourcing of wealth management professionals.

Our Comprehensive Services

Executive Search

Senior-level placements for advisors, portfolio managers, and leadership roles requiring proven track records.

Professional Recruitment

Mid-level client service, paraplanning, and operations talent.

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