FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Each year, NALP and your law school partner to measure the employment outcomes for graduates of your law school and of every law school accredited by the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the ABA. This helps us measure the strength of the entry-level legal employment market at the national, regional, and local levels. Your participation in this survey is critical in helping us provide this important information. Your law school and NALP respect your expectations concerning the confidentiality of the information you provide. Your career office will provide information to NALP with all personally identifiable information removed.

NALP and the Council measure employment status 10 months after graduation to allow for bar admission and licensure. March 15 has been designated as the common date by which all graduates must report their employment status. Although many graduates will report their employment status prior to March 15, you may report it at any point that you secure postgraduate employment. You should also report if you have not secured a job by March 15. Because the time span over which law students may obtain their post-graduate employment is great, your school may request this information as early as the beginning of your final semester of law school and as late as March following graduation, and your school may survey you more than once to be sure that they have the most up-to-date information.

This survey is straightforward and short. You will be asked about your post-graduate employment status — if you have a job (and if so what kind of job you have obtained, your starting salary in that job, and a few other questions) and, if you do not, whether you are continuing your education and seeking a job or not. All of this information helps us provide important consumer information to the law students who will follow you.

Following are some frequently asked questions about the survey. If you have any additional questions, please contact your career services office.

Who should complete the survey?

You should. Regardless of your post-graduation employment status, you should complete the survey when requested by your career office. You should still complete the survey even if:

- You have not secured a post-graduate job or if that job is not your “first choice” job;
- You will be pursuing an LL.M. or another graduate program;
- You do not have paid employment and are looking for work; or
- You do not have paid employment and are not looking for work.

What is the definition of employed?

To be considered as employed as of Wednesday, March 15, 2028, you must be hired for and actually working in a position where you will receive a salary or a stipend or be paid on a contract or retainer basis on March 15, 2028. If you are employed, choose the type of job as described on page 2 under “How do I choose a job type?”

What does “Employed — start date after March 15, 2028” mean?

Because this survey measures employment status as of March 15, if you have accepted a job that will start after this date and you are not working on an interim basis, you should report your status as “Employed – start date after March 15, 2028.” You should also report the date on which your job will start, where requested.

Are there circumstances under which I should report something other than my status on March 15?

If you have accepted a position with the military JAG Corps but will be starting that job after March 15, you should report that job on the survey. Also report the start date for that job. If your start date for a position was delayed due to the birth or adoption of a child, a personal illness, caring for a sick family member, or the fulfillment of required civil or

military service you may also report your job on the survey. Contact your career office if you have questions about whether your circumstances fall within these provisions.

What if my employment status changes between graduation and March 15?

You should report your most current job status. If your employment status changes between graduation and March 15, use the procedures established by your career office to update your information.

How do I choose a job type?

Law school graduates take many different kinds of jobs, and not all of them involve the practice of law. The type of job you obtain is one of the most important pieces of information you are asked to provide. Use the definitions below to help you choose the correct job type.

- **Bar admission required/anticipated** — Please choose this job type if the job requires or will require you to become admitted to the bar or become licensed/authorized to practice law in one or more jurisdictions. This category includes judicial clerks and positions that require bar admission after being hired.
- **JD Advantage** — Choose this job type if your job does not require bar admission, an active law license, or involve practicing law, but your JD provided a demonstrable advantage in obtaining or performing the job — or your employer preferred or even required an individual with a JD. Examples of positions for which a JD is an advantage include a corporate contracts administrator, alternative dispute resolution specialist, government regulatory analyst, FBI agent, and accountant. Also included might be jobs in personnel or human resources, jobs with investment banks, jobs with consulting firms, jobs doing compliance work for business and industry, jobs in law firm professional development, and jobs in law school career offices, admissions offices, or other law school administrative offices. Doctors or nurses who plan to work in a litigation, insurance, or risk management setting, or as expert witnesses, would fall in this category, as would journalists and teachers (in a higher education setting) of law and law-related topics.
- **Other professional** — Choose this job type if the job requires professional skills or training but for which a JD is neither required nor a demonstrable advantage. Examples of jobs in this category include a teacher (non-law related), business manager, or real estate agent. Other examples include professions such as doctors, nurses, engineers, or architects, if a JD was not advantageous in obtaining the position or in performing the duties of the position.
- **Other position** — Choose this job type if the job does not require any professional skills or training or is one that you may not view as part of your career path. Examples of jobs in this category include restaurant servers, retail salespeople, and gig economy contractors (e.g., Uber, DoorDash).

