

March 30, 2022

Union ★
Update

OPEIU
Local



for OPEIU Local 8 members at Northwest Justice Project

Dear Comrades:

We hope this note finds you well, or as well as you can be given the uncertainty around the budget shortfall. Given what seems to be gross over-hiring and mis-budgeting, NJP is running a budget deficit and plans to address the \$1.5M shortfall through a reduction in non-management staff (i.e. elimination of positions and layoffs).

The Union Bargaining Team met with management twice this week to discuss the impacts of layoffs. We did not agree with how NJP initially proposed implementing layoffs but we were able to clarify the process as outlined in the contract and now believe NJP will properly adhere to it.

Our conversations have been focused on the following:

- Pressure management to identify cost-saving alternatives to layoffs
- For layoffs to be shared by management and admin
- Push for management to consider incentives for voluntary layoffs and retirements
- Establish clear and transparent procedures for the layoff process
- A joint email communication to staff from the Union and management
- Ensure seniority in the entire membership is honored and that management fully follows the CBA

What we know:

According to management, they plan to identify 16 general field attorney positions and 4-5 legal assistant positions for layoff. However, there are multiple other job openings statewide that will be filled because their funding is independent of the LSC funds. This is a plan in progress so these numbers are subject to change.

What we don't know yet:

We have not seen a list of which specific positions have been identified for reduction. Management is still finalizing it.

We do not yet have a full picture of what exactly the reduction in force will look like but we know even those employees in positions that management thinks can be eliminated will have options (i.e. layoff, move into vacant position, bump a less senior employee). We are obviously working to get as much information from management and to negotiate the fewest layoffs as soon as possible. We expect that NJP will answer some of these questions at the town hall this week and/or in an all staff email.

We will continue to communicate with you as this moves forward. The shop stewards and bargaining team are happy to speak with anyone who has questions or concerns about this process or any other workplace issue.

As of now, our next membership meeting is April 7 at 5 PM. We hope to have much more

information by then for everyone. Zoom link for April 7 union meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81203286746?pwd=Y2VwRXFzck4xbGpKalVnNnBndDJKQT09>

Take care and be kind to yourselves.

In Solidarity,

The Shop Stewards and Bargaining Team

**Questions? Contact Valarie Peaphon, Union Representative,
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Visit our website



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