



# NAAUSA

National Association of  
Assistant U.S. Attorneys

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November 2, 2023

**Lisa O. Monaco**

Deputy Attorney General  
RFK Main Justice Building  
950 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20530

#### Re: AUSA Pay Study Update

Dear Deputy Attorney General Monaco:

For nearly two years, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) has indicated it is working on a study of the pay disparity between Assistant U.S. Attorneys (AUSAs) and Main Justice Attorneys.

On June 9, 2023, then-Director Wilkinson wrote our association to let us know the Department is “working with DOJ’s Bureau of Justice Statistics on a comprehensive AUSA pay study” and that the “review is in progress.” Most recently, Acting Director Norman Wong indicates that progress on the study has been slowed by other priorities within the Department. Unfortunately, this is unacceptable. The recruitment and retention of qualified AUSAs is necessary for the effective and equitable administration of the law, and it must be a priority.

AUSAs continue to report that inadequate compensation is the leading driver of low morale. As workloads increase and cases become more complex, the recruitment and retention of experienced AUSAs is critical to the federal law enforcement mission. Unfortunately, the pay disparity forces experienced AUSAs out of their positions or, worse, turns our U.S. Attorneys’ Offices into taxpayer-funded training centers for private defense attorneys.

The current pay system exploits the altruism and loyalty of AUSAs who are dedicated to the mission of the Department. This is unsustainable and places U.S. Attorney Offices at a disadvantage in the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel. Across the country, our members report substantial decreases in qualified applicants for open positions, particularly in areas with competitive legal labor markets. Without top talent, our justice system cannot adequately serve and protect the American people.

NAAUSA’s own research, coupled with Employment Fact Book statistics from the Justice Management Division, indicate the disparity is pervasive and substantial. And the lack of action to rectify the disparity has left AUSAs feeling frustrated, ignored, and burnt out.

This administration has repeatedly emphasized the value of the federal workforce and the importance of equitable pay systems. Unfortunately, since we met with you and raised this issue in August 2021, nothing has been done. EOUSA and DOJ’s continued reluctance to prioritize this issue—which impacts many of the nation’s more than 6,000 AUSAs—does not align with the administration’s stated values.

Therefore, NAAUSA requests (1) an update on the status and timeline for completing the pay study and (2) current data on the hiring and attrition rates of AUSAs and Main Justice Attorneys.

Please promptly contact NAAUSA's Washington Representative Natalia Castro ([ncastro@shawbransford.com](mailto:ncastro@shawbransford.com)) with this information.

Sincerely,



**Steven Wasserman**

President

CC: Acting Director of EOUSA Norman Wong