



# 2025

National Association for Law Placement

## Survey of U.S. Law School Career Services Offices

October 2025

*NALP strives for a diverse, equitable, and inclusive legal profession.*

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# Introduction

Every two years, NALP conducts a nationwide survey of U.S. law schools that are accredited by the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association (the Council) to collect data on career office staffing, salaries, and operational changes. In total, 83 offices responded to the 2025 *U.S. Law School Career Services Survey*, reporting information as of May 1, 2025, or the 2024-2025 academic year, as applicable. This report provides U.S. law schools with a valuable resource for benchmarking compensation and staffing levels within their career services offices (CSOs).

A demographic summary of participating law schools is presented below.

Law School Demographics	# of Law Schools	% of Survey Participants
<b>Type of Institution</b>		
Private	43	52%
Public	40	48%
<b>Geographic Region</b>		
Northeast/ Mid-Atlantic	24	29%
Southeast	23	28%
Midwest	20	24%
West/Rocky Mountain	16	19%
<b>Size of Law School (in # of JD Students)</b>		
Less than 400 students	18	22%
400-600 students	31	37%
601+ students	34	41%

Collectively, these participating law schools provided information on nearly 500 career office staff members, with full-time salary information available for 450 of those positions. Five position levels were analyzed, reflecting the hierarchy within offices. While job titles vary across law schools, the table footnotes provide additional insights into the primary titles encompassed within each level. Smaller offices — often staffed by only one or two professionals — may not have representation across all levels, whereas larger offices may have several staff at the same level.

Key findings from the survey are summarized below; however, readers should review the tables and charts for more detailed information, especially regarding salary benchmarking. For simplicity “CSO” is used throughout this report, though it encompasses a range of career office names as shown in Table 2. Additionally, the terms “school” and “CSO” are used interchangeably.

# Key Findings

## Office Staffing and Responsibilities

- Across all law schools, the average number of full-time equivalent (FTE) CSO staff was 5.4 (4.9 professional staff and 0.5 support staff). Nearly one-third of law schools operate with three or fewer CSO staff members, while approximately 29% have more than six staff members. (See Table 3.)
- In addition to full-time staff, law schools average 1.6 part-time CSO staff (1.2 professional staff and 0.4 support staff). However, 31% of CSOs have no part-time staff. (See Table 4.)
- On average, law schools reported 152 JD students for every one FTE professional staff member — a smaller ratio compared to historical trends. Between 2017 and 2023, this ratio ranged from 167 to 177 JD students per professional staff FTE member. (See Chart 1 and Table 5.)
- More than half (58%) of CSOs reported having a staff member designated with primary responsibility for judicial clerkship advising, but schools are somewhat less likely to have a designated public interest/government counselor (49%). Similarly, 47% of law schools indicated they have designated staff, typically one FTE, whose duties primarily encompass employer outreach, while only 17% have a staff member dedicated to alumni counseling. (Tables 6 and 7.)
- Approximately half (51%) of law schools have a Master of Law (non-LLM) program, although in many cases, counseling for these programs is provided by an entity outside of the CSO. (See Table 9.)
- In 73% of offices, the primary professional oversees graduate employment reporting. (See Table 14.)
- Most (63%) primary CSO professionals report to the law school dean, with an additional 32% reporting to a law school associate or assistant dean. (Table 15.)

## Staff Titles, Years of Experience, and Education

- The primary CSO professional is a vice, associate, or assistant dean at 80% of law schools. With one exception, the remainder are directors. The vast majority (90%) of second professionals have director titles, including managing, deputy, associate, and assistant directors. Most third professionals (68%) and fourth professionals (59%) are assistant/associate directors or career counselors. (See Tables 11 and 13.)
- Primary professionals reported an average of approximately 16 years in the profession (including both school and employer experience but excluding time in practice). Second professionals averaged 11 years, while third professionals averaged nine years. (See Charts 2-7.)
- Turnover in CSOs has decreased since the last survey. In 2023, 38% of primary professionals had been in their current role for two years or less, compared with 21% in 2025. While this represents an improvement in tenure, it remains above the 8% figure reported in 2021. (See Chart 3.)
- Likewise, among second professionals in 2025, 20% had been in their current position for one year or less, down from 30% in 2023. However, this is still comparatively higher than the 8% figure recorded in 2021. (See Chart 5.)
- Approximately 90% of primary professionals, 84% of second professionals, and 79% of third professionals have a JD degree. (See Table 10.)

## Salaries

- Primary professionals saw sizable salary gains, with the median salary climbing to \$129,740, a 13.9% increase since 2023. However, salaries vary significantly by geography, metropolitan area size, and law school enrollment. Educational attainment and years of experience are also key factors influencing compensation. (See Tables 11-12 and Chart 8.)
- Since the 2023 survey, the median salary for second professionals grew by 13.6% to \$90,900; however, salary growth was more stagnant for third-level professionals, where the median salary increased by 3.6% to \$80,000. As with primary professionals, there were variations based on institutional and individual demographics. (Table 13.)
- These salary comparisons reflect data from the individuals reported at each staff level in the 2023 and 2025 surveys, rather than tracking the same professionals over time.

## Office Changes Since 2023

- One-quarter of CSOs reported that their budget has been reduced since 2023, while 17% reported a budget increase. CSOs were more likely to report an increase in staff (30%), than a decrease in staff positions (12%). (See Table 16.)
- Nearly half (49%) of CSOs reported that responsibilities have been added to their portfolio, while just 10% have had responsibilities removed from their plate.

- The majority of schools (70%) initiated or increased programming related to professional development.
- Nearly 21% of CSOs reported a reduction or elimination of their travel budget, while 11% reported an increase. In addition, approximately 17% of offices experienced a decrease in funding for staff professional development, while 15% reported more funding.

## Hybrid Offices Policies

- New questions were added to the 2025 survey about CSO hybrid work policies. Overall, more than two-thirds (68%) of CSOs reported operating in a hybrid work environment, with higher rates among private schools and those with 400 or more JD students. (See Table 17.)
- For offices with a hybrid policy, nearly half (46%) reported that staff were required to be in the office three days a week. An additional 34% reported that four in-office days were required.
- The majority (67%) of offices with a hybrid policy noted that they had a formal, written policy in place rather than an informal one.

The tables and charts that follow provide a closer look at these findings and more.

Table 1. **Response to 2025 Law School Career Services Survey By NALP Region and Law School Type**

NALP Region	All Schools		Private Schools		Public Schools	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	24	28.9%	17	20.5%	7	8.4%
Southeast	23	27.7	14	16.9	9	10.8
Midwest	20	24.1	6	7.2	14	16.9
West/Rocky Mountain	16	19.3	6	7.2	10	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>51.8</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>48.2</b>

**NALP Regions****Northeast:** CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT**Mid-Atlantic:** DE, DC, MD, NJ, PA, VA**Southeast:** AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, WV**Midwest:** IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI**West/Rocky Mountain:** AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Note: Responses from the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions were combined to provide sufficient numbers for analysis.

Table 2. **Formal Name of Career Services Office**

Office Name	Percent
Career Services Office or Career Development Office*	73%
Office of Career and Professional Development	20
Office of Professional Development	6

\*Includes variants such as Career Center, Career Planning Center, Office of Career Management, Office of Career Strategy, and Office of Career Strategy and Advancement.

