

## **OUR SALARY DEMANDS + MANAGEMENT'S LOW BALL OFFER**

### **Our Wages Have Trailed the Rising Cost of Living Since 2021**

According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, consumer prices have risen over 15% since July 2021, when our last contract took effect. Meanwhile, our salaries have risen by only 2.77% since then, after a 1% raise in 2022 and a 1.75% raise in 2023.

Under contract, we get Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) each year on July 1st, to help our pay keep up with inflation. Our first COLA increase has always been retroactive to the end of our last contract. COLA increases are separate from our step increases, which are annual raises for seniority.

### **Management's Proposals Are Far Below What We Demand**

Our current salary demands include:

- A 15% increase across all pay scales retroactive to July 1, 2024, an 8.5% increase effective July 1, 2025, and a 9% increase effective July 1, 2026;
- An increase to \$62,000 for Step 1 on salary scales H1 and I, with a proportional increase to each higher step on those scales, to ensure all members are making a living wage; and
- 1% step increases added in for several steps which currently have no step increase.

Management's proposals offer only:

- A 5% increase in the initial year for salary scales A, B, C, D, E, and F (without a guarantee that increases would be retroactive to 2024 – their proposal makes increases contingent on reimbursement from the City and/or State), followed by 2% increases effective July 1, 2025, and July 1, 2026;
- An 8% increase effective July 1, 2024, for salary scale H1(K), followed by a 4% increase effective July 1, 2025, and 3% effective July 1, 2026; and
- A 10% increase effective July 1, 2024, for salary scale I, followed by a 5% increase effective July 1, 2025, and 4% effective July 1, 2026.

Your salary under these proposals will depend on your specific salary scale and step. See the attached charts to find what your pay would be under either set of proposals.

### **Management's Claims of "Financial Vulnerability" Are Not the Financial Reality**

In March 2024, the City announced that it was providing COLA funding increases to its contracts with non-profit organizations like LSNYC. This increase was intended to provide non-profit employees with 3% raises in fiscal years 2025, 2026, and 2027, amounting to a 9% increase in funding.

Rather than provide us with immediate raises, LSNYC has decided to pass off this 9% increase in funding as their proposed raises for Scales A – F (which amount to 9% over the next three years), and almost all of the pay increase for Scales H1 and I. While using the City COLA funding to pay for our raises, management is able to pocket any additional funding instead of paying staff a living wage.

Despite this city funding increase, LSNYC is now claiming that as an organization we are “financially vulnerable.” This is not the first time LSNYC has falsely claimed poverty at the bargaining table. In 2013, management claimed that we were almost fiscally insolvent and that it could no longer afford to provide CIGNA health insurance to its staff. After we ended the strike, ratified the contract, and agreed to a 1% contribution for health insurance, management awarded *themselves* raises retroactive to 2012 and returned \$1.2 million to LSC rather than continue to provide health insurance to their employees at no cost or give them meaningful raises.

In this round of bargaining, we cannot let management misrepresent our organization’s financial situation once again to deny us the financial benefits we deserve.

### **While Claiming They Don’t Have the Money for Staff Raises, Management Went On A Hiring Spree and Gave Themselves a Larger Raise than They’re Offering to Most Staff**

While management has offered the majority of our shop members only a 5% raise for 2024, they awarded themselves at least 7% raises retroactive to January 1, 2024. Unlike the raises they proposed for Salary Scales A – F, their raises were not contingent on reimbursement from the City or State. Alongside taking these large raises, LSNYC has created many new highly-paid management positions, all while refusing to provide us with any information about these costs.

### **Comparing to Recently-won Contracts at Our Peer Organizations**

Our current salaries and management’s offer at the bargaining table are not just well below a living wage; they also do not match the pay currently being offered under the contracts at other organizations in New York City. For comparison:

- For a legal services assistant (our Scale F, MFJ Scale D), MFJ pays
  - \$61,800.00 at Step 1 (11.43% higher than LSNYC)
  - \$81,732.66 at Step 10 (19.29% higher than LSNYC)
  - \$97,350.19 at Step 20 (23.2% higher than LSNYC)
- For a social worker, MFJ pays
  - \$67,285.14 at Step 1 (7.13% higher than LSNYC)
  - \$92,756.30 at Step 10 (8.99% higher than LSNYC)
  - \$113,891.67 at Step 20 (8.76% higher than LSNYC)
- For an attorney,
  - MFJ pays \$84,208.35 at Step 1 (12.45% higher than LSNYC), \$110,775.20 at Step 10 (12.63% higher than LSNYC), and \$136,696.79 at Step 20 (15.1% higher than LSNYC), and
  - Legal Aid pays \$82,573.24 at Step 1 (10.3% higher than LSNYC), \$108,624.23 at Step 10 (10.44% higher than LSNYC), and \$134,024.48 at Step 20 (12.86% higher than LSNYC)

Clearly, we need much higher raises than management’s offer just to reach pay parity with other legal services organizations, much less see our wages keep up with the cost of living in New York City.

*This bargaining summary was prepared by the Member Education Committee - contact [allisonhrabar@gmail.com](mailto:allisonhrabar@gmail.com) with questions or to join the Committee.*