

Union Update

OPEIU
Local 

for OPEIU Local 8 members at Northwest Justice Project

Layoffs

Budgeting at NJP and leadership's rush to layoff rank and file employees has not only put staff in a precarious position, but also dangerously eroded trust and morale. Meanwhile, employees haven't seen anyone at the top meaningfully apologize, take accountability, or be held responsible. We continue to hear many concerns regarding how management may attempt to exercise discretion in determining special qualifications, training, skills, or experience during the layoff process. We have yet to see if that will occur or how it will be justified. We believe as many as ten (10) employees volunteered for layoff and NJP rejected five (5) of them.

Given what we know about pending layoffs from last week's all-staff email please answer [two quick survey questions](#) by 4 pm Monday, April 18th as we weigh next steps.

Contract

We are hoping to distribute copies of the contract soon. In the meantime, we want to call your attention to two new provisions:

Extended Deadline

Do you believe your experience should be reevaluated based on the newly negotiated language (see below)? If so, submit a request for reevaluation by Monday, May 2nd!

Employees hired prior to the execution of the new contract who believe a reevaluation of their experience will result in an increased determination of experience level shall provide to the Human Resources Director a recommended reevaluation by Monday, May 2, 2022. NJP will reevaluate experience based on the resume and other application materials provided by the employee at their time of hire. An employee may provide additional supplemental information that is relevant. If a reevaluation results in an employee being placed at a higher step, they will receive pay at the higher step level retroactive to December 1, 2021.

Determination of Experience Level

In determining the number of years of applicable experience to credit newly hired staff, NJP will utilize the following guidelines:

- **Attorneys:** An attorney is credited on the salary scale for year with year credit (prorated for partial year and part-time work) for the relevant length of previous post-law school or post certified completion of APR 6 program legal experience/work, including but not limited to clerkships or other work defined as the practice of law under the RPC's, etc. Other work experience will be credited with one year on the salary scale when such experience is determined relevant to a legal services practice and is consistent with the position requirements for which the

individual has been hired. If at least two years of the other relevant work experience was at NJP, then it will be credited with two years on the salary scale.

- **Paralegals:** A Paralegal is credited on the salary scale with year for year credit for the relevant length of previous legal experience/work. Other work experience will be credited when such experience is determined relevant to a legal services practice and is consistent with the position requirements for which the individual has been hired.
- **Legal Assistants:** A Legal Assistant is credited on the salary scale with year for year credit for the relevant length of previous legal experience/work. Other work experience will be credited when such experience is determined relevant to a legal services practice and is consistent with the position requirements for which the individual has been hired.
- **Outreach Worker:** Year for year credit for performing similar duties, responsibilities and skills determined relevant to the needs of the organization. Other work experience will be credited when such experience is determined relevant and is consistent with the position requirements.
- **Support Staff:** Year for year credit for performing similar duties, responsibilities and skills determined relevant to the needs of the organization. Other work experience will be credited when such experience is determined relevant and is consistent with the position requirements.
- **Screeners:** Year for year credit for performing similar duties, responsibilities and skills determined relevant to the needs of the organization. Other work experience will be credited when such experience is determined relevant and is consistent with the position requirements.

Lived Experience. NJP values lived experience that contributes to and informs NJP's work. Lived experience will be credited with one year on the salary scale when such experience is determined relevant and is consistent with the position requirements for which the employee was hired.

Coming Soon: Bi-lingual Pay!

Managing Attorneys will ask employees to self-identify whether they are using a language other than English in their work and, if so, which language(s). Based on an office's needs, the Managing Attorney will then determine which employees are eligible for additional bi-lingual pay by May 2, 2022. That additional compensation will be retroactive to January 1, 2022.

If an employee disagrees with the Managing Attorney's determination, they may appeal the decision with the Human Resources Director or designee within fourteen (14) calendar days. The Human Resources Director or designee will respond in writing within fourteen (14) calendar days.

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



OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION LOCAL 8

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