Table 3. **Full-time Staff Size — FTEs By Type and Size of Law School**  
(in percent of schools, except for averages)

	All Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment			Part-time Program		LLM Students?	
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Total Staff</b>										
3 or fewer	32.5%	37.5%	27.9%	72.2%	35.5%	8.8%	37.3%	25.0%	77.8%	15.4%
3.5 - 6	38.6	37.5	39.5	27.8	58.1	26.5	35.3	43.8	22.2	44.2
More than 6	28.9	25.0	32.6	0.0	6.5	64.7	27.5	31.3	0.0	40.4
Average #	5.4	4.9	5.8	2.5	4.2	8.0	5.0	6.0	2.5	6.4
<b>Professional Staff</b>										
1 - 2	20.5	30.0	11.6	66.7	16.1	0.0	19.6	21.9	55.6	9.6
2.5 - 4	51.8	47.5	55.8	33.0	77.4	38.2	54.9	46.9	44.0	50.0
More than 4	27.7	22.5	32.6	0.0	6.5	61.8	25.5	31.3	0.0	40.4
Average #	4.9	4.4	5.4	2.4	3.9	7.2	4.5	5.5	2.4	5.9
<b>Support Staff</b>										
None	68.7	65.0	72.1	88.9	74.2	52.9	70.6	65.6	88.9	63.5
0.2 - 1	20.5	22.5	18.6	11.1	19.4	26.5	17.6	25.0	11.1	26.9
More than 1	10.8	12.5	9.3	0.0	6.5	20.6	11.8	9.4	0.0	9.6
Average #	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.5

Note: Figures for professional and support staff are as of May 1, 2025.

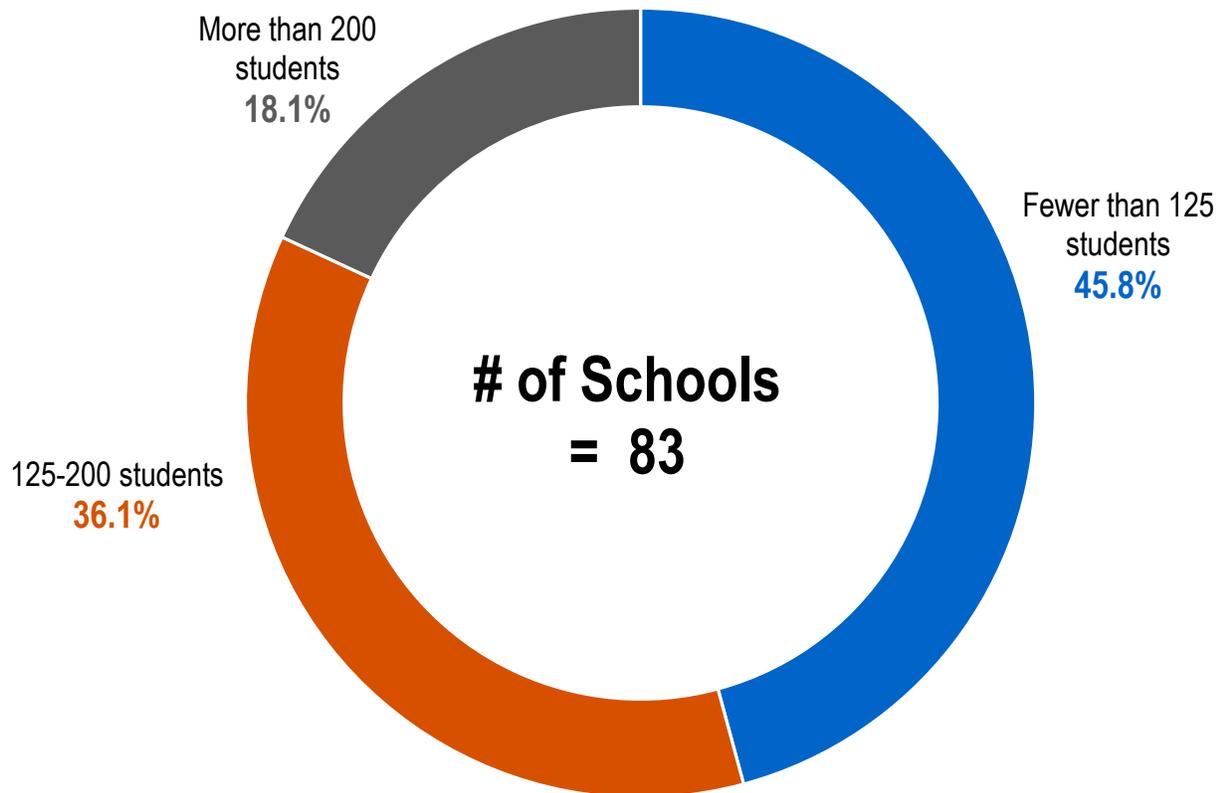
Individuals who work full-time but who have duties outside of the CSO are included in these figures, but are counted according to the portion of their time that is devoted to the CSO. Few schools reported full-time student help; therefore, figures are not reported.

Table 4. **Part-time Staff Size — By Type and Size of Law School**  
(in percent of schools, except for averages)

	All Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment			Part-time Program		LLM Students?	
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Total Part-time Staff</b>										
None	31.3%	27.5%	34.9%	27.8%	38.7%	26.5%	33.3%	28.1%	33.3%	30.8%
1+	68.7	72.5	65.1	72.2	61.3	73.5	66.7	71.9	66.7	69.2
Average #	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.9	1.5	1.7	1.3	1.7
<b>Professional Part-time Staff</b>										
None	48.2	45.0	51.2	44.4	61.3	38.2	51.0	43.8	44.4	48.1
1+	51.8	55.0	48.8	55.6	38.7	61.8	49.0	56.3	55.6	51.9
Average #	1.2	1.0	1.3	1.1	0.7	1.6	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.3
<b>Support Staff</b>										
None	83.1	82.5	83.7	83.3	77.4	88.2	82.4	84.4	88.9	82.7
1+	16.9	17.5	16.3	16.7	22.6	11.8	17.6	15.6	11.1	17.3
Average #	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.4
<b>Student Assistants — Fall 2024</b>										
None	48.2	42.5	53.5	44.4	61.3	38.2	52.9	40.6	44.4	48.1
1	22.9	27.5	18.6	27.8	22.6	20.6	21.6	25.0	27.8	19.2
2+	28.9	30.0	27.9	27.8	16.1	41.2	25.5	34.4	27.8	32.7
Average #	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.0	0.7	1.6	0.9	1.5	1.0	1.3
<b>Student Assistants — Spring 2025</b>										
None	89.2	90.0	88.4	94.4	90.3	85.3	88.2	90.6	83.3	92.3
1	6.0	0.0	11.6	5.6	3.2	8.8	5.9	6.2	16.7	3.8
2+	4.8	10.0	0.0	0.0	6.5	5.9	5.9	3.1	0.0	3.8
Average #	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2
<b>Student Assistants — Summer 2025</b>										
None	71.1	67.5	74.4	77.8	80.6	58.8	72.5	68.8	72.2	67.3
1	16.9	20.0	14.0	5.6	9.7	29.4	17.6	15.6	11.1	19.2
2+	12.0	12.5	11.6	16.7	9.7	11.8	9.8	15.6	16.7	13.5
Average #	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.6

Note: Figures for part-time professional and support staff are as of May 1, 2025. Figures for part-time staff reflect the number of individuals who work part time, regardless of how many hours per week that may be. About one-third of the part-time professional staff collectively reported by schools are counselors.

Chart 1. **Number of JD Students Per Full-time Professional Staff**  
*(percent of schools in each range)*



Note: The average ratio was 152 JD students for each full-time professional staff member.

