

CHECKLIST FOR DEPARTING ATTORNEYS

1. Identify clients to notify about your departure.
2. Determine the status of your caseload.
3. Decide what approach to take with your firm regarding files and clients.
4. Draft a letter to your clients informing them of your departure and their option to stay with you as their attorney.
5. Draft authorization for transfer of client file to be enclosed with notification letter to clients. [See Authorization to Transfer File to Departing Attorney.]
6. Meet with your firm; finalize your client notification letter.
7. Mail notification letters to clients.
8. File substitutions or withdraw as attorney of record* on cases you will *not* be taking with you to your new position. (This includes state and federal agencies as well as state and federal court systems.)
9. Prepare a memo to the appropriate partner(s) regarding status of files you are leaving behind. Include information about upcoming deadlines.
10. Make arrangements with your former firm to forward mail and redirect incoming calls.
11. Make arrangements with your former firm to set up an automated email reply and filter to process your incoming messages. [See Email Communications for Departing Attorneys.]
12. Discuss who will retain or store your *closed* files.
13. Arrange to take conflict information with you to your new position.

CHECKLIST FOR DEPARTING ATTORNEYS

14. Determine whether you will need to reimburse your firm in whole or in part for any professional liability coverage paid by the firm. If your firm has excess coverage, check with your excess carrier.
15. Determine whether you will need to reimburse your firm in whole or in part for any state bar association dues paid by the firm.
16. Submit a change of address card to the post office.
17. Prepare a change of address notice for opposing counsel, courts, vendors, etc.
18. If required by your state bar association, submit a change of address form.
19. Prepare and mail out announcement cards about your new position (to your state bar association, local bar association, law school alumni newsletter, former clients, friends, colleagues, etc.)
20. Review the client list at your new office to screen for potential conflicts.
21. Sign new fee agreements with the clients you brought over from your old firm.
22. Arrange for transfer of trust funds from your old firm. The trust account check from your former firm should be accompanied by an itemization of funds being transferred, as well as copies of the most recent billing statements sent to the clients.

* Review applicable disciplinary rules and rules of procedure.