



# COVID-19

## **PRACTICE OF LAW DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

I run a small law practice supervising one associate attorney, two paralegals and an office manager. The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges, especially on the litigation side. Some of our litigation areas of practice include criminal law, drunk driving cases, divorces/family law and personal injury. The courts have limited our access and have postponed many hearings and trials.

The practice of law involves people. We personally interact with clients, other attorneys, judges and court personnel. To do our part and protect our team, our office is sheltering at home, while continuing to forge ahead. This means our contact with people is very limited. This creates obvious challenges.

I try to find positives in any situation. Several good things have resulted as we face this challenge. Our office has dramatically improved, out of necessity, its communication. We hold daily video meetings to start off our day. During these meetings, we discuss case statuses, deadlines, and we assign tasks. At the end of each week, we try to have a virtual happy hour where we debrief and try to wind down from the week. Though there are challenges, our team has stepped up and banded together to make sure our clients are being well-served.

Another positive result has been through technology. We pride ourselves in keeping up with technological demands of a law office. Out of necessity, we were forced to make some quick changes to continue to serve our clients during this pandemic. For example, we now have an internet telephone system that allows our staff to answer telephone calls from their homes and transfer them, as if we were all in the office. A client or potential client would never know that our “receptionist” is answering the telephone from her home office.

We have also become more organized with the use of Microsoft Teams and Microsoft Planner. These tools allow us to assign tasks and track those tasks in real time throughout the day. It has simplified management, improved communication, and clarified roles and responsibilities. We have other technological advances in the works to improve client experience. We will continue to unveil those. One project we are working on will include software to allow us to notarize signatures through video witnessing. We are excited about this as it will allow us to continue with our growing Estate Planning practice.

On a personal note, this pandemic has given us the blessing of slowing life down and has allowed me to be present for my family. Each Sunday, the family meets to choose meals and entertainment. Each day is assigned where one of the family members has to plan and cook a meal and choose the entertainment. Activities have included movie night, karaoke night, puzzle night, a ping pong tournament and several others.

We will get through this and we will be stronger in the end. We want to thank our clients for their patience and resilience.

Stay Safe Everyone!

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