

# THE ULTIMATE CHECKLIST FOR A **STRESS FREE** **OFFICE MOVE**



by Stephen Furnari

# IT FEELS JUST LIKE A LAW FIRM ...BUT HAPPIER.

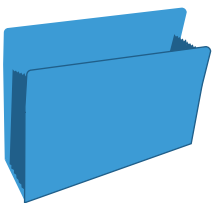
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Premium commercial office services offered on a low-cost, a la carte basis.



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Keep your network active even when you get too busy to leave the office.



**CONFERENCE ROOMS**  
Conference rooms rentals in a facility that feels like a working law office, not a sterile hotel business center.

## A note about your Ethical Responsibilities

This eBook provides advice on the best practices for moving your law office. It is for information purposes only and does not constitute legal counsel, guidance or an opinion about how to practice law within the bounds of the ethical rules governing your jurisdiction. Compliance therewith is solely your responsibility and adherence to those rules should take precedence over the points discussed in this eBook.

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



## Stephen Furnari

Stephen Furnari left the safety of a law firm job and began practicing as a solo attorney in 2002. He is now a partner in the law firm Furnari Scher LLP. In 2006, Furnari founded **Law Firm Suites** to help other solo attorneys and small law firms retain a competitive edge in today's increasingly crowded legal market.



**Law Firm Suites** is now the leading provider of professional office solutions for solo attorneys and small law firms. At **Law Firm Suites**, attorneys get headache free, turn-key office space and virtual offices, membership in a community of lawyers who are eager to help them succeed, and referrals to increase the bottom line. **Law Firm Suites** estimates that its attorney in each business center exchange over \$2.5 million in legal business per year.

# INTRODUCTION

Moving your office is about as pleasurable as paying your taxes. Most likely, you barely have enough staff to handle your current case load, never mind all the additional responsibilities that will come with the move.

And since most of us only get paid for hours billed, a successful move is the one with the least amount of disruption. For this reason alone most lawyers attempt to physically move their office during “off-hours”. However, if your office is located in a commercial office building with union labor requirements and mandatory freight elevator usage, an off-hours move may not be an option.



“MYLAWFIRMHASMOVED  
OFFICES FOUR TIMES IN  
TWELVE YEARS”



Through Law Firm Suites, we have also helped over a hundred firms successfully move their offices.

Over the years, we’ve refined our moving strategy to anticipate in advance anything and everything that could go wrong on move day. This checklist is the result of many [painful] lessons learned.

Don’t be discouraged by this introduction. Even with the most difficult of law firm moves, you’d be surprised how fast you can get your office up-and-running. Once your stuff is physically relocated, you’ll have plenty of time during off hours to make your new workspace perfect.

After witnessing hundreds of moves, we can say with confidence that *within a month* it will be like you were working in your new office for years.

Hopefully these tips will help you get there with the least amount of aggravation.



# PLAN YOUR MOVE CAREFULLY.

**MOVING A LAW OFFICE IS TIME CONSUMING. Worse, you will be working at a far lower efficiency level than normal during the months immediately prior to, and immediately following, your relocation. Keep this in mind as you plan the date of your move.**



For example, if you have two back-to-back trials during November, you should seriously consider holding off the office relocation during the months of September, October and November.

If you have advance notice that your current lease terminates on a specific date and have chosen to seek new office accommodations, attempt to schedule arduous client work so it does not conflict with your move.

Alternatively, it may be worth it to move a month earlier than the termination date of your current lease and temporarily carry two rental payments. At least you will be settled in your new work environment before you need to start prepping for that big trial. Better yet, try to arrange an extra month or two with your current landlord. You may have to pay a premium, but at least you'll be able to finish your work with a clear head and fewer interruptions. To the extent possible, allow yourself a minimum of two weeks to get settled into the new office before taking on closings, trials, or other legal work that requires a significant amount of advance preparation and concentration.



# APPOINT A “MOVE MANAGER”.

**ONCE YOU KNOW YOUR FIRM WILL BE MOVING,  
EVEN BEFORE YOU KNOW WHERE YOU MAY BE  
GOING, APPOINT A “MOVE MANAGER.”**

## THE MOVE MANAGER WILL BE IN CHARGE OF:

- budgeting for the move,
- keeping everyone else on schedule,
- ensuring that everyone on the team stays well informed,
- working directly with vendors,
- providing packing materials as appropriate,
- providing all employees with keys to the new office, and
- the creating and maintaining of an Asset Tracking spreadsheet.

The Move Manager should delegate responsibilities and set goals on a calendar for the move. If goals are not met on time, the Move Manager should revise the move plan so that all goals will have been met by moving day.

If you are a solo with no staff, you will be the Move Manager; however, this is probably not a time to try to tackle every aspect of the move on your own. You will still need to find time to service client matters during your move, which may take longer than usual with the disruption of the move. Consider hiring an assistant, even if on a temporary basis, to whom you can delegate the more menial tasks of the move.



## *Summary*

- ☐ NAME A MOVE MANAGER
- ☐ CREATE A PROJECT BUDGET
- ☐ FIND TEMPORARY STAFF
- ☐ DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITIES
- ☐ SET GOALS ON A CALENDAR
- ☐ MONITOR GOALS

# GET MOVING SUPPLIES EARLY ON.

**Begin gathering packing supplies as soon as you know you will be moving. Of course you'll want to purchase the usual stuff: boxes, tape, bubble wrap and packing paper, but there are some other supplies to start to pull together as well.**

## Boxes.

Choose sturdy boxes in a variety of sizes. Your mover may provide these to you as part of your moving package. Keep in mind, that moving companies are in business to realize a profit. While it may be convenient to rely on the moving company for boxes, you will significantly overpay as compared to purchasing the boxes yourself. You can order low cost moving kits from any number of vendors online.

