

Suggestions in Planning for a Sabbatical/Extended Absence

CONTEXT

There may be instances when a solo practitioner takes an extended absence from practice but with the intent to return. Such circumstances may include sabbatical, extended military service, prolonged vacation or recovery from surgery. With proper planning, the solo practitioner can successfully take a break from practice while ensuring that clients' needs are addressed.

Below is a checklist of suggestions.

- ☐ 1. Discuss your plan to take a sabbatical with your staff and your family.
- ☐ 2. Make financial plans for your office to continue to operate and to generate and collect fees to support the office while you are away.
- ☐ 3. Call your professional liability insurance carrier to discuss your intentions.
- ☐ 4. Begin incorporating the "sabbatical language" into your representation agreements if you think you may want to avail yourself of the program.
- ☐ 5. Contact attorneys who may be available and capable of serving as a Supervising Attorney during your absence.
- ☐ 6. Enter into an Agreement with a Supervising Attorney (similar to the enclosed Agreement with an Assisting Attorney for a law office that is closing) which requires him/her to review your client list in confidence to determine whether there are conflicts of interest.
- ☐ 7. Bring the Supervising Attorney into the office to meet with staff and to review office procedures while you are still in the office.
- ☐ 8. Notify your clients of your potential extended absence.

Additional Resources

Another excellent resource is Lawyers Mutual's Risk Management Practice Guide entitled *Extended Leave*. (https://nmcdn.io/e186d21f8c7946a19faed23c3da2f0da/556712d9bf0f4cb2a916cc810687d52b/files/risk-management-resources/practice-guides/Extended_Leave.pdf)