

## Checklist - Practice and Planning Considerations

1. Create and maintain an office procedure manual and review and update the manual from time to time, providing detailed directions regarding every aspect of your office's operations:
  - a. How to check for a conflict of interest
  - b. How to use the calendaring system
  - c. How to generate a list of active client files, including client names, addresses, and phone numbers;
  - d. Where client ledgers are kept
  - e. How the open/active files are organized
  - f. How the closed files are organized and assigned numbers
  - g. Where the closed files are kept and how to access them
  - h. The office policy on keeping original documents of clients
  - i. Where original client documents are kept
  - j. Where the safe deposit box is located and how to access it
  - k. The bank name, address, account signers, and account numbers for all law office bank accounts
  - l. The location of all law office bank account records (trust and general)
  - m. Where to find, or who knows about, the computer passwords
  - n. How to access you voice mail (or answering machine) and the access code numbers
  - o. Where the post office or other mail service box is located and how to access it
2. Ensure that you are able to generate complete client and file open lists with up-to date contact information
3. Have secure documentation recording all accounting and financial information, access codes and passwords and identify document location in your planning instructions
4. Record all deadlines on every file in a central calendar system which is easily accessible
5. Thoroughly document all files sufficiently to allow the conduct of file to be assumed without delay and expense to clients
6. Keep all time and billing records up-to-date
7. Avoid keeping clients' property or clients' original documents. Return original documentation to clients as soon as possible

8. Purge and close files regularly (see the [LSBC File Retention Policy](#))
9. Have discussions with all appropriate person regarding practice coverage plans - family, office staff, Practice Attorney/Trustee, Executor, personal Attorney, Gatekeeper, banking personnel
10. Make formalized arrangements for trust accounts to be accessed and maintained in case of your illness, incapacity or death
11. Consider including in retainer agreements provisions indicating your arrangement for a Practice Attorney/Trustee to manage or dispose of your practice in the event of your disability, incapacity or death
12. Obtain a line of credit (unused) and/or life and disability insurance to cover your office overhead and your Practice Attorney/Trustees and expenses for at least 6 months.
13. Review annually your Law Practice Coverage Agreement, Law Practice Power of Attorney and Gatekeeper Agreement and confirm with the parties involved that each still agrees to act.
14. Review and update annually these forms: Law Office Contacts and Basic Information and Law Firm Inventory.