## Cleaning supplies.

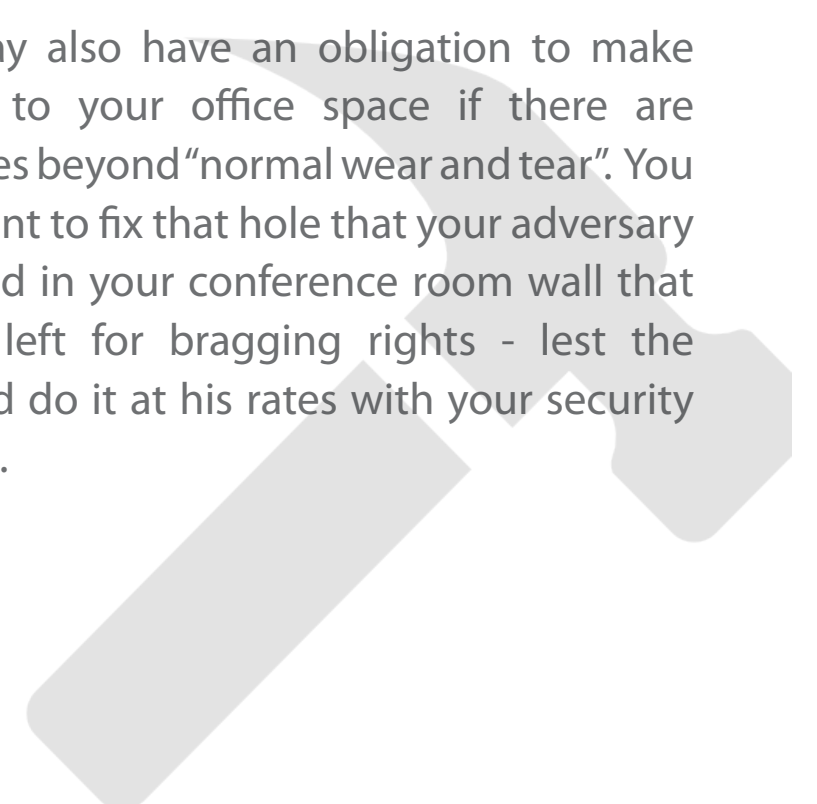
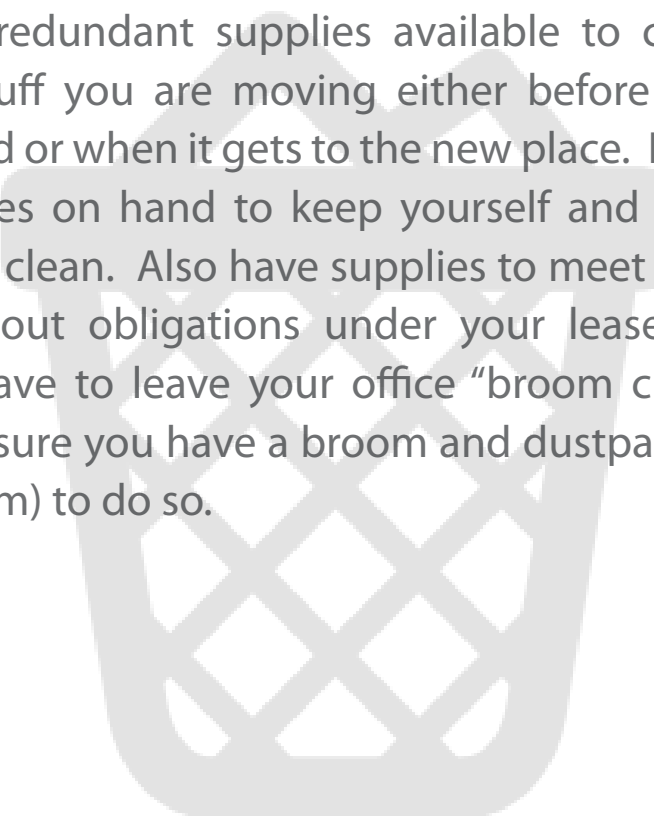
In case you need reminding, moving is dirty business. Even the most OCD neat freak is bound to find 5 years' worth of dust bunnies built up behind the tangled mess of wires attached to your tower computer.

Have redundant supplies available to clean the stuff you are moving either before it is packed or when it gets to the new place. Have supplies on hand to keep yourself and your hands clean. Also have supplies to meet your move-out obligations under your lease. If you have to leave your office "broom clean" make sure you have a broom and dustpan (or vacuum) to do so.

## Handyman supplies.

Chances are you may be breaking down décor or furnishings to get ready for the move. The more you can do this on your own before your movers get there, the less time the actual move will take. Have a basic toolset available to you to do this.

You may also have an obligation to make repairs to your office space if there are damages beyond "normal wear and tear". You may want to fix that hole that your adversary punched in your conference room wall that you've left for bragging rights - lest the landlord do it at his rates with your security deposit.





# Make an Inventory of YOUR “ASSETS”

The Move Manager should make a list of everything in your office that needs to be moved, sold, donated or thrown away. Some of the items being moved may go to different places. For example, if you have a conference room table and do not need one in your new office, you may want to take it to your home.

Employees might make asset requests for the new space. These asset requests should be reviewed, and if approved, added to the budget.

If you choose to use a moving company, you will need to provide them with an inventory of your assets, with specific instructions if certain items are going to different places.





