



CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY  
FOWLER SCHOOL OF LAW

Career Services Office

## Negotiating the Offer

### *Points to Consider*

What do you do once you receive a job offer? The first thing you should do is take some time to carefully evaluate the offer. You should be very gracious to the employer and state that you are extremely interested, but ask if you can take some time to consider the offer; find out when the employer needs your response. Make sure that all of your questions about the offer and the job have been answered. Here are some negotiating points and/or questions to consider when deciding whether to accept an offer of employment.

- How much is the salary? (Salary differs for various types of employers.) Please see our Employment Statistics Page at <http://www.chapman.edu/law/careers/employment-statistics.aspx>, as well as NALP's latest *Jobs & JDs: Employment and Salaries of New Law Graduates* and Robert Half Legal's *Salary Guide: Your Resource for Compensation in the Legal Field* in the CSO for the latest salary ranges.
- What is the benefits package (e.g., 401K, health, dental, vision, flexible spending programs, child care programs, and life insurance) – when does it start? Which carrier(s) is it with? How much holiday, vacation, and sick time do you get? When does it accrue? (Note that the benefits may compensate for a lower salary.)
- Does the employer pay for your bar dues, MCLE, and various association dues? Is office parking free? Does the employer pay for your business expenses (e.g., cell phone, mileage, and/or parking for court appearances)?
- Does the firm carry malpractice insurance?
- What is the billable hour requirement? Are pro bono hours counted toward your billable hour requirement?
- Are bonuses a part of the compensation? If so, how are bonuses determined, when and by whom?
- Will you receive a performance evaluation(s)/review(s)? If so, how often and by whom?
- Are you exempt or non-exempt status? Usually as a professional you will be exempt status. (Exempt status typically means no overtime pay, just a flat salary.)
- If the offer is for a temporary or contract job, what is the hourly rate/fee and how frequently are you paid? Will you receive overtime? Are contract employees covered under the firm's malpractice insurance policy?

Note: If you are hired as a contract employee, inquire whether your income will be reported to the IRS on a 1099 form versus a W-2 form. Please contact a tax professional to educate yourself on the [tax consequences](#).

- Is there a track to partnership? If so, what are the requirements and timeline? Where does the employer see you in five years/where will the firm be in five years?
- Does the firm offer any administrative support?