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New NALP Recruiting Guidance Emphasizes Fairness and Reasonableness

(Washington, DC) — The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) today released its new [*Principles for a Fair and Ethical Recruitment Process*](#). The new Principles recognize that NALP's member organizations are diverse and their needs are varied but that they share a common commitment to diversity, access, and fairness. The former timing guidelines have been replaced by guidelines that emphasize reasonableness. Specifically, the 28-day period during which offers for summer and permanent employment were to remain open has been eliminated, and the October 15 and December 1 timing guidelines for advising and recruiting first-year students have been eliminated.

The new Principles and supporting materials can be found at www.nalp.org/principles.

The new Principles emphasize that all recruitment activities should be scheduled to minimize interference with students' academic work, and that the legal profession should be accessible to all individuals on a non-discriminatory basis, free of harassment. They continue to promote good judgment from law schools, candidates, and employers. The Principles urge members to aspire to the highest ethical and professional standards, and to maintain policies and procedures that allow students to meaningfully choose between competing offers and allow employers to effectively manage their recruitment processes.

The Board believes that modifying the guidelines to encourage broader experimentation provides a path to meaningful positive change in entry-level recruiting. The new Principles are the culmination of the work of several Boards, task forces, and work groups. They are informed by prior work that highlighted recruiting methods in other industries, technological advancements in interviewing and candidate assessment, and member feedback over many years.

The Principles provide guidance that schools and employers can use to formulate their own ethical recruiting practices. The Board believes that these new Principles support NALP members' historical values and will ensure the maintenance of an ethical recruiting system. The Board also believes that this new guidance document is responsive to a current market in which different kinds of employers are recruiting law students.

The Board considered the impact of these changes on diversity, access, and fairness and believes that the changes will support positive developments in each of these arenas.

NALP guidance about recruitment activities has been changed and amended on a regular basis in response to market changes. The NALP “Principles and Standards for Law Placement and Recruitment Activities” were first adopted in 1978. The former Part V, “Standards for the Timing of Offers and Decisions,” was derived from “Interviewing Procedures for Law Students and Prospective Employers,” a set of guidelines originally adopted in the early 1960s by a group of law schools meeting under the auspices of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York.

NALP remains committed to fairness, facts, and the power of a diverse community.

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About NALP

NALP is an association of over 2,500 legal career professionals who advise law students, lawyers, law offices, and law schools in North America and beyond. What brings NALP members together is a common belief in three fundamental things. First, all law students and lawyers should benefit from a fair and ethical hiring process. Second, law students and lawyers are more successful when supported by professional development and legal career professionals. Third, a diverse and inclusive legal profession best serves clients and our communities. That’s why NALP members work together every day to collect and publish accurate legal employment data and information, and champion education and ethical principles for recruiting, professional and career development, and diversity and inclusion. For more than 40 years, NALP has played an essential role in the success of our members and the lawyers and law students they serve. NALP maintains an online archive of press releases at www.nalp.org/pressreleases. For additional information, contact NALP at info@nalp.org or call (202) 835-1001.