## Summary

- MAKE A LIST OF MOVING SUPPLIES
- FIND A VENDOR TO PURCHASE SUPPLIES
- ORDER SUPPLIES
  - MOVING SUPPLIES
    - LARGE MOVING BOXES
    - MEDIUM MOVING BOXES
    - SMALL MOVING BOXES
    - BUBBLE WRAP
    - PACKING PAPER
    - MOVING TAPE
    - ZIPLOC BAGGIES
    - PAINTER’S TAPE
    - TRASH BAGSS
  - CLEANING SUPPLIES
    - BROOM & DUSTPAN
    - VACUUM
    - FANTASTIK
    - GLASS CLEANER
    - PAPER TOWELS
    - HAND SANITIZER
    - DUST RAGS
    - RUBBER GLOVES
    - FURNITURE CLEANER
    - CARPET CLEANER
  - HANDYMAN SUPPLIES
    - DRILL OR DRIVER
    - SCREWDRIVERS
    - EXTENSION CORDS
    - UTILITY KNIVES (2 – 3)
    - PLIERS OR VICE GRIPS
    - TAPE MEASURE
    - STAPLE GUN
    - SPACKLE KNIFE
    - QUICK-DRY WALL REPAIR OR JOINT COMPOUND
    - PAINT & PAINT BRUSHES

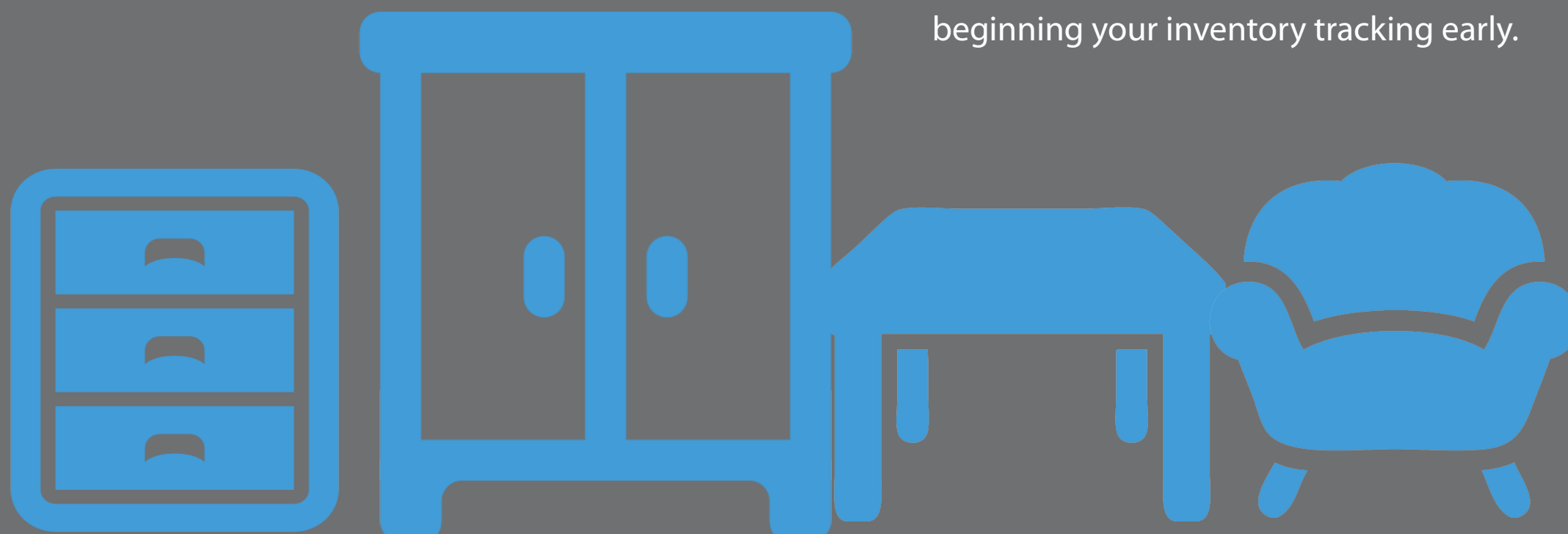
# THE TRUTH ABOUT GETTING RID OF USED OFFICE FURNITURE.

Used office furniture has very little value, especially if your office is in a high rise office building. There is an expense associated with moving used furniture, and there is also an expense associated with throwing it away (your landlord will likely charge you dumpster fees to throw away furnishings).

If you have used furnishings you want to unload, try to sell it at a bargain-basement price. Even though you may have paid \$1,500 for a desk two years ago, it's not worth more than \$200 now.

As it gets closer to moving day and you still have furniture to get rid of, consider just giving your stuff away in exchange for the recipient removing it at their expense.

They will want to know how many boxes you have, how heavy they are, how many fragile items you have, and which boxes contain those fragile items. You can make this process much easier by beginning your inventory tracking early.



Go through your office and note any items you want to bring with you to the new office. Create a spreadsheet with a column for the item description, and also include the estimated weight, fragility, value, serial number, and which room it is in and where it is going.

As you pack up your office, you will add to this spreadsheet and include codes to help your movers and to help you unpack. We'll cover this topic later on.

Starting your move early gives you more time to decide what you want to bring to your new office and does not. Start packing early and use this as an excuse to make sure all of your files are in order.

**Don't just pack and bring everything.  
THINK ABOUT IT FIRST.**

Get rid of files you no longer need, or use this as an opportunity to digitize some of your records.

Set a date for staff to remove their personal items, and have them help by packing up their individual work spaces.



