


How to Create a Remote Working Plan for Your Law Firm

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Given the uncertainty of current events, it's a good time to assess your law firm's remote working plan. What steps have you taken to prepare your firm for remote work? Have you laid the groundwork that would allow your law firm to continue with business as usual even when all employees must work remotely? Your clients will undoubtedly continue to call with questions, so it's important to ensure your law firm continues to run smoothly no matter what. That's where planning for a remote law office comes in.



Transition to cloud-based legal practice management software

The very first step is to choose software for remote work. If you're not already using cloud-based software like law practice management software to run your law firm, it's time to pull the trigger. You can't run a law firm remotely without 24/7 access to all of your law firm's data in one centralized location. Cloud-based law practice management software makes that possible.

If you're not sure where to start, an opinion issued last year by the American Bar Association provides some guidance. In Formal Opinion 482, the ABA Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility explained that lawyers have an ethical obligation to prepare for the possibility of expected business interruptions in the event of a disaster:

“Lawyers have an ethical obligation to implement reasonable measures to safeguard property and funds they hold for clients or third parties, prepare for business interruption, and keep clients informed about how to contact the lawyers (or their successor counsel).”

Notably, the Committee repeatedly emphasized the value – and the benefits – of online storage (aka cloud computing) throughout the opinion. This is because 24/7 access to your law firm's case files following a business disruption is essential, and one of the best ways to ensure that this happens is to use cloud-based law practice management software.

The bottom line: offsite storage of digital documents using law practice management software is an incredibly important part of your firm's remote working plan. With cloud storage, you'll have one less thing to worry about. Your law firm's confidential client data will be safely stored on cloud computing servers with built-in redundant data backup — where data is regularly backed up to multiple servers located in different geographical regions. In other words, when your law firm's data is stored in cutting edge, cloud computing data centers you can rest easy, even in the face of an unexpected business interruption. For more on transitioning your firm to the cloud, make sure to download this FREE guide: ["Moving Your Law Practice to the Cloud: How to Transition Your Law Firm to Cloud-based Legal Software."](#)

Create a plan for remote law office operations

In addition to storing your firm's data in the cloud, there are other steps you can take to ensure that your firm recovers quickly. Here are some of the top issues to think about when creating a remote working plan so that you'll be able to get your remote law office up and running as quickly as possible:

- **Establish a communication plan** – your remote working plan should fully address communications and should include multiple ways to communicate both within your firm and externally. In addition to using the communication tools and portals in your chosen law practice management software, you'll likely also need to set up VOIP phone systems and choose a video conferencing tool.
- **Have a plan in place for both receiving online payments from clients and for payroll** – ensure that clients can continue to pay their bills and that your employees will continue to get paid.
- **Protect law firm data** – ensure that everyone working remotely understands client confidentiality issues and uses the chosen software for all client matters.
- **Secure and take stock of your office hardware assets as soon as possible** – once you're able to do so, inventory your firm's hardware and distribute it as needed to all staff that will be working remotely.

Now that you have a plan and have identified the tools you need to establish a remote law office are readily available, what are you waiting for? Choose a law practice management platform, invest in the tools you need to run your law firm remotely, and train your staff accordingly. Rest assured your law firm will be set up for remote work sooner than you think, and you'll be able to get back to doing what matters the most: representing your clients.