

# *Quick Guide to Opening Your Own Law Office*

*Without a Job?  
Leaving Your Law Firm?  
Opening Your Own Office?*

*Informative Resources  
for  
NHBA Members*



**New Hampshire**  
**BAR ASSOCIATION**  
*Equal Justice Under Law*

**[www.nhbar.org](http://www.nhbar.org)**

*“...Supporting Members of the Legal Profession and Their Services to the Public and Justice System.”*

*Have you been laid off or terminated, or simply cannot find employment due to the economic times? Are you looking to start your own law practice? The following are some rules you should be familiar with, followed by resources available to you as a member of the New Hampshire Bar Association.*

## 1. Supreme Court Rule 42(9)

Under the Supreme Court Rule 42(9) the New Hampshire Bar Association must be notified of any contact information (phone numbers or email address) and address changes for both home and work.

Contact Emily Whiteman, Member Records Clerk via email at [ewhiteman@nhbar.org](mailto:ewhiteman@nhbar.org) for any contact and address changes.

## 2. What PCC Rules Apply When Leaving a Firm?

The following rules of professional conduct may apply to you.

**Rules 1.6, 1.9, 1.11 (if applicable), 1.15, 5.2 and the advertising rules, 7.1-7.5.**

## 3. Professional Liability Insurance

Before you leave your current law firm, you should ask the administrator for the following information:

- a. Insurance policy number
- b. Claims that have been filed against you (include those claims closed)
- c. Amount of insurance coverage

To obtain your own professional liability insurance, contact **Sue Morand**, AAI, CIC at the NHBA Insurance Agency, Inc., at (603) 715-3204 or email her at [smorand@nhbar.org](mailto:smorand@nhbar.org). She also has access to member discounts for other insurance you may need including general liability (umbrella coverage), court bonds, long-term care, disability, life, auto and more.

## 4. IOLTA – Lawyers Trust Account Reporting

The New Hampshire Supreme Court Rule 50 requires attorneys to "create or maintain an interest-bearing trust account for clients' funds which are nominal in amount or to be held for a short period of time." Under Rule

50, the interest generated in these accounts must be transferred to the New Hampshire Bar Foundation for charitable purposes.

- a. Your employer may have filed a certificate for you in the past, this is now your responsibility.
- b. For detailed information on IOLTA accounting, visit the NH Bar Foundation website at: [www.nhbarfoundation.org](http://www.nhbarfoundation.org)

There are 40 financial institutions in New Hampshire that participate in IOLTA, 12 of which are IOLTA Leadership Banks. Leadership Banks offer higher rates for IOLTA and may waive routine service charges.

Contact **Mary White**, Finance and IOLTA Coordinator, at [mwhite@nhbarfoundation.org](mailto:mwhite@nhbarfoundation.org) or (603) 715-3210 with IOLTA questions.

## 5. NHMCLE – NH Supreme Court Rule 53 Reporting

The Bar Association assists with NH Supreme Court Rule 53 by administering the NHMCLE Program, which is overseen by a court appointed board. All the information regarding compliance with the annual minimum CLE requirement appears on the NHBA website at: [www.nhbar.org/nhmcle](http://www.nhbar.org/nhmcle)

- a. Ask your law firm to send you any records they were maintaining for you. Many law firms maintain this information for the attorneys.
- b. Set up your own file for recordkeeping.
- c. This is now your responsibility.

For further information call Dana Hochgraf or Priscilla LaMonica in the NHMCLE Office located at the Bar Association at 715-EASY (3279). or email [nhmcle@nhbar.org](mailto:nhmcle@nhbar.org).

## 6. NHBA•CLE

Each active member of the Bar is required to attend twelve hours of continuing legal education annually. (See **NHMCLE Information (Rule 53)**). To meet this requirement, **two hours must deal with ethics and professionalism and at least six hours must come from attendance at live programs**. The Association offers a variety of high quality seminars, workshops, and self-study options in many formats and locations. NHBA•CLE programs are developed by and for NH practitioners.

- a. Live Programming (Live Credit)
- b. On-line Seminars (Live Credit)
- c. Live Webcasts (Live Credit)
- d. CLE Club
- e. CLEtoGo™ (Self-study/non-live credit)
- f. AV Catalog (Self-study/non-live credit)
- g. Telephone Seminars (Live credit)

NHBA•CLE is a great resource for expanding your practice. Visit [www.nhbar.org/nhbacle](http://www.nhbar.org/nhbacle) for additional information.

## 7. Lawyer Referral Service offers a way to build your practice

Join the attorney panel of the NHBA Lawyer Referral Service for just \$75 per year. LRS connects you with clients in the practice areas you select. Trained staff screen cases, and refer clients to you. In addition to panel membership fee, attorneys pay 10% of net collected fees on cases where the fees amounted to \$250 or more.