## Summary

- ☐ MAKE A LIST OF ALL ASSETS IN THE OFFICE
- ☐ DECIDE WHICH ASSETS TO BRING WITH YOU TO THE NEW LOCATION
- ☐ CREATE ASSET TRACKING SPREADSHEET
- ☐ BEGIN SORTING THROUGH YOUR OLD OFFICE AND GETTING RID OF UNWANTED ITEMS
- ☐ ARRANGE FOR DUMPSTERS
- ☐ ARRANGE FOR COMMERCIAL SHREDDING SERVICES
- ☐ SET A DATE FOR STAFF TO HAVE THEIR
- ☐ BELONGINGS READY TO MOVE

# BEWARE:

## THE \$30 LAMP SHADE BOX



One of the benefits of hiring movers is that they can do the “finish” packing quickly. This being said, appoint an employee to supervise the packing on your moving day.

After a recent move, we unpacked a huge “wardrobe” box filled with packing paper only to find one lampshade that had a \$2 replacement value. Was the lampshade delicate? I guess so. Was the packing overkill? Absolutely. The cost for the extra box, which was not included in our contract, was about \$30.

Just a few “lampshade boxes” can result in a material increase in your moving cost. Even if the cost for extra boxes is included in your contract, at the very least, it’s a waste of time and resources.

# HIRE A **MOVING** **COMPANY.**



Unless you are starting a firm for the first time and the only thing you need to move is your computer, hire a moving company. Starting the packing process is easy, but after a while, you can get bogged down in your stuff. Moving companies are not emotionally attached to your things, and they are experts at “finishing.” They come into your office with a bunch of guys, move out the packed boxes, safely pack the rest of the stuff in boxes and quickly get all your things out of the office. The cost of their billable hour is significantly less than yours, so let the experts handle the heavy lifting. Literally.

# MAKE YOUR MOVING COMPANY **RESERVATION** **EARLY**



Moving companies are typically reserved on a first-come-first-served basis. Even if you don't yet know where you're moving to, you can still reserve a moving company. If you are unsure of the exact moving date, set up multiple moving dates and have them “on-hold” with the moving company. You may have to pay a small cancellation or reservation fee for each date, but this fee will be significantly less than your own billable time that will be wasted if you can't find a mover last minute.





## *Summary*

- ❑ MAKE MOVING COMPANY RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
- ❑ SET RESERVATIONS FOR SEVERAL DIFFERENT DAYS AND NARROW THEM DOWN AS THE TIME DRAWS CLOSER

# HOW TO CHOOSE **THE BEST** MOVING COMPANY

## 1. HIRE A COMPANY THAT SPECIALIZES IN OFFICE MOVES

Moving office furniture is much different from moving your personal items. Office furniture is very heavy. It can be expensive and is easily damaged when transported. Moving an office is significantly different than moving a home or apartment, so find a licensed and insured moving company that

## 2. HIRE ONLY THE HIGHEST RATED COMPANIES

When it comes to movers, you get what you pay for. Research moving companies in your area and only hire the best. Ask friends or colleagues for referrals. The US Department of Transportation has a website (ProtectYourMove.gov) where you can check movers' registrations and view helpful guidelines to choosing a reputable company.



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## 3. HIRE ONLY LICENSED AND INSURED MOVERS

Use **only** licensed movers who provide a written "Binding Not-To-Exceed" estimate before moving day. Movers should be registered with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and should include their Department of Transportation registration numbers in advertisements. Credible moving companies always provide a written estimate upon inspection of the items you need moved.



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## 4. YOUR WRITTEN ESTIMATE IS BINDING.

A “rate quote” is not an estimate. Get multiple written estimates from different moving companies based on their actual inspections of what is to be moved. Your written estimate is binding. Movers are required by law to deliver goods at no more than 10% over the estimate. This is known as the “110% rule.” To protect yourself from fraud, do not sign blank or incomplete documents.



## 5. KNOW YOUR BUILDING'S REQUIREMENTS BEFORE HIRING MOVERS

The landlord in the building where you are moving from, and going to, may have certain restrictions that can affect what mover you can hire and the expense of the move, including:

- Is the mover required to have Union-only laborers?
- Can you only select a mover from a pre-approved list?
- Does the landlord have special insurance requirements or require a certificate of insurance from the mover?
- Does the landlord require your movers to cover floors with protective covering?
- Does the landlord (or building configuration) require the mover to have any kind of special equipment, or restrict the type of equipment the mover may have?
- Are there parking restrictions that may affect the loading and unloading of the truck?

# 6. BUY LIABILITY INSURANCE FROM THE MOVING COMPANY

Moving companies typically provide liability insurance at \$0.60 per pound. Since you will be moving office supplies instead of household goods, this coverage might not be enough for you. Full-value protection for a \$25,000-value load can cost around \$250. This is a small price to pay considering your mahogany desk cost upwards of \$1000. Regardless, you should notify movers of any items valued at over \$100 per pound.

You will be expected to provide the movers with an inventory before or at the time of loading. If you do not provide one, the movers will create one for you. You must sign all pages of the inventory list, as well as an order of service for every shipment transported.


On the move day, you will receive a “bill of lading.” This is your contract. Inspect it, and sign every page, then keep a copy for your records. If you disagree with anything in the document, bring it up and note it on the document.

STRAIGHT BILL OF LADING—SHORT FORM—ORIGINAL—NOT NEGOTIABLE

RECEIVED, subject to the classifications and lawfully filed tariffs in effect on the date of issue of this Bill of Lading.

