

Business Continuity Plans:

Communication 101

Central to any disaster recovery is communication with the firm's staff, clients, vendors, courts, and others who make your practice work.¹⁷

- 1 Do you have a list of your staff and their after hour contact numbers stored at your home?
- 2 Would your staff know who to call in the event of an emergency?
 - * *Develop a **telephone tree** and brief all staff on who they should call in an emergency.*
 - * *It is also vital to assign staff with pre-assigned responsibilities to contact each other and establish their condition and whereabouts in the event of an "accident/disaster".*
- 3 Have you provided selected staff with paper and electronic copies of internal telephone lists?
- 4 Do you have a copy of your client database with critical information, including names, phone numbers and addresses?¹⁸
 - * *The copy of your client database could be in soft copy on a portable hard drive or better yet a paper print out.*
- 5 If you do keep a copy of your client database and other contacts, how often do you update this information?
- 6 Do you have an appointed staff who will contact clients to inform them of the situation and provide them available emergency telephone numbers?
- 7 Do you have a plan to determine the current status of each active matter and communicate with your clients about them?¹⁹
- 8 Do you have a **referral contact with another firm** so that you can ask them to handle key practice matters, for example, requesting continuance or rescheduling a deposition?²⁰

Did You Know?

- ♦ Not storing and backing up your firm's data and work could be more of a threat to your practice than leaving your firm's doors wide open in the night when you leave the office! It would actually be easier to replace the contents of your office than all the data on your computer.¹⁵
- ♦ Any disruption of your firm's revenue stream, especially a disruption that lasts for more than 48 hours, could have significant impact on your practice. As well as the usual ongoing expenses, e.g. payroll, you may have to finance a myriad of disaster-related costs.¹⁶

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- ⁶ Daniel Pinnington & David Bilinsky, 'Preparing Your Finances for the Unexpected', *Managing the Finances of Your Practice*, LawPRO, pg 16 (cited henceforth as Pinnington & Bilinsky) <www.practicepro.ca/practice/Managing_Finances_booklet.pdf>
 - ⁷ Pinnington & Bilinsky, pg 17
 - ⁸ Suzanne Rose & Jim Calloway, 'Steps to Take in a Recovery Effort', *GP Solo Magazine* June 2002, pg. 2 (cited henceforth as Rose & Calloway) <<http://www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/2002/jun/rosecalloway.html>>
 - ⁹ *Ibid.*
 - ¹⁰ Edward Poll, 'Disaster Planning After the Apocalypse', *Law Practice Today*, October 2005, pg. 2 <<http://www.abanet.org/lpm/lpt/articles/mtt10051.html>>
 - ¹¹ Rose & Calloway, pg. 2
 - ¹² Bruce L. Dorner, 'Getting Up and Running', *GP Solo*, December 2006, pg. 1 (cited henceforth as Bruce Dorner) <<http://www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/2006/dec/gettingupandrunning.html>>
 - ¹³ Patricia A. Yevics, 'Preventing Data Disasters with a Good Backup Plan', *GP Solo*, Spring 1997, pg. 3 (cited henceforth as Patricia Yevics) <<http://www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/1997/spring-tpg/index.html>>
 - ¹⁴ Bruce Dorner, pg. 1
 - ¹⁵ Patricia Yevics, pg. 1
 - ¹⁶ Pinnington & Bilinsky, pg. 16
 - ¹⁷ Edward Poll, 'Notifying the People Around You', *GP Solo*, December 2006, pg. 1 <<http://www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/2006/dec/notifyingthepeople.html>>
 - ¹⁸ Bruce Dorner, pg. 1
 - ¹⁹ Wells H. Anderson, 'Learning to Crawl: Relocation Coping Strategies', *GP Solo*, December 2006, pg. 2, <<http://www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/2006/dec/learningtocrawl.html>>
 - ²⁰ Edward Poll, 'Notifying the People Around You', *GP Solo*, December 2006, pg. 1 <<http://www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/2006/dec/notifyingthepeople.html>>