Table 5. **Number of JD Students Per Full-time Professional Career Services Staff By Type and Size of Law School***(in percent of schools, except for averages)*

# of JD Students per Full-time Equivalent Professional Staff	All Law Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment			Part-time Program	
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+	No Part-time Students	Part-time Students
Fewer than 125 students	45.8%	47.5%	44.2%	33.3%	51.6%	47.1%	51.0%	37.5%
125-200 students	36.1	32.5	39.5	38.9	32.3	38.2	31.4	43.8
More than 200 students	18.1	20.0	16.3	27.8	16.1	14.7	17.6	18.8
Average # per full-time professional staff	152	149	154	179	153	136	147	159

Table 6. **Counseling for Judicial Clerkship and Public Interest Positions***(in percent of schools)*

Judicial Clerkship Advising	All Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment		
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+
One person in the CSO has primary responsibility	57.8%	62.5%	53.5%	50.0%	51.6%	67.6%
Responsibility for clerkship advising is divided among multiple CSO staff	28.9	30.0	27.9	33.3	32.3	23.5
Not applicable – clerkship advising is independent of the CSO	8.4	2.5	14.0	11.1	9.7	5.9
Other	4.8	5.0	4.7	5.6	6.5	2.9
<b>Public Interest and Government Job Advising Provided by:</b>						
Designated CSO staff	49.4	57.5	46.5	50.0	38.7	58.8
Any available CSO counselor/ staff	66.3	67.5	65.1	55.6	77.4	61.8
Staff in separate public interest office	15.7	7.5	23.3	11.1	6.5	26.5

Note: Among schools indicating that one person has primary responsibility for clerkship advising and providing the title of that person, most reported a director, including assistant, associate, and senior directors. Percentages for public interest and government job advising add up to more than 100% because more than one response option could be selected.

Table 7. **Staffing for Selected Functions By Type and Size of Law School**  
(in percent of schools)

	All Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment		
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+
Staff person for employer outreach	47.0%	37.5%	55.8%	22.2%	51.6%	55.9%
Staff person for alumni counseling	16.9	17.5	16.3	11.1	12.9	23.5

Note: Figures report the percentage of schools with a staff person whose duties are primarily in the area described. An additional inquiry on staffing levels reveals that schools with employer outreach staffing averaged about one FTE. The small number of schools with staff for alumni counseling typically also have about one FTE in this role.

Table 8. **Staff Providing LLM Counseling**  
(in percent of schools)

	All Schools Reporting LLM Students	Number of LLM Students		
		10 or Fewer	11-30	More than 30
Any available CSO counselor/staff	40.4%	20.0%	60.0%	37.0%
Designated CSO staff	34.6	70.0	20.0	29.6
LLM office/program staff person	55.8	40.0	53.3	63.0
Other	1.9	10.0	0.0	0.0

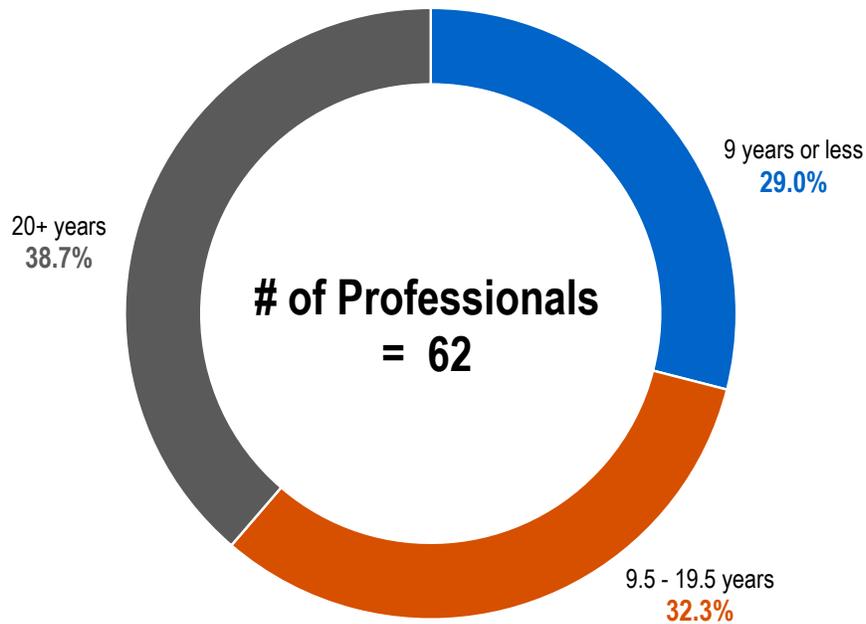
Note: Figures based on 65 schools reporting that they have LLM students. Schools may use any available counselor in addition to a designated staff member or LLM program staff. Thus, percentages add up to more than 100%. Some schools with an LLM program did not report their number of LLM students, and so are included only in the total column.

Table 9. **Non-LLM Master's in Law Degree Programs**  
(in percent of schools)

	Law School Type			JD Enrollment	
	All Schools	Public	Private	Fewer than 600	601+
<b>School offers non-LLM master's degree(s)</b>	50.6%	55.0%	46.5%	22.2%	52.9%
<b>Counseling Provided By:</b>					
Designated CSO staff	19.0	22.7	15.0	20.8	16.7
Any available CSO counselor/ staff	26.2	27.3	25.0	37.5	11.1
Another office in the law school	42.9	54.5	30.0	41.7	44.4
Career center outside of the law school	23.8	18.2	30.0	20.8	27.8
Other	9.5	4.5	15.0	8.3	11.1

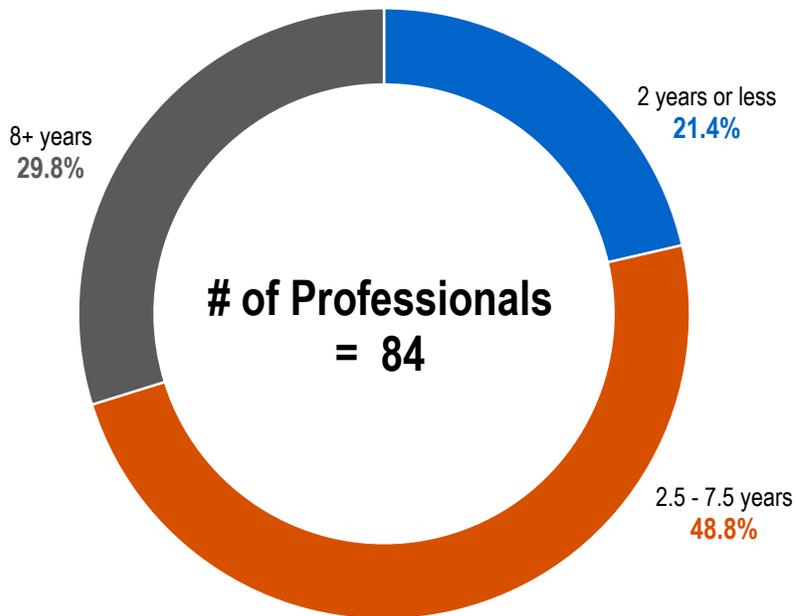
Note: Figures for presence of a non-LLM master's program are based on all survey respondents. Figures by the type of counseling provided are based only on the number of schools that indicated that they have a non-LLM master's program. Faculty members were most commonly reported under the "other" category.

