

MEMORANDUM

To: Council, ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar

From: Bill Adams, Deputy Managing Director
Kirsten Winek, Manager, Law School Analytics and Reporting

Date: 8/27/18

RE: New Streamlined Guidance Document for Employment Data Collection (ABA Guidance Document: Employment Protocols)

Over the past several years, our guidance for Career Services professionals related to completing the Employment Questionnaire and documenting the responses to it has become expansive. The key documents for completing the Employment Questionnaire have been the Employment Questionnaire's Definitions and Instructions and the Protocol for Reviewing Law Graduate Employment Data and Statement of Procedures for Collecting, Maintaining, and Reporting Law Graduate Employment Data (Protocol). However, law schools also have FAQ and Q&A documents, webinar recordings, and PowerPoint presentations on the ABA's Questionnaires webpage to guide them in their graduate employment data collection and classification.

While these sources are helpful, the guidance is spread out over many different documents, making it difficult for Career Services professionals to quickly find or reference relevant information. In response to feedback, we created a new document to organize, streamline, and maintain all ABA guidance on graduate employment data collection, classification, and reviews in one document. The result is a document called the ABA Guidance Document: Employment Protocols. To accomplish this, we worked with an advisory group of Career Services professionals from different law schools across the country, as well as leaders from NALP, to combine all the existing guidance materials, create an organizational structure for the new document, and share feedback. While there was no requirement we consult with an advisory group, we found their assistance and comments valuable in creating this new document.

Additionally, the ABA Guidance Document: Employment Protocols refines many of the definitions from the current Employment Questionnaire Definitions and Instructions to minimize "gray" areas and hopefully reduce the number of questions Career Services professionals have. It also clarifies the documentation requirements and lessens some documentation burdens that do not affect the validity of the data. Some of the guidelines and examples in this new document help address concerns about previously-given guidance, especially regarding lines between Bar Passage Required and J.D. Advantage and Seeking and Not Seeking. The changes also stem from the ABA now having an in-house graduate employment data reviewer (Kirsten Winek) who has been in the position for just over a year. This allows us to respond to questions from Career Services professionals and look at the graduate employment data and documentation to see where we can improve our instructions.