DESIGNATE WITH AN (X)  
BY TRUCK ☐ FREIGHT ☐

The property described below, in apparent good order, except as noted (contents and condition of contents of packages unknown), marked, consigned and destined as indicated below, which said carrier (the word carrier being understood throughout this contract as meaning any person or corporation in possession of the property under the contract) agrees to carry to its usual place of delivery at said destination, if on its route, otherwise to deliver to another carrier on the route to said destination. It is mutually agreed, as to each carrier of all or any of said property over all or any portion of said route to destination, and as to each party at any time interested in all or any of said property, that any service to be performed hereunder shall be subject to all the terms and conditions of the Uniform Domestic Straight Bill of Lading set forth (1) in Uniform Freight Classification in effect on the date hereof, if this is a rail or a rail-water shipment; or (2) in the applicable motor carrier classification or tariff if this is a motor carrier shipment. Shipper hereby certifies that he is familiar with all the terms and conditions of the said bill of lading, set forth in the classification or tariff which governs the transportation of this shipment, and the said terms and conditions are hereby agreed to by the shipper and accepted for himself and his assigns.

From **YOUR COMPANY NAME HERE** DATE  
At 123 MAIN STREET  
YOUR TOWN, STATE AND ZIP CARRIER  CARRIER'S NO.

CONSIGNEE AND DESTINATION ROUTE DELIVERING CARRIER

CAR OR VEHICLE INITIALS & NO.

NO. PACKAGES	DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLES, SPECIAL MARKS AND EXCEPTIONS	WGT. (LBS.)	WEIGHT (SUBJECT TO CORR.)	CLASS OR RATE	✓

PLACARDS SUPPLIED ☐ YES ☐ NO DRIVER'S SIGNATURE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PHONE NO.

SHIPPER'S CERTIFICATION: This is to certify that the above-named materials are properly classified, described, packaged, marked and labeled, and are in proper condition for transportation according to the applicable regulations of the Department of Transportation.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

\* If the shipment moves between two ports by a carrier by water, the law requires that the bill of lading shall state whether it is "carrier's or shipper's weight". \* Shipper's imprints in lieu of stamp, not a part of Bill of Lading approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission.  
Note - Where the rate is dependent on value, shippers are required to state specifically in writing the agreed or declared value of the property.  
The agreed or declared value of the property is hereby specifically stated by the shipper to be not exceeding \_\_\_\_\_

THIS SHIPMENT IS CORRECTLY DESCRIBED: CORRECT WEIGHT IS \_\_\_\_\_ LBS. \*The fibre boxes used for this shipment conform to the specifications set forth in the box makers certificate thereon, and all other requirements of the Consolidated Freight Classification.

Per \_\_\_\_\_ Shipper \_\_\_\_\_ Agent, Per \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR COMPANY NAME HERE  
123 MAIN STREET YOUR TOWN, STATE AND ZIP  
Permanent post-office address of shipper

C.O.D. SHIPMENT  
C.O.D. Amt. \_\_\_\_\_  
Collection Fee \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Charges \_\_\_\_\_

1

The mover will weigh all packages before placing them on the truck.

Upon arriving at your new office location, you will be asked to sign a delivery receipt.

Do not sign the receipt until all the boxes are physically placed in your new office and have been accounted for by the Move Manager. This delivery receipt does not relieve the movers of any damages they may have caused during the move. You should note these and act on them quickly though, before your insurance period runs out.



## *Summary*

- ☐ FIND A LICENSED AND INSURED MOVING COMPANY THAT SPECIALIZES IN OFFICE RELOCATION
- ☐ DO YOUR RESEARCH
- ☐ HAVE DIFFERENT COMPANIES DO WALK-THROUGHS SO THAT THEY CAN CREATE WRITTEN ESTIMATES
- ☐ SCHEDULE YOUR MOVING DAY WITH THE COMPANY YOU CHOOSE
- ☐ CONFIRM YOUR LANDLORD'S PARTICULAR MOVING REQUIREMENTS
- ☐ CHOOSE THE RIGHT INSURANCE LEVEL FOR YOUR MOVE
- ☐ PROVIDE THE MOVING COMPANY WITH YOUR ASSET TRACKING SPREADSHEET



# CONFIRM ALL THE DETAILS OF THE MOVING COMPANY RESERVATION IN ADVANCE OF THE MOVE.

The most important thing you can do regarding the moving company is to confirm and re-confirm the details of the reservation.

## Suggested items include:



# Summary

- ☐ Confirm your reservation one month out from your move
- ☐ Confirm the details of your reservations two business days before you move
- ☐ Confirm that the movers understand exactly where they are going, including any nuances for getting to your exact location
- ☐ Confirm that they are estimating the appropriate amount of travel time that it will take them to get from their depot to your office by the designated start time (if they are late, you may miss your freight elevator reservation)
- ☐ Do they know how far in advance of your outgoing freight elevator reservation the movers need to arrive if there is additional packing to be completed (should it be done the day before?)
- ☐ Do they know the freight elevator reservation time in the new building, and the correct travel time to get there from the move-out location
- ☐ Is there enough of a time contingency budgeted for unexpected delays
- ☐ Confirm that they are bringing the correct size truck and appropriate number of movers for the amount of items you are moving
- ☐ Know who the move-team manager will be and his cell phone contact info.
- ☐ Do they know who the primary contact is for your firm and make sure they have that person's cell contact info
- ☐ Has the appropriate insurance information been provided to each landlord
- ☐ Will floor coverings be brought to the extent necessary

# GET A HANDLE ON EACH BUILDING'S ELEVATOR POLICY



If your office is in a building with elevators, find out what the landlord's policy is with respect to move-ins and move-outs. Elevator policies in commercial office buildings can be inconsistent, to say the least. Well in advance of your move request in writing the landlord's freight elevator policy for move-ins and move-outs.

