



November 2021

TO: Law School Career Services Offices

FROM: James Leipold, Executive Director  
Danielle Taylor, Director of Research

SUBJECT: 2021 Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS)

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

**April 20, 2022**

We are writing to provide you with a complete set of the Employment Report and Salary Survey (ERSS) materials for the Class of 2021, including the ERSS form for the Class of 2021 which has already been posted to the NALP website at: [www.nalp.org/erssinfo](http://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 2020, 193 ABA-accredited law schools in the U.S. submitted employment status data for 33,235 graduates, providing information on nearly 97% of all graduates. With your help, we again look forward to being able to report similar coverage for the Class of 2021.

### **Submission Due Date**

The due date for employment data for the Class of 2021 is **Wednesday, April 20, 2022**, to allow you time to submit your data to the ABA by its deadline of Friday, April 1, 2022, and then submit your data to NALP after attending the Annual Education Conference (AEC), taking place from April 5-8, 2022. Note that the employed-by date for this class is **Tuesday, March 15, 2022**. Also keep in mind that per the ABA definition of employed, graduates must have commenced their employment by March 15, 2022, 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.



## Updates for the Class of 2021

The "Non-professional position" job type has been renamed to "Other position" to match the language adopted by the ABA. This change is also noted in the "What's New for the Class of 2021" document.

## COVID-19 Considerations for the Class of 2021

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 COVID-19 exceptions are in place only for the Classes of 2020 and 2021.

## 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. Of note, 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. In cases where this information is truly unknown, it can be left blank for NALP reporting purposes.

Additionally, NALP's counts of job types, e.g., bar passage required, include law-school funded positions, if any, whereas ABA counts do not. Beginning with the Class of 2021, the ABA is no longer tying definitions of short-term and long-term jobs that are school-funded to a particular minimum salary threshold. NALP has never adopted any minimum salary thresholds for school-funded positions. See the ABA's *Employment Protocols for the Class of 2021* for additional information about this year's changes.

## General Instructions and Guidelines for the Class of 2021

The Class of 2021 will be the 48th consecutive law school graduating class documented by NALP's annual ERSS. 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 continuing to provide 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 2021*, 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 2021 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, 2022*, 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 at: [www.nalp.org/uploads/2015BestPracticesLSEmploymentOutcomes.pdf](http://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 **Thursday, June 30, 2022**. We cannot accept any changes after June 30 in order to publish the national reports and provide 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. If your school does not use software such as Symplicity or 12Twenty for your employment reporting, please see the “ASCII Specifications” document for additional information on how to create your Class of 2021 file. NALP can also provide a reporting template upon request.

**The deadline to submit your data to NALP is April 20, 2022.**

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](mailto:dtaylor@nalp.org) or 202-835-1001.