NOVA SCOTIA
BARRISTERS' SOCIETY

NEW PRACTICE CHECKLIST

BEFORE SETUP	DONE
Consider what form of practice works for you (e.g., sole practitioner, space-sharing, partnership, limited liability partnership, multidisciplinary) Some factors to consider: • *lawyer compatibility* • *income tax factors* • *client perception* • *preferred area(s) of practice* • *number of hours you wish to work* • *income security* • *family commitments* • *financial considerations*	❑
Consider whether you wish to incorporate (this should be discussed with an accountant)	❑
Consider how you wish to start practice (establishing a practice, acquiring an established practice, acquiring or earning interest in a practice overtime)	❑
Create a business plan	❑
Arrange financing, if needed	❑
Create a budget	❑
Create a Management System for Ethical Legal Practice (MSELP/Self-Assessment/Workbook)	❑
BUSINESS CREATION	**DONE**
Complete documentation with Registry of Joint Stock Companies (business name / LLP / incorporation)	❑
Complete documentation for the Society (LLP / Law Corporation)	❑
Complete the New Law Firm Registration Form	❑
FINANCIAL SETUP	**DONE**
Review Trust Account Regulations	❑
Review Trust Account FAQs	❑
Take Trust Account Exam	❑
Provide Society with Personal and Accountant's Certification	❑
Open General in name of the practice	❑
Open trust account in name of the practice "in Trust" with a designated financial institution and make arrangements for payment of interest to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia	❑
Open SNS account, if required, in the name of the practice "*In Trust for Service Nova Scotia"*	❑
Provide Officer, Database Administration with particulars of trust account(s) (bank, account number, name on account)	❑
Set up general accounting records	❑
• *General book of original entry (general receipts and disbursements journal)*	❑

• *Accounts receivable subledger*	❑
• *Billing records*	❑
• *Cash receipt book of duplicate receipts*	❑
Set up trust accounting records	❑
• *Trust book of original entry (trust receipts and disbursements journal)*	❑
• *Trust ledger*	❑
• *Trust transfer journal*	❑
• *Valuable property record*	❑
• *Cash receipt book of duplicate receipts*	❑
Set up SNS trust accounting records, if required	❑
• *Trust book of original entry (trust receipts and disbursements journal)*	❑
• *Trust ledger*	❑
• *Trust transfer journal*	❑
• *Valuable property record*	❑
• *Cash receipt book of duplicate receipts*	❑
Set up payroll for any employees	❑
Set fees (hourly / flat fees / disbursements) – *See Law Office Management* *Standard 3: Timekeeping*	❑
Set up collections policy and system	❑
OFFICE	**DONE**
Arrange for office space (rent / buy)	❑
Obtain office furnishings	❑
Obtain telephone services	❑
Obtain internet services	❑
Set up other utilities, if necessary	❑
Obtain computer hardware and software, including antivirus and surge protection)	❑
Obtain copier / scanner	❑
Set up voice mail	❑
Set up website	❑
Set up email	❑
Obtain and set up dictation equipment	❑
Set up backup systems for electronic data	❑
Set up security for email and files	❑
Purchase office stationery	❑
Obtain and set up shredding services	❑
Set up secure storage for files and valuables	❑
Set up emergency exit plans	❑

HUMAN RESOURCES	DONE
Review Law Office Management Standards 3 *(Timekeeping)* and 8 *(Equity & Diversity)*	❑
Hire any needed personnel (See Sample Interview Questions, Interviewing Strategies: Finding a Good Fit)	❑
Create office manual	❑
• *Biographies of lawyers*	❑
• *Areas of practice*	❑
• *Management and supervisory structure*	❑
• *Job descriptions*	❑
• *Performance reviews*	❑
• *Hours of work, overtime, vacation, sick days, holidays, leaves of absence, benefits*	❑
• *Policies re: office administration (include procedures)*	❑
Set up timekeeping system	❑
Create supervision plan	❑
Create confidentiality policy	❑
Create privacy policy	❑
Create professional development plan	❑
Create training policy	❑
Arrange life insurance	❑
Arrange disability insurance	❑
Arrange health insurance	❑
Create succession plan (include contingencies for unplanned absences) – *See Succession Planning*	❑
See Wellness and Balance	❑
FILING SYSTEM	**DONE**
Review Law Office Management Standards 1, 4, 6 *(record retention, electronic data, cloud computing)*	❑
Create labelling system	❑
Set up file tracking / indexing software	❑
Create file organization policy	❑
Create file opening checklist including Client ID & Verification rules	❑
Create file closing checklist	❑
Create file storage and retrieval policy and procedures	❑
Create file destruction policy	❑
Create bring forward system	❑

ADMINISTRATION	DONE
Advise Society of name and contact information	❑
Arrange liability insurance (including excess insurance)	❑
Arrange business insurance (property/fire/liability)	❑
Create checklists for common matters	❑
Create precedent bank • *See Notes to File* • *See Sample Letters* • *See Real Estate General Precedents* • *See Family Law Resources* • *See Real Estate Resources* • *See Practice Management* • *See Technology* • *See Standards*	❑
Pay Society fees	❑
CLIENT MANAGEMENT	**DONE**
Review Law Office Management Standards 2, 5, 7 *(client service, retention & billing, limited scope retainers)*	❑
Create marketing plan	❑
Arrange to announce opening / arrival	❑
Create communications policy (message, emails, mail, media, social media)	❑
Set up procedure for conflict checks	❑
Create retainer letter(s) (including contingency fee agreements) See Retainer Agreements and Engagement Letters See Limited Scope Retainer Resources	❑
Create service evaluation survey	❑