Some commercial office buildings have freight elevators that you are required to use for moves. Other buildings use one of the passenger elevator cars, but install padding to protect them from damage. Most passenger elevators are smaller than a freight elevator. Make sure you budget for the extra time (and expense) of using a smaller elevator.

Determine whether you are going to require exclusive use of the freight elevator. For example, at our location at 11 Broadway, moves must be done in the freight elevator. During limited workday hours, tenants are allowed two trips up or down the freight per day for free and usage is first-come-first-served. The entire contents of one standard 10' x 12' office can fit in the freight elevator at one time. However, if you require more trips than two, or you can't get there during the limited hours the freight elevator is free, you have to reserve the freight elevator for after 5:00PM at for an hourly rate.

**If your outgoing and incoming freight elevator constraints are not likely to line up, it may be best to make arrangements to keep your things on the truck overnight and do the move over two days.**

Consider whether it makes sense to have exclusive use of the elevator (expect to pay a fee for this). If you do not want to pay for elevator exclusivity, contact the building Super and determine the times when the freight elevator is most likely to be in use. For example, a building may have trash pick-up on Wednesdays from 10:00AM until 12:00PM. If your mover arrives at 10:00AM on Wednesday, you will be paying them an hourly fee to sit there and do nothing for two hours while they wait for the freight elevator to free up.





# Summary

- ☐ Get the elevator policy in writing from the move-out building landlord
- ☐ Get the elevator policy in writing from the move-in building landlord
- ☐ Determine if you have enough items to move to justify an exclusive use elevator reservation
- ☐ Make any reservations and pay any fees in advance
- ☐ Find out if there are any unusual items that may delay your use of an elevator (other moves, building construction, etc.)
- ☐ Determine if you can get the move-out elevator and move-in elevator reservation to match up
- ☐ Make arrangements for overnight storage if necessary

# Moving to (or from) an EXECUTIVE SUITE OR SUBLET?

If you are moving to or from an executive suite (Law Firm Suites is an executive suite) or a sublet office, you do not have a direct contractual relationship with the landlord. Contact the manager of the executive suite or the sublet office space and make sure that someone from their staff confirms all these details and will be on hand the day of your move.



## CONFIRM YOUR MOVE DATE AND TIME WITH BOTH BUILDINGS; **SPEAK TO BUILDING STAFF**

Confirm the date and time of your move with the building management of the move-out and move-in buildings and find out which building staff member will be your contact on the day of the move. If your move is going to be done outside of normal business hours, make sure you have a way to get in touch with the building staff member (either have their cell, or make sure the lobby security person can get in touch).

Also, make a point to speak to the building staff member who will be there on the day of your move to make sure (a) that they will be there; and (b) you are aware any special requirements. For example, you will want to know the freight elevator height restriction if you are moving very tall file shelves. Often times the building management is not “in the know” about particular items about the building that can make a move difficult, but the building staff will surely know.

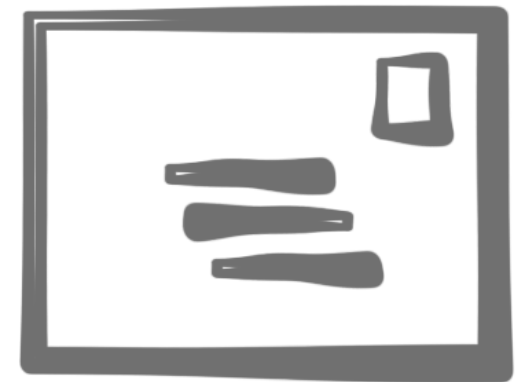


# Summary

- ☐ Confirm your move-out date and time with building management
- ☐ Confirm your move-in date and time with building management
- ☐ Get contact information for move-out building staff member
- ☐ Get contact information for move-in building staff member
- ☐ Speak with move-out building staff member about special items and to confirm they will be there
- ☐ Speak with move-in building staff member about special items and to confirm they will be there

# CHANGE YOUR FIRM'S ADDRESS WITH THE POST OFFICE.

Begin the change of address process as soon as you know your new address, preferably at least 30 days prior to the day of your firm's move. You can change your address with the US Postal Service on their website, by calling toll free to (800) ASK-USPS, or by mailing in a form that is available upon request at your local Post Office.



Submit one mail forwarding/change address form for:

- each person who receives mail at your address; and
- each business entity that you either control, or serve as a postal agent, and that receives mail at your address.



Keep a list of each person or entity for which you've submitted a form.

Wait 7-10 business days for each request receipt, which will show your old and new information so that you can confirm it is correct. Confirm that a receipt was received for each person or entity on the list.

Once you receive the receipt, your mail will be forwarded for 6 months past the start date you've set. Bulk mail will not be forwarded unless it is first class, and it may be delayed. Your mail may go through a different distribution center, so you may receive it either sooner or later than you are used to. Be advised, mail that used to be delivered within 3 days may now take 2 weeks.