Why should I report my salary?

When you were considering law school, no doubt the job prospects and salary potential available to you with a JD factored into your decision-making. Such information was available to you because students who came before you were willing to provide that information. By itself, your individual salary is of little interest — but taken together with those of your classmates and fellow graduates nationwide, it allows us to provide the information on earnings potential that you sought and expected as a prospective law student.

How do I report my salary?

Report whether your job pays a salary or a stipend and the amount of that salary or stipend. When reporting your salary, include base compensation only. Do not include items such as a bar stipend, a signing bonus, a potential bonus, or contingent income. If you have accepted a judicial clerkship and you are/will be in that position on March 15, 2028, report the clerkship salary, not the salary you expect to earn after the clerkship. If your salary increased between the time you started your job and the time you completed this survey, you should report the higher figure.

What is a stipend?

A stipend is a form of salary often used for an internship or apprenticeship. It is a payment or payments that represent a set amount for a fixed period of time or for a project's duration. For example, a stipend might be $7,000 for two months or $10,000 for the length of a project. Compensation which is paid at an hourly rate is not a stipend. For example, if you are working at an hourly rate as a law clerk or in a part-time job that is not law-related, you are receiving a salary and not a stipend.

Why should I report demographic information, such as my gender and race/ethnicity?

This demographic information allows NALP to study whether there are differences in employment outcomes among groups or subgroups of graduates. NALP will only report these data in the aggregate and it is optional to share this information within the survey.

I am unfamiliar with some of the terminology included in the gender items. How should I describe myself?

- **Cisgender** is a term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth.

- **Transgender** is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation.

- **Intersex** people are born with a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy. There is a wide variety of difference among intersex variations, including differences in genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits. Intersex individuals may also identify as either cisgender or transgender.

How are "long-term" and "short-term" jobs defined for the purposes of this survey?

A **long-term** job is expected to last for one calendar year or more from your graduation date or the start date, whichever is later. A **short-term** job is expected to last less than one calendar year from your graduation date or the start date, whichever is later. An exception to this definition is made for articling positions in Canada. These positions should be reported as long-term.

Note that a job that you consider short-term, while, for example, you continue to seek a different job, may not be a short-term job from the employer's perspective, and should not be reported as a short-term job on this survey.

I have a job but am still looking. How do I report?

Report the details of the job that you have, and also complete the item on search status to indicate whether or not you continue to seek a job other than the one you currently hold. Do not complete this item if you are unemployed.

I have two concurrent jobs. Which one do you want me to report?

If you hold more than one job, consider which job you define as your primary or main employment and which you consider your secondary work, since the primary job is what will be used when your school, NALP, and the Council report on graduate employment. In addition to obvious situations of multiple paid jobs, other circumstances for which you need to determine what you consider your primary job include having paid employment in addition to starting your own solo law practice; owning/running a business while being employed by someone else; and being employed in the civilian workforce while also a member of the military reserves. If you have obtained a judicial clerkship and you are in that position as of March 15, you should report that job as the primary job, not on a job you may have obtained that will begin after your clerkship.

I'm working at a firm as a legal temp. Should I report the firm as my employer?

In most cases, no. If you are working at a firm but are doing so through a legal temporary agency, report your employer as "legal temporary agency" under business and industry. Report the firm as your employer only if you were hired directly by the firm and not through a temp agency.

I continued with my previous employer, but changed jobs after earning my JD. What start date do I report?

Report the date that you started in that new position. If you obtained a non-attorney position that transitioned, or will transition, to an attorney position upon bar admission, you may report the start date of either the non-attorney position or attorney position.

I got an offer from my summer employer or as a result of my clinic work. Why is that not a choice under "Source of job?"

You should indicate how you obtained the summer job or clinic position that led to the post-graduate employment offer. For example you may have gotten that job through a job posting or by means of your school's on-campus interview program.

I have taken a job in a law firm as an attorney, but I am neither an associate nor a staff attorney. How should I report my position?

Most entry-level attorney jobs should be reported as associate jobs. The staff attorney category is reserved to describe certain jobs, usually in larger law firms, where the firm hires both partnership-track and non-partnership-track attorneys. It can also include instances where the firm hires attorneys on a project or fixed-duration basis. The staff attorney position describes the non-partnership-track position, regardless of the actual job title used at a particular firm.

