

# ALWU NEWSLETTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AOTEAROA LEGAL WORKERS' UNION



## ALWU TURNS 1

We launched on 20 May 2019. To all of ALWU's members and supporters - thank you for your support. ALWU looks forward to another year of advocacy and action.



## WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN OUR FIRST YEAR?

### 822 members

The number just keeps growing!

### Auckland Branch

ALWU is creating regional branches to support members in each region



### Christchurch Branch

### Minimum Wage Campaign

This campaign is ongoing and has already resulted in many firms topping up staff payments. ALWU has also produced a best practice policy.

## Reports

Each of these reports were the first of their kind. ALWU published the reports to increase transparency by helping legal workers see what's happening across the profession. ALWU will continue to collect data, share it with members and work with employers to improve conditions.

### Employment Information Survey Report 2019

### Response to Covid-19 Report 2020



### Pro Bono Panel



### Employment Law Committee

ALWU has set up the Employment Law Committee to provide advice and the Pro Bono Panel to represent individual members

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# PROGRESS REPORT

What has ALWU been doing since the last newsletter?

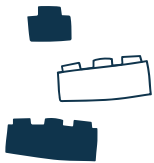
## RESPONSE TO COVID-19 REPORT

ALWU understands that COVID-19 has required some employers to access the government's wage subsidy and make difficult decisions about employees' salaries and jobs.

To empower our members to engage in conversations with their employers in relation to those issues in an informed and constructive manner, ALWU collected information regarding employers' responses to COVID-19.

On 21 May, our Aotearoa Legal Employers' Response to Covid-19 Report landed in your inboxes.

### What did we learn?



Close to one third of firms have taken steps to reduce staff salaries.



Some firms have taken excellent initiative in the ways they have supported their staff - including cash payments to help cover costs associated with working from home, leave purchase schemes and optional hour reductions, surveys to monitor staff well-being, and flu shots and other medical care.



There were significant differences in how the large firms handled their COVID-19 responses.



This included some large law firms taking the wage subsidy, some taking it but then paying it back, and others refusing to take it at all.



One large law firm did not take the wage subsidy but did reduce employees pay. Other large law firms reported that they had actually seen an uptake in productivity while staff worked from home.



Covid-19 has not affected law firms and practice areas equally. Where ALWU is aware of redundancies, these have occurred in commercial property teams, family law, and corporate finance.



Some law firms have had their recruitment affected by Covid-19, including large law firms that have cancelled winter / summer clerk applications.

## LEVEL 2

With the move to Level 2, many workplaces have asked staff to come back into the office. Some employers are looking at what they can learn and implement going forward - for example, more staff working from home.

Continue to look after yourselves, be kind and remember that we're still in a global pandemic, so it's ok if you are more stressed or tired than normal.

ALWU is still helping members who need assistance or advice through this time, whether your issue is related to Covid-19 or not.

You can email [employmentlaw@alwu.org.nz](mailto:employmentlaw@alwu.org.nz) and one of ALWU's executive team will work with you to resolve your issue, or refer you to our Pro Bono Panel.

### NEED SUPPORT?

**Don't forget we're here to help! ALWU is committed to helping workers at an individual level as well as through collective action.**

**ALWU can provide confidential support and, if needed, it can connect members to workplace delegates and senior lawyers who can provide expert employment advice.**

# ADMIN & SUPPORT STAFF SURVEY



Coming soon to an inbox near you!

ALWU is a union for all legal workers, not just lawyers. There is an army of legal workers who support the lawyers, the policy makers and the courts, but they are often overlooked. They face many of the same issues as lawyers, plus a whole host of issues of their own.

ALWU has been working behind the scenes to figure out what campaigns for this wonderful and diverse group of workers could look like. ALWU needs some data from the people themselves to help shape those campaigns.

ALWU's admin and support staff survey aims to gather that data. It covers working conditions, job satisfaction, career progression opportunities, COVID-19 support and ALWU engagement. Some of the data gathered through the survey will be published and some will be used internally to inform future campaigns and work.

If you are an administrative or support worker in the legal sector, please take our survey and help us to help you. This includes legal secretaries, IT support staff, finance staff, legal executives - basically anyone who is in a role that works alongside (among others) lawyers, policy makers or judges.

If you are not an admin or support worker, please forward the survey to the admin and support workers you know or work with. Workers do not have to be ALWU members to fill out the survey!

**GOT QUESTIONS?**  
**FEEDBACK?**  
**COMMENTS?**  
**IDEAS?**

Get in touch:  
[contact@alwu.org.nz](mailto:contact@alwu.org.nz)

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

If you are interested in joining the Auckland Branch or the Christchurch Branch, the Pro Bono Panel, or becoming a delegate at your legal workplace please contact the ALWU Executive at [contact@alwu.org.nz](mailto:contact@alwu.org.nz).

## MEME CORNER

Some comic solidarity to provide relief from the strain of collective action.

