

PART V OF THE NALP PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS (as of December 12, 2018)

GENERAL STANDARDS FOR THE TIMING OF OFFERS AND DECISIONS

To promote fair and ethical practices for the interviewing and decision-making process, NALP offers the following standards for the timing of offers and decisions:

A. General Provisions

1. All offers to law student candidates (“candidates”) should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter unless the offers are made pursuant to Sections B and C below, in which case the later response date should apply.
2. Candidates are expected to accept or release offers or request an extension by the applicable deadline. Offers that are not accepted by the offer deadline expire.
3. A candidate should not hold open more than five offers of employment at any one time. For each offer received that places a candidate over the offer limit, the candidate should, within one week of receipt of the excess offer, release an offer.
4. Employers offering part-time or temporary positions for the school term are exempted from the requirements of Paragraphs B and C below.
5. Practices inconsistent with these guidelines should be reported to the candidate’s career services office.

B. Full-Time Employment Provisions

1. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 28 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within 14 days from the date of the offer letter, if an employer requests such reaffirmation in its offer letter. Employers that have requested this reaffirmation may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 14-day period. Offers made after December 15 for full-time positions to commence following graduation should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer’s offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least October 1 of the candidate’s final year of law school, provided that such offers are made prior to or on September 2. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within thirty days from the date of the offer letter, if an employer requests such reaffirmation in its offer letter. Employers that have requested this reaffirmation may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 30-day period. After September 2 of a candidate's final year of law school, employers offering full-time positions to commence following graduation to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 28 days following the date of the offer letter.
4. If an employer makes an offer to a law student candidate not previously employed by that employer before the beginning of the law school's on-campus interview program, that offer should not expire until at least 28 days following the first day of the law school's on-campus interview program. Employers should contact the appropriate law school(s) to determine these dates.

5. Employers offering candidates full-time positions to commence following graduation and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from Paragraphs 1-4 of this Section. Instead, offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for at least three weeks following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first, and offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

C. Summer Employment Provisions for Second and Third Year Students

1. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates not previously employed by them should leave those offers open for at least 28 days following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first. Candidates should reaffirm these offers within 14 days from the date of the offer letter, if an employer requests such affirmation in its offer letter. Employers that have requested this reaffirmation may retract any offer that is not reaffirmed within the 14-day period. Offers made after December 15 for the following summer should remain open for at least two weeks after the date of the offer letter.
2. Candidates may request that an employer extend the deadline to accept the employer's offer until as late as April 1 if the candidate is actively pursuing positions with public interest or government organizations. Candidates may hold open only one offer in such circumstances. Employers are encouraged to grant such requests.
3. Employers offering positions for the following summer to candidates previously employed by them should leave those offers open until at least 28 days following the first day of the law school's on-campus interview program.
4. If an employer makes an offer to a law student candidate not previously employed by that employer before the beginning of the law school's on-campus interview program, that offer should not expire until at least 28 days following the first day of the law school's on-campus interview program. Employers should contact the appropriate law school(s) to determine these dates.
5. Employers offering candidates positions for the following summer and having a total of 40 attorneys or fewer in all offices are exempted from Paragraphs 1-4 of this Section. Instead, offers made on or before December 15 should remain open for at least three weeks following the date of the offer letter or until December 30, whichever comes first, and offers made after December 15 should remain open for at least two weeks.

D. Summer Employment Provisions for First Year Students

1. To position law students to be as successful as possible, their efforts during the first semester of law school should focus on their studies rather than on job search activities. Nonetheless, opportunities to learn about professionalism, professional development and the legal profession in a group setting are appropriate early in law school. Recognizing that law schools will differ in philosophy as to first-year career development activities, law schools nevertheless should not begin providing one-on-one career counseling or application document reviews to first-year students before October 15 (except in the case of part-time students who may be given assistance in seeking positions during the school term). Individual law schools may set later dates as appropriate.

2. Recognizing that opportunities to learn about professionalism, professional development, and the legal profession are appropriate early in law school and recognizing that law schools will differ as to whether and how to include prospective employers in career development activities, educational and professional development contact with 1Ls is permitted at any time at the discretion of the school. Prospective employers and first year law students, however, should not initiate contact with one another and employers should not initiate formal one-on-one recruiting contact with one another, including applications, interviews, or offers to first year students, before December 1. Appointments with candidates for interviews should be established for a mutually convenient time so as not to unduly disrupt candidates' studies.
3. All offers to first year students for summer employment should remain open for at least two weeks after the date made.