Chart 2. **Years in Field for Primary Professionals**  
(percent of individuals in each range)



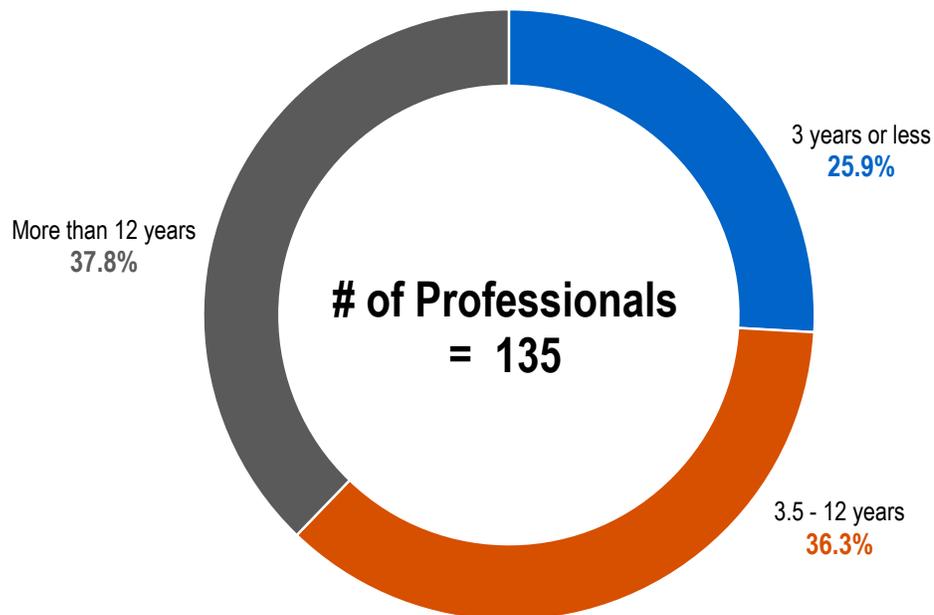
Note: Overall, the average number of years of experience was 15.7.

Chart 3. **Years in Position for Primary Professionals**  
(percent of individuals in each range)



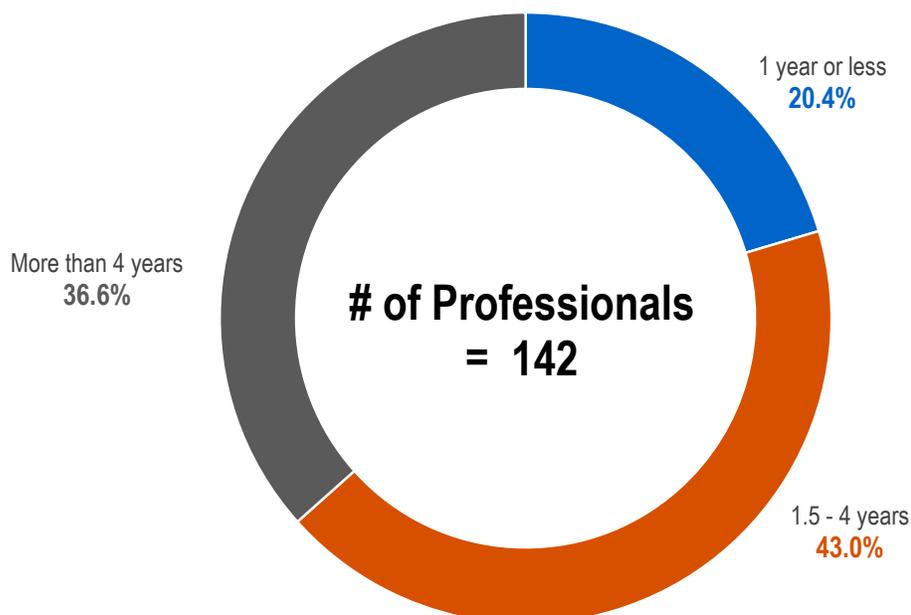
Note: Overall, the average number of years in position was 7.0.

Chart 4. **Years in Field for Second Career Services Professionals**  
*(percent of individuals in each range)*



Note: Overall, the average number of years of experience was 11.1.

Chart 5. **Years in Position for Second Career Services Professionals**  
*(percent of individuals in each range)*



Note: Overall, the average number of years in position was 5.7.

Chart 6. **Years in Field for Third Career Services Professionals**  
*(percent of individuals in each range)*

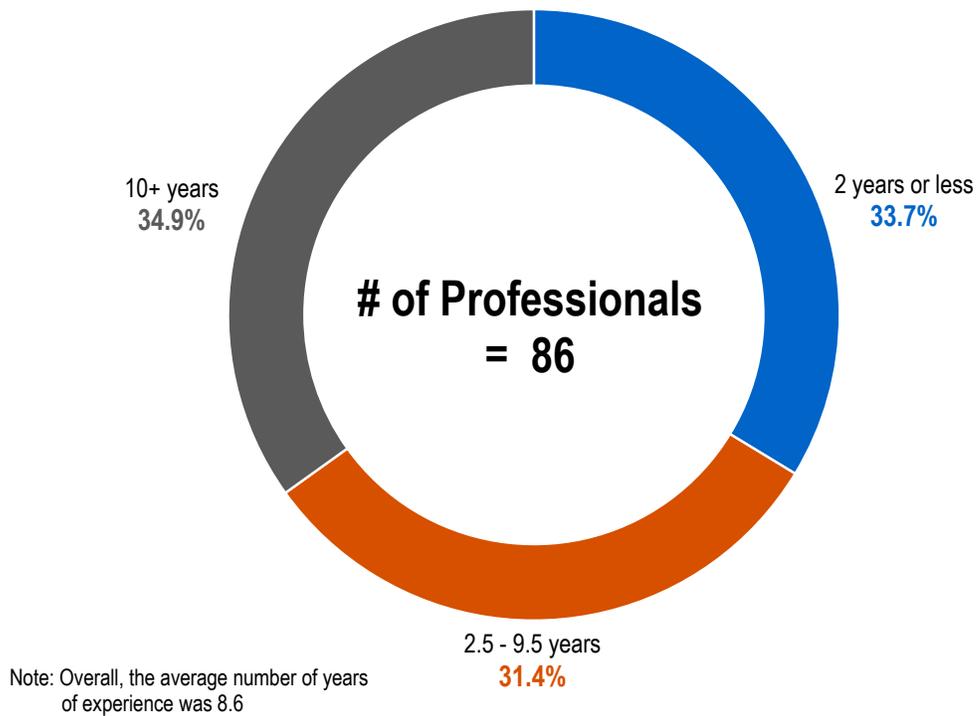


Chart 7. **Years in Position for Third Career Services Professionals**  
*(percent of individuals in each range)*

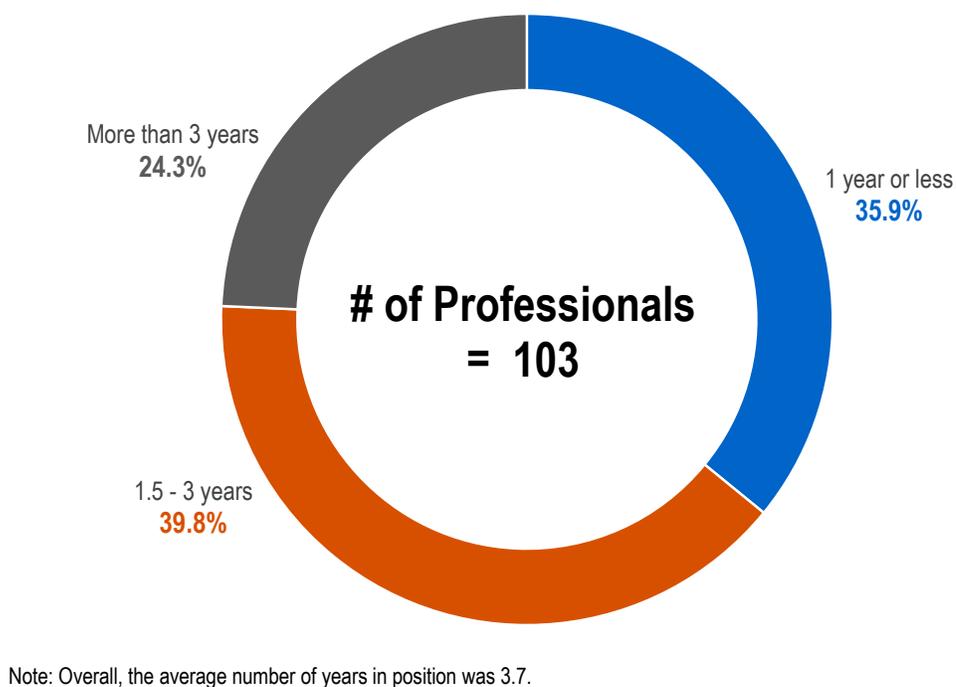


Table 10. **Education of Career Services Professionals by Level and Job Tenure**  
(in percent of professionals)

