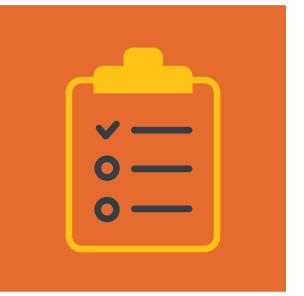


## NEW LAW PRACTICE

## **CHECKLIST**



The following checklist was developed over the years by members of the NJSBA Solo and Small-Firm section. It is meant to be a comprehensive list of to-do items when establishing a new law practice. If an item does not apply to you, skip it!

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Accountant	Discuss with accountant tax consequences, type of entity and accounting basis (cash or accrual), Obtain FEIN from IRS on SS-4
Accountant	Set up chart of accounts (Quickbooks template)
Accountant	Establish schedule for preparation of monthly statements and account reconciliation
Accountant	Determine policy for billing method and client costs advanced
Accountant	Obtain forms: journals and ledgers, cash received receipt, time tickets, bill head, thank you letter forms
Accountant	Determine need for accounting software
Accountant	Develop revenue, expense, cash flow and capital needs budgets (don't forget start-up expenses: deposits, down payments)
Advertising	Determine advertising need, review NJ ethics opinions re: advertising/signage





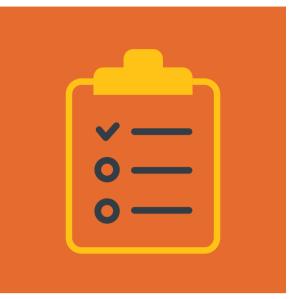
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Banking	Attorney Business account, banking supplies (checks, deposit slips deposit stamps), safe deposit box for firm valuables, will storage needs, determine account signers.
Banking	Determine need for IOLTA account and/or safe deposit box for client property; review Rule 1:21-6 trust accounting rules.
Banking	Determine need for line of credit, firm credit card.
Bar Associations	Notify bar associations of physical and mailing addresses, email and telephone.
Calendar and Diary	Determine process for maintaining calendar and diary (to-do and tickler system). Dual manual system, automated? Backup procedures (copied or printed and when)
Client Intake	Forms: new client/new matter intake form, client interview/initial consultation form representation agreements, fee agreements (flat fee or non-refundable agreement, cost and fee retainer agreements), narratives on how cases are handled, client's responsibilities, post-matter client evaluation forms.
Courts	Electronic and file-by-mail capabilities
Courts	Notify New Jersey Fund for Client Security re: new address.
Dues and Licenses	Bar dues, city and county occupational licenses, if any.





CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Equipment	Copier, scanner, fax, postage machine, shredder, binding equipment, DVD player, adding machine, etc. Determine which are purchased, which are rented and which are leased.
Files	Cabinets, chrono file, accordion file, date stamp, reading files, filing supplies, binders (folders, file pockets, etc) incoming and outgoing mail procedures
Files	Master open and closed file lists (manual or automated - or both); determine records retention schedule (see pdf file)
Forms	List of needed forms for your practice and where these forms can be obtained.
Furniture & Accessories	Art work, carpeting, chairs (executive, secretarial, visitors), conference room furniture, reception room furniture, desks (secretaries, paralegals, lawyers) credenzas, window treatments, umbrella and coat rack, trash and recycling bins. Determine where builtins will suffice. Lease or purchase?
Insurance <b>Critical</b>	Disability, health, professional liability, office pack (liability, business resumption, valuable papers, employee fidelity), workers' compensation. Flood
Library, Legal Research	Determine need for on-line databases, hard copy library materials and directories, periodical subscriptions, bookshelves (floor strength?); Fastcase, Google Scholar.
NJICLE Publications	Review available list of helpful start-up materials. Administrative and legal forms.





CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION
Mail and Messengers	Mailing supplies (labels, USPS supplies etc.), express mail accounts (e.g., FedEx, UPS, etc.), email account, private courier account.
Maintenance and Janitorial	Office cleaning, garbage removal, landscaping/snow removal, carpet cleaning services—may be included in office lease.
Marketing	Business cards, stationery, announcements, holiday cards, thank you notes/form letters, practice- specific paper (e.g., will paper)