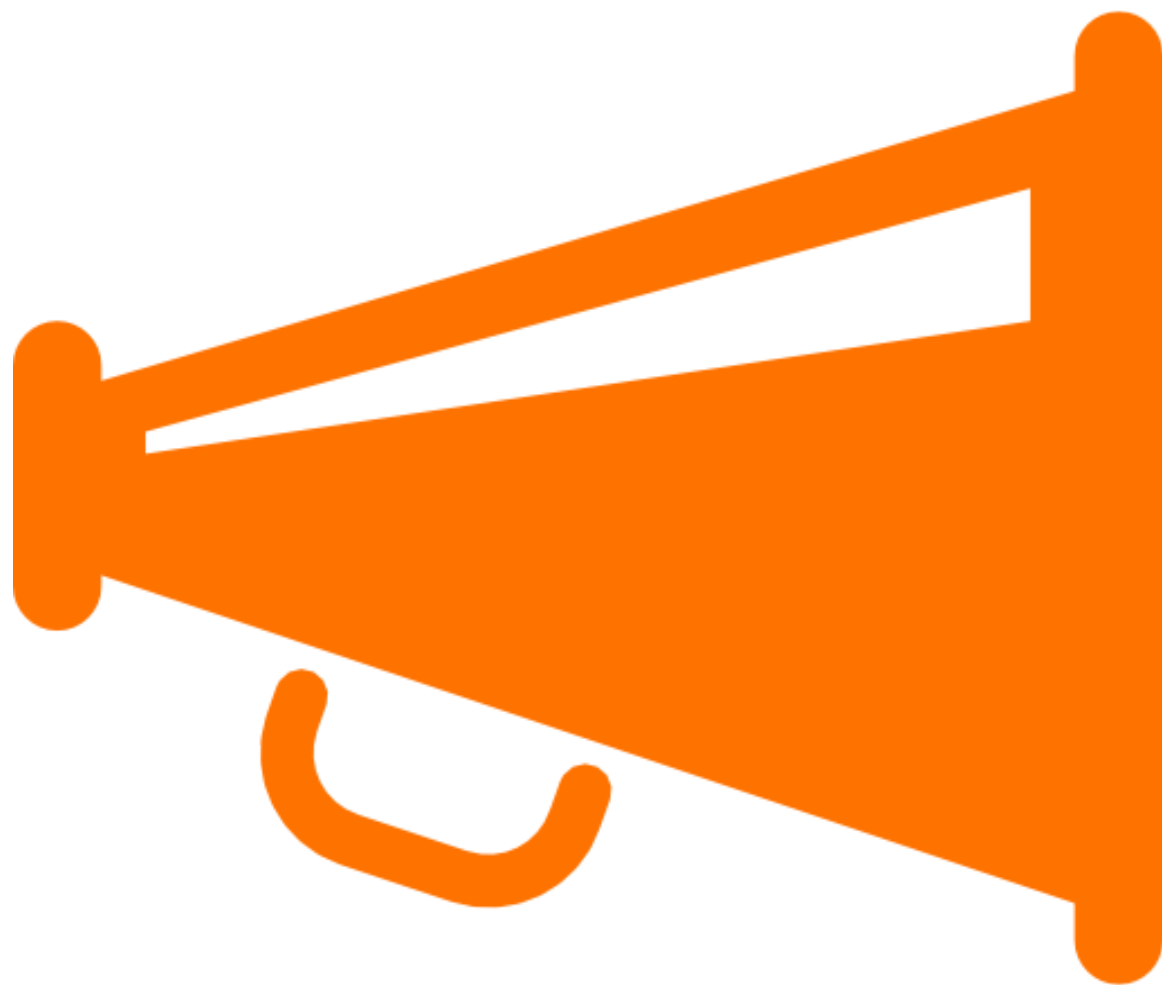


## Summary

- ☐ Change your address with the Post Office
- ☐ Set up mail forwarding
- ☐ Confirm that each person or entity for which address change forms were submitted to USPS has been received



# Begin to notify others about **your change of address.**



A month prior to your office move, have an assistant begin compiling a list of mail that the firm regularly receives and its senders. A few weeks after you have completed your office relocation, compare the list with mail you are receiving at your new office location. If you are not regularly receiving mail from a sender, you'll know you did not notify them about your address change.

## **Change your address with the following:**

- ☐ Department of State, Corporate Records  
Department All jurisdictions where you are admitted
- ☐ Courts
- ☐ Banks
- ☐ Cell phone provider
- ☐ Credit card issuers
- ☐ Credit card processors
- ☐ Doctor's Offices and Hospitals
- ☐ Insurance providers
- ☐ IRS (form 8822)
- ☐ Magazine and newspaper subscriptions
- ☐ Online Shopping Services
- ☐ Professional organizations
- ☐ Schools
- ☐ Chamber of Commerce
- ☐ Internet & Social Media
  - ☐ Facebook
  - ☐ Paypal
  - ☐ Google+
  - ☐ Internet search engines
  - ☐ LinkedIn
  - ☐ Yellow pages
  - ☐ Your firms website & blog
- ☐ On advertisements you may be running
- ☐ Newspaper and magazine subscriptions

## Contact Vendors & Utilities



Begin contacting your utilities vendors at least a month before your move, but preferably as soon as you know your new address.

The Move Manager should time the switchover of vendor services (such as phone and internet) so that the office will never be without these essential communications. Ideally, make arrangements to have service running in the new location before leaving the old location. Test lines before the move to make absolutely sure everything is working.

Contact the following vendors to change your address and service location. As you contact each of these vendors, check them off.

- ☐ Cable provider
- ☐ Dry Cleaning delivery and pickup services
- ☐ Electric services
- ☐ Garbage services
- ☐ Gas services
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Internet provider
- ☐ Landline provider
- ☐ Snow removal service
- ☐ Landscaping service
- ☐ Water delivery service
- ☐ Water services
- ☐ Copy machine vendors/repairs
- ☐ IT Services

Call each of these a second time to and check them off again as you confirm them.