	JD or LLB Degree	
	Yes	No
<b>Education of Primary Professionals Overall</b>	<b>90.2%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>
2 years or less in job	94.1	5.9
2.5 - 8 years in job	86.0	14.0
More than 8 years in job	95.5	4.5
<b>Education of Second Professionals Overall</b>	<b>84.2</b>	<b>15.8</b>
1 year or less in job	89.7	10.3
1.5 - 4 years in job	85.2	14.8
More than 4 years in job	78.8	21.2
<b>Education of Third Professionals Overall</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>21.5</b>
1 year or less in job	75.7	24.3
1.5 - 3 years in job	78.0	22.0
More than 3 years in job	80.0	20.0
<b>Education of Fourth Professionals Overall</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>43.5</b>
2 years or less in job	60.4	39.6
More than 2 years in job	54.8	45.2

Note: Education was reported for 82 primary professionals, 146 second professionals, 107 third professionals, and 92 fourth professionals. Job tenure was also reported for most. Among additional staff, 16% have a JD.

Table 11. Salaries for Primary Professionals By Law School Characteristics as of May 1, 2025

	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Average	# of Salaries Reported
<b>All Primary Professionals</b>	<b>\$105,200</b>	<b>\$129,740</b>	<b>\$154,125</b>	<b>\$132,789</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Private Law Schools</b>					
All Private Law Schools	113,300	130,777	159,000	138,503	39
<b>By Region</b>					
Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	122,000	138,500	184,000	149,601	14
Southeast	105,000	133,389	140,000	133,629	14
Midwest	—	113,300	—	123,538	5
West/Rocky Mountain	—	133,380	—	136,447	6
<b>By Metro Area Population</b>					
Less than 1.5M	85,000	122,000	140,000	127,678	11
1.5M - 5M	113,300	128,759	140,000	125,661	13
More than 5M	118,900	154,125	190,000	157,570	15
<b>By JD Enrollment</b>					
600 or fewer JD students	97,500	118,450	133,389	116,679	20
601+ JD students	130,720	154,125	190,000	161,475	19
<b>Public Law Schools</b>					
All Public Law Schools	101,225	125,000	153,000	127,076	39
<b>By Region</b>					
Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	—	145,645	—	139,887	7
Southeast	—	110,000	—	124,012	9
Midwest	96,000	103,600	132,000	108,956	13
West/Rocky Mountain	109,000	145,500	173,604	144,420	10
<b>By Metro Area Population</b>					
Less than 1.5M	89,000	107,100	151,510	113,885	20
1.5M - 5M	114,000	144,260	164,245	138,780	12
More than 5M	—	142,000	—	144,698	7
<b>By JD Enrollment</b>					
600 or fewer JD students	93,000	105,600	142,000	113,399	26
601+ JD students	127,000	150,019	173,490	154,428	13

Note: Approximately 80% of the professional staff in this table have a title of Vice Dean, Associate Dean, or Assistant Dean. With one exception, the remainder are directors. Figures reflect full-time salaries and only median and average are shown if fewer than ten salaries were reported. Population figures correspond to the size of the school's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), per U.S. Census Bureau estimates as of July 1, 2024.

Table 12. Salaries for Primary Professionals By Education and Tenure as of May 1, 2025

	25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Average	# of Salaries Reported
<b>All Primary Professionals</b>	<b>\$105,200</b>	<b>\$129,740</b>	<b>\$154,125</b>	<b>\$132,789</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>By Education</b>					
With JD/LLB	110,000	130,777	154,361	136,167	69
Without JD/LLB	—	95,000	—	107,146	7
<b>By Years in Field</b>					
9 years or less	105,000	120,000	142,000	127,417	18
9.5 to 19.5 years	122,000	130,777	144,565	133,471	17
20+ years	106,000	150,010	173,400	145,576	22
<b>By Years in Current Position</b>					
2 years or less	105,000	122,000	153,000	130,229	17
2.5 to 7.5 years	107,100	130,749	152,563	129,085	40
8+ years	106,000	139,519	173,394	141,918	21

Note: Figures reflect full-time salaries and only the median and average are shown if fewer than ten salaries were reported. Counts across subcategories may not add up to the overall total because not all respondents reported both educational attainment and position tenure/experience.

Table 13. Salaries for Other Professional and Administrative Positions as of May 1, 2025

		25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Average	# of Salaries Reported
<b>Second Professionals</b>						
<b>Overall</b>		\$78,562	\$90,900	\$108,132	\$93,297	134
By Education:	With JD/LLB	80,000	91,900	108,324	94,740	110
	Without JD/LLB	70,000	78,059	107,808	85,928	23
By JD Enrollment:	600 or fewer JD students	72,000	80,000	91,800	81,380	62
	601+ JD students	88,697	105,520	113,970	103,559	72
By NALP Region:	Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	89,000	106,000	120,000	105,942	42
	Southeast	73,195	81,567	95,000	82,546	43
	Midwest	73,850	79,304	97,921	84,188	18
	West/Rocky Mountain	82,400	98,842	108,324	96,365	31
By Type of School:	Private	80,000	98,112	109,263	96,359	77
	Public	75,710	85,643	105,000	89,160	57
By Years in Field:	3 years or less	73,800	80,000	95,950	82,825	33
	3.5 to 12 years	75,710	87,000	103,240	87,622	45
	More than 12 years	94,554	106,904	115,000	104,730	46
By Years in Position:	1 year or less	80,000	95,950	105,000	93,054	27
	1.5 to 4 years	75,000	85,000	106,000	91,043	59
	More than 4 years	82,662	99,960	109,800	97,441	44
<b>Third Professionals</b>						
<b>Overall</b>		69,005	80,000	94,550	83,261	96
By Education:	With JD/LLB	70,000	82,400	98,500	86,355	75
	Without JD/LLB	64,000	70,000	80,000	72,212	21
By JD Enrollment:	600 or fewer JD students	66,625	78,000	84,000	74,300	33
	601+ JD students	71,459	82,393	105,000	87,955	63
By NALP Region:	Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	77,000	84,000	108,000	89,930	33
	Southeast	66,950	74,302	87,000	76,361	26
	Midwest	60,000	79,000	82,384	73,303	13
	West/Rocky Mountain	67,912	86,000	101,570	86,960	24
By Type of School:	Private	69,010	80,000	95,000	82,862	55
	Public	69,000	82,384	94,099	83,796	41
By Years in Field:	2 years or less	65,000	79,500	82,615	76,432	26
	2.5 to 9.5 years	69,010	79,044	93,000	80,685	26
	10+ years	83,200	94,099	115,000	95,811	25
By Years in Position:	1 year or less	69,010	80,000	95,700	82,975	34
	1.5 to 3 years	69,480	80,000	89,050	82,020	36
	More than 3 years	76,525	92,000	104,293	87,462	22

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Table 13. Salaries for Other Professional and Administrative Positions as of May 1, 2025

