

**THE FLORIDA BAR'S LAW OFFICE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE SERVICE**

**NEW LAW PRACTICE // NEW OFFICE CHECKLIST**

*(visit us at [www.flabar.org/newflabar/memberservices/LOMAS](http://www.flabar.org/newflabar/memberservices/LOMAS))*

**OPENING DAY**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>Deadline Date</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>One-time Start-up Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Monthly Recurring Cost</b>	<b>Estimated Annual Cost</b>
Accountant	Refer to F.S. 620 & 621 and then discuss with accountant tax consequences, type of entity and accounting basis (cash or accrual), Obtain FEIN from IRS						
Accountant	Set up Chart of Accounts (recommend ABA Model Chart of Accounts for Law Firms which can be purchased from LOMAS)						
Accountant	Establish schedule for preparation of monthly statements and account reconciliation						
Accounting	Determine need for accounting software and develop policies for fees and client costs						
Accounting	Obtain forms: journals and ledgers, cash received receipt, time tickets, invoice head, thank you letter forms						
Accounting	Develop revenue, expense, cash flow and capital needs <b>budgets</b> (don't forget start-up expenses: deposits, down payments)						
Advertising	Determine advertising need, review TFB Ethics Opinions re: advertising/signage.						

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Banking	Operating account, banking supplies (checks, deposit slips, deposit stamps), safe deposit box for firm valuables, will storage needs, determine account signers						
Banking	Determine need for IOTA account and/or safe deposit box for client property; review TFB Chapter 5 trust accounting rules and/or purchase LOMAS Training Videotape, 'Maintaining a Trustworthy Account.'						
Banking	Determine need for line of credit, firm credit card						
Bar Associations	Notify bar associations of physical and mailing addresses						
Calendar & 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 (see TFB LOMAS website), 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, memberships						
Dues & Licenses	Bar dues, city and county occupational licenses						

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	Deadline Date	Date Completed	Person Responsible	One-time Start-up Cost	Estimated Monthly Recurring Cost	Estimated Annual Cost
Equipment	Copier, postage machine, binding equipment, VCR, adding machine, cassette or CD player, clock, fan, dictation machines, etc. Determine which are purchased, which are rented, which are leased						
Files	Cabinets, chron file, accordion file, date stamp, reading files, filing supplies, binders (folders, file pockets, etc.), incoming and outgoing mail procedures, master file list (manual or automated?)						
Forms	List of needed forms for your practice and where these forms can be obtained. Purchase Administrative Forms Manual from LOMAS						
Furniture and Accessories	Art work, carpeting, chairs (executive, secretarial, visitors), conference room furniture, reception room furniture, desks (secretaries, lawyers), credenzas, window treatments, umbrella and coat rack. Determine where built-ins will suffice. Lease or Purchase?						
Insurance	Disability, Health, Professional liability, Office Pack (liability, business resumption, valuable papers, employee fidelity), Workers Compensation						
Library, Legal Research	Determine need for on-line databases, hard copy library materials and directories, periodicals subscriptions, bookshelves (floor strength?)						
LOMAS	Remember to call LOMAS's Practice Management Advisors and ask questions along the way!						

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LOMAS/ CLE Pubs	Review available list of helpful start-up materials. Administrative and legal forms						
Mail & Messengers	Mailing supplies (labels, USPS supplies, etc.), express mail accounts, e.g., fed ex, airborne, etc.), E-mail account, private courier account						
Maintenance & Janitorial	Office cleaning, garbage removal, carpet cleaning services						
Marketing	Business cards, Stationary, Announcements, Holiday cards, thank you notes/form letters, practice specific paper (e.g., will paper)						
Marketing	Website, Client Newsletters, Firm Brochure						
Marketing	Develop a business plan (helpful when applying for a line of credit)						
Office Supplies	Develop office supply inventory (don't forget: business card holders, calendars, disposition stamps (file, draft, client copy, copy, duplicate original, confidential, etc), clipboards, copy paper, desk organizers, dictation tapes, file racks, diskettes, glue sticks, highlighters, pens, pencils, sharpeners, hole puncher, document covers, staplers, waste baskets)						
Organization	Partnership/shareholder agreement, buy-sell agreement,						
Parking	Determine need and potential cost for employee and client parking						

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Personnel	Acquire appropriate personnel forms (e.g., confidentiality agreement, I-9 forms, W-4 forms, employment applications, interviewing guidelines, labor law manual, office style manual). Purchase LOMAS Sample Office Policy Manual.						
Postal Service	Determine need to acquire P.O. Box						
Postal Service	Change of address forms, USPS supplies						
Public Relations	Determine need for public relations consultant, who can talk to the press?						
Signage	Contact landlord for specifications, Determine need for interior and exterior signage, Contact sign company. Refer to TFB's ethics opinions						
Space	Space plan, location of space, how much space, option to expand, lease arrangements, landlord's build-out allowance (if any), alternative work site in case of disaster						
Technology	Determine computer hardware and software needs (# of PC's, printers; word processing, document assembly, document management, case/matter management, and accounting software); Data backup and security procedures. Internet access carrier. Determine lease or purchase of hardware and software						
Technology	Determine cabling requirements						

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	Deadline Date	Date Completed	Person Responsible	One-time Start-up Cost	Estimated Monthly Recurring Cost	Estimated Annual Cost
Telecommunications	Obtain phone number; Determine adequate number of phone lines; Determine type of system (vanilla phone sets, rotary sets/lines, key system, baby switch (PBS); Answering service, machine or voice mail; call and/or system forwarding; call waiting; conference calling; fax line; modem line; music on hold?, intercom capability; long distance carrier; white pages listing; yellow pages listing or Ad						
What Else?							

**NOTE:** This Checklist is meant to be a comprehensive lists of to-do items when establishing a new law practice. If an item does not apply to *your* new practice, merely strike through it.