Note: *An entry-level attorney job in a smaller firm, which may not have a partnership track, should be reported as an associate/entry-level attorney position under most circumstances.*

What law firm job choice should I use if I have started my own solo practice?

For purposes of this survey, report your job as associate/ entry-level attorney.

How is firm size counted?

Firm size refers to the total number of attorneys firm-wide regardless of title. *Use the solo practice category only if you have established your own solo practice*; if you are working FOR a solo practitioner report the firm size as 1-10.

Does law firm private practice include public interest law firms?

Yes. Public interest law firms are private and **for-profit** firms, but are distinguished from other private firms in that a majority of their practice involves clients that are typically underrepresented or groups that advocate for community rather than corporate interests. Sliding fee cases, attorney fee cases, and contingent fee cases are common. Typical areas of practice include plaintiff's employment discrimination, civil rights, union representation, and environmental law. ***Note:*** *Civil legal services/legal aid organizations are not public interest law firms. Employment with these organizations should be reported under the* ***Public Interest*** *employer type.*

My job is not in a law firm. What are the definitions for other employers?

BUSINESS/INDUSTRY: This category is broad and includes most employers that are not law firms, schools, or government organizations, as well as most instances of being self-employed (other than having set up your own solo law practice), including contract work for multiple law firms. Business employers are subdivided into 15 categories and do not refer to practice areas within law firms. Choose the one type of employer category that best describes your employer. If you have a job with a business that performs a function traditionally performed by government, such as child support enforcement, report the job in the "other" business category. If your job is with a law firm but is on a temporary basis through a staffing agency, report your job in the "legal temporary agency" category. If you are working for a bank, report it in the "investment banking/ financial institution" category. Real estate includes a variety of jobs such as agent, broker, or property manager. The retail trade or hospitality sector includes a wide variety of jobs, ranging from retail sales associate, bartender or wait staff, to retail or hotel/resort management, and in-house lawyer positions with such establishments. If your job is with a strictly online retailer, such as Amazon, report your job as "other technology/e-commerce." The "other" category encompasses a wide range of profit and not-for-profit organizations including corporations of all sizes not falling into one of the specific categories listed.

For jobs in business, also indicate the type of job you hold, e.g., management, temporary attorney, in-house lawyer.

GOVERNMENT: For all government positions, you should report both the level of government (e.g., federal, state, local, tribal, or international) and the type of job or employment setting. The "military-other" category includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and state National Guard units, in addition to any other non-JAG Corps civilian and uniformed positions. Prosecution encompasses representation or litigation on behalf of government in criminal or civil matters. These positions may be in the U.S. Department of Justice, offices of state attorneys general, or local district attorneys' offices.

Most government jobs that are not with the military, the legislative branch, the court system, or with an agency honors program, are with an administrative or executive branch agency, such as the FTC, SEC, and USDA at the federal level, departments of labor and natural resources at the state level, and housing authorities and law enforcement at the local level. Note that positions in public education at any level are to be reported as education positions. Public defender or appellate defender jobs should be reported as public interest. Jobs with political campaigns should be reported under business — trade

association or political campaign. Jobs with private employers but that involve provision of services sometimes performed by government — e.g., child support enforcement (functions sometimes contracted out) — should be reported using the appropriate private employer category rather than as government positions.

Local governments include county, municipal, and city governments, as well as special purpose entities such as local transit authorities and sanitation districts. Unless they are federal government positions, report non-court jobs with governments in U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia as state level jobs. Report judicial clerkships (or other court positions) with federal courts in these jurisdictions as federal level jobs. Report similar positions with lower courts (the equivalent of a state or local court in other jurisdictions) as state level jobs. Use the "international" government level category for jobs with foreign governments or the United Nations.

PUBLIC INTEREST: This category includes jobs funded by the Legal Services Corporation and other organizations offering civil legal services, jobs as public defender or appellate defender, and jobs with private nonprofit advocacy, religious, social service, fundraising, community resource, or cause-related organizations such as the Children's Defense Fund, United Way, and Red Cross chapters. It also includes nonprofit policy analysis and research organizations such as Brookings and the Heritage Foundation. Jobs with unions should be reported in the "other" category. The public interest category does not include jobs with trade associations (which should be reported in the business category) or for-profit public interest law firms (which should be reported in the law firm category).

EDUCATION: Positions may be at any level, from elementary to higher education, including at your own law school, and within either the private or public sector, e.g., private colleges, state universities, and local public education, and include both teaching and non-teaching or administrative positions. ■