		25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	Average	# of Salaries Reported
<b>Fourth Professionals</b>						
<b>Overall</b>		65,000	81,000	92,300	78,633	86
By Education:	With JD/LLB	79,151	89,500	95,056	87,140	48
	Without JD/LLB	57,554	64,394	77,000	67,887	38
By JD Enrollment:	600 or fewer JD students	55,500	62,500	77,000	65,172	20
	601+ JD students	70,135	87,000	95,000	82,712	66
By NALP Region:	Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	70,135	87,000	92,300	81,475	33
	Southeast	63,000	70,442	91,500	72,766	18
	Midwest	59,000	65,000	77,000	69,038	13
	West/Rocky Mountain	65,000	89,200	102,500	84,839	22
By Type of School:	Private	65,000	80,000	90,000	77,783	46
	Public	61,305	82,301	95,056	79,610	40
By Years in Field:	Less than 5 years	58,000	72,000	90,000	71,984	29
	5+ years	70,000	87,000	95,000	81,565	35
By Years in Position:	2 years or less	65,000	81,000	90,750	77,337	44
	More than 2 years	63,394	82,350	95,000	80,168	40
<b>Additional Staff</b>						
<b>Overall</b>		50,750	60,428	74,000	61,988	54
By JD Enrollment:	600 or fewer JD students	36,863	47,211	55,000	46,816	12
	601+ JD students	56,530	64,350	76,776	66,323	42
By NALP Region:	Northeast and Mid-Atlantic	55,000	64,350	78,000	68,274	21
	Southeast	48,250	55,765	60,856	54,325	14
	Midwest	40,000	57,000	74,000	56,215	10
	West/Rocky Mountain	—	70,000	—	65,656	9
By Type of School:	Private	54,415	61,000	74,000	64,235	29
	Public	48,006	59,500	70,000	59,382	25
By Years in Field:	1 year or less	58,999	74,000	90,000	70,035	13
	More than 1 year	48,926	56,590	64,350	58,588	30
By Years in Position:	1 year or less	55,000	64,350	78,000	66,841	19
	More than 1 year	50,000	59,028	70,000	59,746	34

Note: Figures reflect full-time salaries and only the median and average are shown if fewer than ten salaries were reported. Counts across subcategories may not add up to the overall total because not all respondents reported both educational attainment and position tenure/experience.

Most second professionals (90%) have director titles, including managing, deputy, senior, associate, and assistant directors. The majority of third professionals (68%) and fourth professionals (59%) are assistant/associate directors or career counselors. The remainder are distributed among directors, managers, and coordinators. Additional staff reported include assistants, coordinators, specialists, and office managers.

Table 14. **CSO Staff Person with Lead Responsibility for Collecting, Compiling, and Reporting Graduate Employment Data**  
(in percent of offices)

	Percent
Primary Professional Takes Lead	73%
Other Professionals Take Lead	27

Notes: Figures are based on 83 schools for which the lead employment reporting staff member was listed. Other professionals most commonly include directors (including associate and assistant directors) and managers. In some offices, lead responsibility is shared among two individuals.

Table 15. **Person to Whom the Primary Career Services Professional Reports by Size of Law School**  
(in percent of schools)

	All Sizes	JD Enrollment		
		Fewer than 400	400-600	601+
Law school dean	63.4%	83.3%	58.1%	57.6%
Law school associate or assistant dean	31.7	16.7	38.7	33.3

Note: Figures based on 82 law schools. An additional 4.9% reported that the primary professional reported to someone else. Examples include the provost, academic dean, vice dean, and dean of students.

Table 16. **Changes Experienced Since the 2023 Survey**  
(in percent of schools)

	Percent of Schools		
	No	Yes	Change was or is expected to be temporary
Position(s) in the office eliminated	87.8%	12.2%	1.2%
Position(s) in the office added	69.9	30.1	0.0
Office budget reduced	74.7	25.3	6.0
Office budget increased	82.7	17.3	1.2
Staff furloughs	98.8	1.2	0.0
Responsibilities added to CSO portfolio	51.2	48.8	4.9
Responsibilities removed from CSO portfolio	90.4	9.6	0.0
Initiated or increased programming related to student mental or physical well-being	66.3	33.7	0.0
Initiated or increased programming related to student professional development	30.1	69.9	0.0
Travel authority/budget reduced or eliminated	79.5	20.5	3.6
Travel authority/budget increased	89.2	10.8	1.2
Decrease in funds for staff professional development/conferences	82.9	17.1	2.4
Increase in funds for staff professional development/conferences	85.5	14.5	3.6

Note: All percentages are based on the number of respondents who chose at least one response option. That number ranges from 81 to 83 depending on the question.

Table 16. **Changes Experienced Since the 2023 Survey**  
**Supplemental Notes**

More specific information for categories is reported below.

**Staff positions noted as eliminated:**

- Director
- Associate Director for Alumni Advising
- Assistant Director of Career Counseling
- Career counselor
- Office manager
- Program specialist
- Front desk coordinator
- Graduate assistant
- Student worker

**Staff positions noted as added (in some cases by multiple schools):**

- Directors (including Career Development, Career Strategy, and Public Service)
- Associate Directors (including Career & Professional Development, Clerkships & Externships, External Relations, and Programs)
- Assistant Directors (including Career Counseling, Data, and Public Service Programs)
- Managers (including judicial clerkships and programs)
- Coordinators (including administrative, alumni, employer outreach, and programs)
- Career counselors and advisors
- Data specialist
- Administrative assistant

**The kinds of duties specified as added (many by multiple schools) include:**

- Additional course programming, including online JD programs
- Event planning
- Role in Council Standard 303/Professional Identify formation
- Externship programs
- More counseling (e.g., master's students and certificate students; part-time students; LLMS; alums; public service)
- 1L mentor program
- CLEs
- Pipeline programs
- Committees
- Admission and student affairs functions

- Fundraising
- Judicial outreach
- Bar support
- Pro bono clinic
- Student well-being workshops
- Field placement marketing
- Enrollment assistance
- Academic advising
- Commencement
- Programs and resources related to early recruiting
- Orientation

**The kinds of duties/responsibilities specified as removed from the CSO:**

- Externship program; director of externships was hired
- Bar assistance
- LLM counseling
- Council mandated data reporting (non-employment related)
- Mental health referrals
- Law school sponsorship of external organizations and events
- Leadership and professional development classes

Table 17. **Work Environment Format for Career Services Office By Type and Size of Law School**  
(in percent of schools)

Work Environment	All Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment		
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+
100% on-site/in-person	27.7%	40.0%	16.3%	55.6%	22.6%	17.6%
Hybrid	67.5	57.5	76.4	38.9	74.2	76.5
Other	4.8	2.5	7.0	5.6	3.2	5.9
<b>For Hybrid Offices</b>						
<b>Number of Required In-Office Days in a Typical Week:</b>						
4 days	33.9	52.2	21.2	57.1	47.8	15.4
3 days	46.4	26.1	60.6	28.6	34.8	61.5
2 days	1.8	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	3.8
1 day	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
As needed	1.8	4.3	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0
Other	16.1	17.4	15.2	14.3	13.0	19.2
<b>Type of Policy:</b>						
Formal, written policy	67.4	72.2	64.0	80.0	81.3	54.5
Informal, without written documentation	27.9	16.7	36.0	20.0	18.8	36.4
Other	4.7	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1

Note: Work environment format was reported for 83 offices. No offices reported a completely virtual format. Offices that selected “other” work environment noted that they are in-person during the academic year/when classes are in session and remote or hybrid during the summer/when classes are not in session. Data on the required number of in-office days is based on 56 offices reporting a hybrid format. Those who selected “other” for the number of required in-office days most commonly reported that the number of days varied by position or time of year. In total, 43 hybrid offices reported the type of policy their office had in place. Examples of “other” policies include a formal policy during the academic year and an informal policy during the summer.

