



November 2020

TO: Law School Career Services Offices
FROM: James Leipold, Executive Director
Danielle Taylor, Director of Research

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING
YOUR DATA TO NALP:**

April 20, 2021

SUBJECT: 2020 Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS)

We are writing to provide you with a complete set of the Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS) materials for the Class of 2020, including the ERSS form for the Class of 2020 which has already been posted to the NALP website at: www.nalp.org/erssinfo.

Collecting and reporting this consumer information remains one of the most important things that we do together each year. As legal career professionals, individually and collectively, one of our professional responsibilities is to provide prospective law students and their families with complete and reliable information about their reasonable employment prospects upon graduation. That responsibility can only be met by reporting individual student employment outcomes to both the ABA and NALP on an annual basis. For the Class of 2019, 196 ABA-accredited law schools in the U.S. submitted employment status data for 33,007 graduates, providing information on over 97% of all graduates. With your help, we again look forward to being able to report similar coverage for the Class of 2020.

Submission Due Date

The due date for employment data for the Class of 2020 is **Tuesday, April 20, 2021**, to allow you time to submit your data to the ABA by its deadline and then submit your data to NALP before the Annual Education Conference (AEC), taking place from April 27-30, 2021. Note that the employed-by date for this class is **Monday, March 15, 2021**. Also keep in mind that per the ABA definition of employed, graduates must have commenced their employment by March 15, 2021 in order to count as employed. If they have accepted a job offer that will start after March 15 and they are not working in another temporary job in the meantime, then they must be counted as “Employed – Start Date Deferred” in both the ABA and NALP data sets.



New This Year

Noted below are several updates for the Class of 2020. Please see the “What’s New for the Class of 2020” document for more detailed information on these changes.

- The gender identity item has been expanded to include additional selection options.
- The previous sexual orientation item has been replaced with an “I identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and/or Queer” item.
- Some race/ethnicity categories have been renamed.
- Two new demographic questions on first-generation college student status have been included under “Parental/Guardian Education.” These questions have been added to capture both first-generation college students and first-generation JD students.
- In order to be consistent with the ABA, the “Enrolled in a full-time degree or certificate program” option has been changed to “Enrolled in graduate studies” to allow for both full-time and part-time enrollment.
- Under “Source of Job,” the spring and fall OCI response options have been consolidated into a single response option, “through an on-campus interview (OCI) program,” and a new response option of “as a result of an internship/externship experience” has been added.
- Two new business job types have been included: “Privacy/Cyber Security analyst or officer” and “Contract manager/analyst.”
- Two new level of government options have been added: “Tribal” and “International.” The “Other” response option has been eliminated.

COVID-19 Considerations for the Class of 2020

In order to be consistent with the ABA, judicial clerkships originally intended to last for one year or more, but that started late due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, may still be counted as long-term. This also applies to fellowships and other term-limited positions that were intended to last at least one year. These exceptions only apply to the Class of 2020.

Paper Survey Forms Are No Longer Accepted

If your school was one of the remaining six law schools that submitted ERSS data via paper forms rather than a data file for the Class of 2019, you should have received a communication from NALP last year regarding the phase out of this submission method and alternative reporting options. If you need more information on alternative submission options, please let us know.

NALP and the ABA

In a few instances NALP and ABA definitions will continue to diverge. We try to keep these variances to a minimum, but in some cases the differences are unavoidable. In particular, starting with the Class of 2015, the ABA tied the definitions of short-term and long-term jobs that are school-funded to a particular minimum salary threshold. NALP did not follow suit and retains definitions of short-term and long-term that are tied to how long the job is expected to last from the employer's perspective. Additionally, NALP does not require reporting of information as to terms of the job — that is, whether it is full-time or part-time and whether it is long-term or short-term for graduates where that information is not known.

General Instructions and Guidelines for the Class of 2020

The Class of 2020 will be the 47th consecutive law school graduating class documented by NALP's annual ERSS. As you know, throughout this time, the ERSS has allowed NALP to provide comprehensive, reliable, and authoritative information on the employment of new law school graduates. We are committed to continue providing this vital information and we understand that **you play the most important role in this process**. NALP's extraordinary track record to date has only been possible because of your efforts to track down your graduates and your willingness to provide information — on a confidential basis — to the NALP office. **Your participation is necessary to ensure that the ERSS remains the premier source of information** on the employment experiences of new law school graduates.

Survey results will be published in *Jobs & JDs: Employment and Salaries of New Law Graduates — Class of 2020*, in the *NALP Bulletin*, and on the NALP website. Law schools, legal employers and attorneys, the media, and prospective students all use the results. Your information will also be available in your confidential School Report, which all participating NALP member schools automatically receive. Remember that your information is confidential. No information that identifies schools or individuals is published or released by NALP. To ensure the highest possible quality data:

- *Read the instruction booklet and the separate enclosure, "Guidelines for Surveying Your Graduates,"* regardless of the format you use to submit your data. In addition to reflecting the questions being used for the 2020 data collection, the booklet provides important definitions, guidelines, and answers to most of your specific inquiries.
- *Submit a record for each graduate*, even if you have no information beyond demographics. This is vital to determining survey quality and coverage. The only exception is that you do not need to report on a graduate who is deceased.
- *Report employment status as of March 15, 2021*, using the most current information you have. For some graduates, this status will be different than at graduation. A December (or six-month) survey is highly recommended, preferably for all graduates, but at a minimum for graduates for whom you

have no information, for graduates who were not employed at the time of an earlier survey, and for those known to be in a temporary situation or position and/or seeking a different position than the one held at the time of an earlier survey. Your own internal reports, of course, can be updated even after you report to NALP, and if so, will then not correspond to the information submitted to NALP.

- *Please review all of the information provided by your graduates and follow up if you have questions.* Your critical review and professional judgment contribute to survey integrity. Please also review the final individual records for each graduate for completeness and accuracy before your submission to NALP.
- Refer to the enclosed data submission information sheet for instructions on how to submit your data. *Please return the data submission information sheet regardless of the method used to submit your data.* This sheet not only provides NALP with a contact should we have questions regarding your data, but also helps document survey response and coverage.
- Read and refer to the *NALP Best Practices Guide for Managing Law School Employment Outcomes*, which was written by and for CSO professionals. You can find this guide on the NALP website by clicking on the Resources & Initiatives tab > For Career Services > Employment Report & Salary Survey (ERSS) Info > NALP Best Practices Guide for Managing Law School Employment Outcomes, or by going to www.nalp.org/uploads/2015BestPracticesLSEmploymentOutcomes.pdf.
- *If you become aware of any changes to a graduate's record after April 20 (for information that was still current as of March 15), please contact NALP as soon as possible and we will do our best to accommodate any changes through **Wednesday, June 30, 2021**.* We cannot accept any changes after this time in order to publish the national reports and provide you with your school-specific report in a timely manner.

If you have questions about how to create the file for NALP from your software, please contact your vendor for assistance.

The deadline to submit your data to NALP is April 20, 2021.

The importance of this deadline cannot be overstated. Please help NALP provide timely, comprehensive reporting by submitting your data on time. NALP cannot guarantee that data submitted after the due date will be used.

If you have any questions about the survey please contact NALP Director of Research, Danielle Taylor, at dtaylor@nalp.org or 202-835-1001.