Contact Robin Brown, LRS coordinator, at [rbrown@nhbar.org](mailto:rbrown@nhbar.org) for details.

## 8. Join a Section

Bar section participation allows you to improve knowledge and make contacts in particular areas of the law. More than 2,000 NHBA members belong to one or more of the Bar's 21 Sections.

Visit the Online Store at [www.nhbar.org](http://www.nhbar.org) and click on Section Membership for an order form.

## 9. Member Services & Benefits

As a member of the New Hampshire Bar, you have access to a variety of resources and services. Principal resources include:

**CasemakerElite** – Online Legal Research at no cost to Bar members. (Casemaker recently upgraded its interface to offer Google-like searching across all libraries and other intuitive features.)

**Member Directory** – Need to find a colleague? The Bar's member directory is constantly updated, and offers searching by name, city and even email address.

**ESQsites 123.com**. Affordable websites with discounts on setup costs. ESQsites123.com caters to solo and small-firm lawyers, and provides live online help.

### **Bar Center Lending Library** –

Publications located in the NHBA Library (can be signed out of the library, call ahead to see if a publication is available or to reserve

**Meeting Room Space for Members** – Bar members, on a space-available basis, may reserve small meeting rooms or conference rooms for client meetings, depositions, or simply as a place to catch up on calls and work in between appointments in Concord. Contact the Bar Center front desk coordinator for availability at 603 715-EASY.

## 10. Law Practice Resources on Website

The Bar Association maintains a “Law Practice Management Tools” and “Law Practice Tips & Resources” sections on the website in the For Members area. You will find a variety of resources in the following areas:

- **Administration & Business Planning**
- **Marketing & Client Development Resources**
- **Finance/Technology for the Law Office**
- **Quality of Life**

## NH Practice & Procedure Manual 2010

The NHBA's only legal reference work. Growing out of the mandatory Practical Skills training program, the NHBA's 2-volume Practice & Procedure Handbook has evolved into a first-source reference for New Hampshire practitioners of all levels of experience. (Updated every 2 years.)

Available for purchase through NHBA•CLE.

## Online Programs on Law Practice Management – Some are free

NHBA•CLE offers a number of online Law Practice Management and Technology seminars. Some of these programs qualify for NHMCLE credit and some do not. You can find online programs at [www.nhbar.org/nhbacle/](http://www.nhbar.org/nhbacle/) click on the blue bar "CLE online catalog," and then the "online CLE" tab. To purchase a DVD or CD of any NHBA CLE programs, click on the "Self-Study" tab.

### Samples of "for credit" LPM online Seminars:

- Avoiding the Problems and Pitfalls of Lawyers' Trust Accounting (6-3-11)
- The Cybersleuth's Guide to the Internet (9-10-09)
- Many ethics/professionalism programs available under that subject area.

### Samples of "not for credit" LPM online seminars available:

- Advancing Toward the Paperless Office...Are You Ready? (11/17/06)
- Alternatives to Hourly Billing
- Brown-bag Lunch Workshop "Organizing and Creating Balance"
- Brown-bag Lunch Workshop "Marketing Ideas and Opportunities"
- Changing Firms without Burning Bridges
- Closing a Law Practice: The Rest of the Story (12/07)
- Developing the Legal Team
- Disaster Prevention and Relief for Law Firms

- Finding and Keeping Good Clients
- Internet Issues – Don't Get Tangled in the Web! – original program date 9/07
- Legal Support Staff Training Seminar
- Practical Aspects of Enhancing Your Legal Practice
- Small Firm Flight Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – original program date 6/20/08
- Stop the Stress...Manage Your Time and Take Back Your Life (11/12/08)
- Strategy for Your Career and Your Life//Financial Planning for Young Lawyers//Balancing Your Career with the Rest of Your Life//Alternative Careers//The Law as a Business
- Top 10 Things to know about Opening/Operating a Law Office – original program date 2/16/07

## 11. Public Service

Volunteering for Pro Bono is a good way to stay current with the law, or, with mentoring, gain experience in a new practice area. Contact **Carolann Wooding**, Assistant Pro Bono Coordinator at 603 715-3279 or email [cwooding@nhbar.org](mailto:cwooding@nhbar.org);

## 12. Job Listing Resources

[Visit the New Hampshire Department of Employment Security](#) – a portal to unemployment and job listing resources for New Hampshire.

[NHBA - Classifieds](#) – These listings include those published in *Bar News*; some listings only appear online. Updated whenever new ads are received.

## 13. Additional Resources/Information

- Join social media sites to extend your network: LinkedIn.com, Twitter.com, facebook.com (The NHBA has sites for both LinkedIn and Facebook).
- Visit the [ABA's Economic Recovery Resources](#) website at [www.americanbar.org](http://www.americanbar.org) (site available to non-members of ABA).