Table 18. **Format of Career Services Office Student Programming By Type and Size of Law School**  
*(in percent of schools)*

Types of Student Programming Offered	All Schools	Law School Type		JD Enrollment		
		Public	Private	Fewer than 400	400-600	601+
In-Person	91.6%	95.0%	88.4%	100.0%	83.9%	94.1%
Virtual	78.3	82.5	74.4	61.1	74.2	91.2
Hybrid	72.3	65.0	79.1	44.4	90.3	70.6

Note: Figures are based on responses from 83 law schools. Percentages add up to more than 100% because offices could select multiple formats. The majority (63%) of schools reported that they offer student programming options in all three format types.

# Open-Ended Responses/Commentary

Career services offices were asked to respond to an open-ended question about how much their students engage with and use the resources of the office, including what methods/initiatives have been effective in motivating students to engage. Offices were also asked to comment on whether they have noticed any challenges with student attendance at networking/employer events since the last survey was administered in 2023. A sample of responses are listed below. Some comments have been lightly edited for clarity and anonymity.

## Attendance & Engagement Trends

- “Attendance at programs during the spring semester was down compared to prior years. Attendance at fall programs was about the same as in prior years. Student RSVPs were also down, but often students who didn’t RSVP for programs would turn up.”
- “We continue to struggle with getting 2Ls and 3Ls to attend events and programming. Part of this is due to the fact that upper-class students spend far less time on campus (experiential learning and internships take them off campus). The issue also seems to be tied toward student attitudes toward programming.”
- “Students will not network, period. Getting students to come to programs, especially without some incentive, is very tough. I was able to get the administration to make it mandatory that all 1Ls see me for resume review their first semester. That has helped in increasing the number of 2L students that come and see me or ask me questions. However, by 3L year, that drops dramatically.”
- “Still challenges to getting students to attend anything not mandatory.”
- “Attendance appears to be class specific. We have a class that is super engaged and attentive and then the next is more passive and withdrawn from our events, appointments, and programming.”
- “We are seeing lower turnout for programming. Unless we are able to provide lunch or it is required, attendance is very low. Our student orgs have become much more active this year, and there are lots of lunchtime programs fighting for student engagement.”
- “It seems difficult to attract students to events with outside guests and speakers. But the ones who attend are interested and engaged.”
- “The number of employer events has skyrocketed since 2023. Students are being pulled in many directions. When employers complain about the low turnout, we typically show them five other events they were competing against.”
- “We have found that students are very engaged as reflected in an increase in student appointments and attendance at employer events. We have not changed our methods — they seem very eager and anxious about all things career related.”
- “I think students are engaging with our office more than ever, as a result of a law school culture that integrates professional development and job searching into the educational mission of the law school.”

## Early & Mandatory Engagement Strategies

- “We have been able to significantly increase 1L attendance at introductory professional development programs by making attendance at those programs a requirement tied to their ability to register for Fall 2L courses. We have also made the 1L initial appointment with the office a requirement.”
- “Historically, networking events were poorly attended. However, with the changes in recruiting timelines, we stressed the importance of these events to students and saw much improved attendance by our 1Ls.”
- “We meet with each 1L section early in the fall semester and follow up with targeted communications and small-group check-ins. Regular engagement with class leadership (e.g., section reps or student bar leaders) allows us to stay in tune with student needs and promote upcoming events.”
- “We begin our engagement with students during the 1L Orientation program by providing them with a QR code during our presentation that allows them to set up their LinkedIn profile, including information about their interests, which we subsequently use to assign students based on similar practice area interests or experience of our professional staff. This early engagement appears to work well.”
- “We have a co-curricular graduation requirement that most of our career development programming qualifies for. This helps drive attendance at many of our events.”
- “In the last few years, we have also implemented mandatory exit interviews for graduating JD students. Coupled with At-Graduation employment surveys, these exit interviews are tied to the students’ ability to participate in commencement.”

## Programming Formats & Innovations

- “Students increasingly prefer online programming. Attendance at in-person events continues to be a struggle. Students do appreciate when programs are recorded and often may watch them at different times later. Students also appreciate innovative programs; for example, professional dress fashion shows, coffee networking sessions, and holding office hours in the student cafe.”
- “Students prefer to be back in-person. Virtual events don’t get great attendance anymore unless it’s when they’re away working during the summer.”
- “To meet students where they are, we offer hybrid counseling options, evening availability during peak periods, and walk-in hours during key recruiting windows. These options have helped boost appointment numbers, especially among students juggling multiple obligations.”
- “We’ve seen less use of formal drop-in hours, but more students wanting to drop-in at random times of the day to see counselors.”
- “We find students engage more with us when we are in “their” space, i.e. atrium, green space, etc., than in our offices.”
- “We started a networking area that allowed for guests who wanted to “pitch” to students to set up a table in a high traffic area for a couple hours. This afforded them the opportunity to be present with the students without having the visit as an event during the lunch hour. We also started having a peer resume reviewer program where a student with good resume writing skills meet one-on-one with students to help get their resumes in order.”
- “Offering a peer advisor program allows highly engaged students to serve as the bridge between disengaged students and administrators.”

- “We have modified our employer panels to “Ask the Experts: the subject specialization” (Personal Injury, In-house counsel), which has increased attendance.”
- “We added an employer fair on a single evening with a few dozen employers and 100+ students attending. This promoted much greater student attendance, engagement, and networking than the individual employer tables and individual employer info sessions held at the law school previously.”
- “We add a table talk career exploration series, which is a recurring casual networking event where students connect with attorneys to learn about legal career paths in featured practice areas. During these hour-long gatherings, students rotate freely among tables, practicing professional conversations with attorneys in this valuable relationship-building opportunity.”
- “We design events and workshops that are not only skills-based but also culturally relevant and affirming. Students respond well when they see themselves reflected in the programming.”
- “The Law School implemented a policy prohibiting student organized events/programs on Mondays and now reserves Mondays for offices like ours to offer programs. While it can still be challenging to get students’ attention, this change has created some space for us to engage with students through in-person programming.”
- “We have increased the number of in-person events where students can meet employers and attendance has been very strong. In addition, we have added several topical programs (The Big Law Job Search and Opportunities with the Judiciary) in the fall semester and we saw very strong attendance. We have been careful to avoid conflicts with 1L assignments and other events on the school calendar, and we get the word out in multiple ways. Challenges around attendance seem to increase in the spring.”

- “I have made a significant effort to repeatedly address the importance of building connections within the legal community that does seem to help some with student attendance. Facilitated networking (where we tell them which community events we’ll be attending) is also showing signs of being impactful.”

### Incentives & Engagement Drivers

- “We have seen much more attendance at activities, and we are providing a lot more food/swag to get that.”
- “We occasionally use modest incentives (e.g., raffles, firm-sponsored meals, or swag giveaways) to encourage attendance, especially for employer-facing events. More importantly, we integrate networking into required or high-interest programs (e.g., post-reception dinners, alumni panels) so that relationship-building feels organic.”

### Outreach & Communication Methods

- “We have implemented the use of a weekly newsletter to disseminate information in one condensed format, short video instruction clips and increased social media.”
- “This year we created an Instagram account as a way to engage with students.”
- “Increased usage of social media has been useful towards increasing interactions with students.”
- “We have seen an increase in engagement after using text messages and increasing collaboration with student organizations.”
- “Faculty members, student organizations, and upper-class peer leaders are some of our strongest partners in promoting engagement. We have noticed increased participation when programming is co-sponsored by student orgs or endorsed directly by professors in class.”
- [In terms of motivating and engaging with students] “Collaborating with student groups on programming, getting into classrooms to meet students, paying for students to attend

industry/bar association events, and collaborating with bar associations sections on programming and panels.”

- “The use of Calendly to schedule appointments has improved students’ access to the office.”

### Student Preferences & Challenges

- “Students are more distracted. It takes more time and a greater variety of outreach to engage them. More effort required to repeat counseling advice or ensure that students followed up. Many more students are coming to law school with little or no prior exposure to what used to be standard business communications — oral and written communications that doesn’t involve cell phones or texting. Seeing more students who are intimidated by face-to-face interpersonal communications with people who are new to them or in groups.”
- “Students are often reluctant to attend events unless they see a tangible outcome (e.g., direct hiring connection or mentorship opportunity). Additionally, events held during periods of academic intensity (e.g., midterms, write-on, exam prep) tend to see lower turnout. To address this, we have worked to clearly communicate the long-term value of early networking, and we are continuing to explore new formats (i.e. small-group coffee chats, firm walkthroughs, and practice-area-specific speed networking) to make employer engagement feel more personal and less transactional.”
- “Student engagement with our office is strong, mainly because of our individual advising model. We have had to drastically cut down on our in-person programs, because of budget and because the students are overprogrammed. The biggest challenge with student attendance at networking/employer events is that there are too many of them. While I know in some ways it is a good problem to have, the firm interest in our students is resulting in an overabundance of events.”
- “We have found that students are primarily focused on individual advising so we have decreased programming and increased individualized outreach.”
- “As for challenges, like most schools, we do have some students who register for our networking/employer events, but then no-show.”
- “Since COVID, students are lacking in the “softer” skills necessary for successful networking — especially if it involves actually speaking/listening to a real person.”
- “We are not struggling to engage students - they are actively engaged in their own career searches. Our struggle is actually in (a) ensuring that students are receiving accurate information, rather than relying on peers or random strangers on the internet and (2) dealing with the exhaustion, and burnout that comes from being overburdened, underpaid, and underappreciated for our expertise.”

At the conclusion of the survey, career services offices also had the opportunity to share more generally any significant changes, challenges, or enhancements to their office operations since the 2023 survey. Some of those responses are listed below. Some comments have been lightly edited for clarity and anonymity.

### Recruiting Timeline & Changes

- “The changes in the legal recruitment cycle have made us shift how we assign items internally to allow for certain staff to focus solely on recruitment rather than recruitment and counseling. We’ve added a new employer relations position as well.”
- “Increased employer-initiated programming on campus has had an impact on workloads and been challenging in terms of scheduling, with consideration to other programming at the law school. Early recruiting essentially eliminated cyclical patterns with students, and the office has not had a break or decrease in document review or appointments since January.”
- “The earlier recruiting cycle has changed how we work with 1Ls. We started engaging with them earlier this year and plan to have resume workshops, etc. even earlier this fall.”
- “We have had to pivot quickly to the changes in the recruitment timeline. This has changed the role of the Recruitment Coordinator from one that was more administrative (facilitating the behind-the-scenes of the on-campus recruitment program) to one that needs to be more about employer outreach. We are in the process of changing that job description to reflect those changes.”
- “The earlier recruiting timeline has negatively impacted many things, including student attendance and engagement, student mental health and well-being, and participation in student organizations, leadership opportunities, and law review.”
- “The erosion of OCI has required much more personalized attention to students in helping to create individualized job search strategies.”
- “Having a dedicated employer engagement

staff member has been a game-changer, especially in the rapidly changing recruiting timeline. We have been able to move to a quarterly OCI schedule, which has resulted in significantly higher numbers of employers participating in our recruitment efforts.”

- “The most significant changes affecting our operations are (1) the earlier and accelerated BigLaw hiring timelines and (2) the impact of the federal government hiring freeze.”
- “The frenetic pace of private sector recruiting has had a significant negative impact on students and our staff. It’s challenging to keep pace and keep our students informed with the most up to date information (when it seems to be changing by the minute).”
- “OCI blowing up has forced us to put much more attention on meet the employer events, both big and small.”

### Student Behaviors & Needs

- “We are rolling out the materials for 1Ls that we used to do in the fall — resumes, practice setting and areas, interviewing/networking, geography, narratives — in July this year. We want to enable 1Ls to get the foundation done before school starts so they can focus on academics. This is a huge shift and issue.”
- “Students need more counseling on how to be an adult than how to be a professional — this is particularly challenging.”
- “Student disengagement and lack of consideration for more rural opportunities are the biggest issues for placement.”
- “Students have begun to expect individualized everything, and that has a huge impact on my office and my time. They won’t read their listserv emails for information. They won’t apply for OCIs; instead, they ask our

office to find them something. They don't pay attention during the mandatory resume/cover letter sessions we hold; instead, they want our office to look at their resume/cover letter individually without following the templates/examples we provided. They expect law school staff and faculty to help step-by-step with bar applications, which isn't even in my wheelhouse. They want instant answers as well. Entitlement is through the roof, and our office is not given resources to actually meet these expectations."

- "We try to get feedback from the students as far as their needs and recommendations. A lot of their requests surround bar application which we really can't provide specific information, but we do give some ideas and encouragement. We have started to provide a mock interview opportunity in the fall and the spring where alums and friends of the law school volunteer for virtual mock interviews. Overall, our students typically respond well to requests from the office (such as for the ABA Employment Report) which is nice."
- "Students are not reading emails. "

### Enrollment Growth & New Programs

- "We will have a much larger class in fall 2025."
- "The law school class size has increased significantly since 2023."
- "The start of the law school's new online JD program has required our office to start providing a whole new set of career services to this new student cohort. Most of the part-time students have extensive professional backgrounds and full-time jobs while attending law school, so their career advising needs, availability, and career goals are generally different than for our full-time, residential students. Also, because this is an online program, we need to provide all career services remotely. Adding these services has required significant staff time and resources."

### Budget, Staffing & Resource Constraints

- "Budget constraints. Lack of staffing, not just in CSO but in school."
- "We are and continue to be faced with extreme financial and staffing challenges, as well as the turmoil in private and public sector hiring. These factors are resulting in staff burnout and impacting student services."
- "The major concern is budget cuts and reduced spending. The need for an additional counselor as our enrollment is increasing each year."
- "Lack of university budget for professional development, conferences, etc. The university is cutting back on these funds campus wide, and more of these funds are being given to faculty."
- "Ongoing budget cuts have increased our reliance on virtual-only programming. As compared to our in-person and hybrid programming, our sense is that students are not as fully engaged in the virtual programs as they are when they are in person (screens are off, etc.)."
- "Financial issues for small private colleges and universities (Are we safe? Will we close? Will the demographic cliff be a reality?)"

### External Factors

- "The new presidential administration is having a big effect on higher education in general and areas that trickle down to the legal employers and law schools, specifically regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion, financial aid, international students, etc."
- "AI (How to use? When to use? Can you use? Helping students see its value and limitations); Hostile government actions against higher ed in general; NextGen Bar; Assault on diversity, equity, and inclusion (every scholarship/job fair/recruitment effort needs review by counsel before I can promote). There has

been so much change in the last year alone that I'm simply putting out fires, struggling to stay informed and up-to-date, and facing challenges from financial constraints of the university and a lack of staff, among other issues. I foresee continued significant change for most law schools."

- "Restrictions on diversity, equity, and inclusion."
- "The new administration's federal government workforce reduction policies enacted in January 2025 displaced many of our alumni working for the federal government, rescinded offers accepted by students for summer intern and postgraduate Honor Program employment."

As a result, we have been dealing with higher volumes of alumni contacting us for help and have had to work double time with students who lost jobs. A large number of our graduates typically entered postgraduate federal government jobs in previous years. So, these new developments have impacted us in a big way."

### Other Challenges

- "We are navigating a Dean transition and changing priorities for that Dean. That has been a challenge."
- "Increase in alumni requests for services."
- "We have no time in the schedule dedicated to programming. The school calendar is packed."

## Questions?

Please contact NALP's research team at [research@nalp.org](mailto:research@nalp.org).

NALP  
1220 19th Street NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20036  
[www.nalp.org](http://www.nalp.org)  
(202) 835-1001