# IT & Copy Vendors

If you are moving a server, switch, phone system or copy machine, contact your service vendor prior to your move about best practices for moving. These are not items that you want your movers to disassemble. This is particularly important if you lease this equipment. Check your service agreement or call your vendor as there may be specific restrictions on who can move these items and/or how they need to be moved.



## CONTACT TECH VENDORS ABOUT REQUIREMENTS FOR:

- ☐ moving equipment
- ☐ Network vendor
- ☐ Phone vendor
- ☐ Copy machine vendor
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO HAVE EQUIPMENT:

- ☐ packaged and moved
- ☐ Switch
- ☐ Data Server
- ☐ Phone Server
- ☐ Copy Machine
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

# Order new stationery, consider rebranding.

Since you will have to order all new stationery for your firm, if you’ve been thinking about rebranding your firm image with a new logo, now is the time to do it. You’ll want to start the process as soon as you know you will be moving. Rebranding can take several weeks by the time you pick a graphic designer and come up with branding that you like.

Either way, start to order all your printed materials as soon as you know your new address.



## Items to Order:

- ☐ Letterhead
- ☐ Business cards for each employee
- ☐ Firm brochures & advertisements
- ☐ Envelopes
- ☐ Mail labels
- ☐ Rubber address stamps



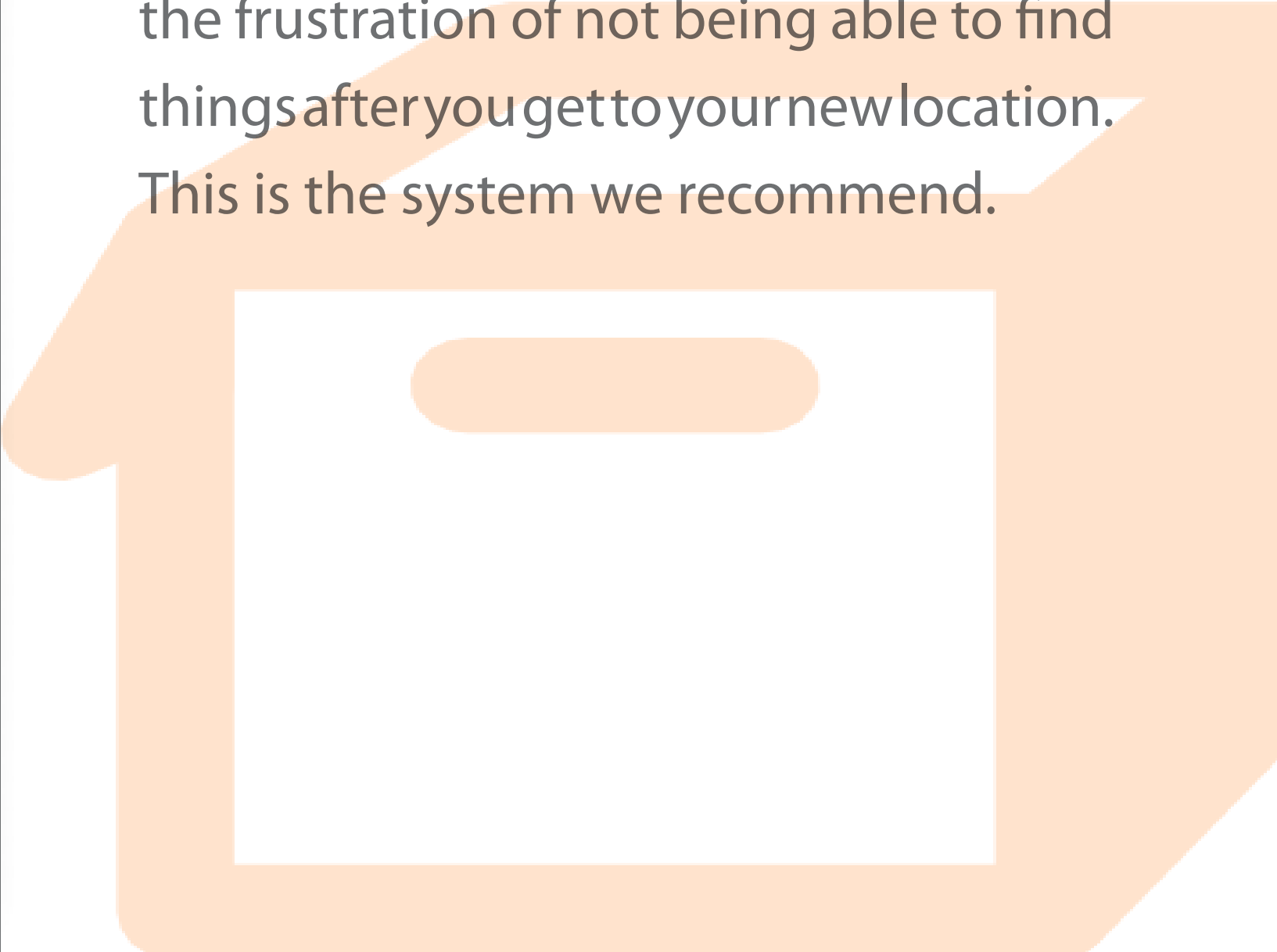
# TIP WHEN MOVING TO A SHARED LAW OFFICE SPACE

If you are moving to shared office space where you are getting phone and fax service, don't assume that the phone and fax numbers on the Office Manager's business card is the one you will be using (it frequently is not). Check with your new landlord first to avoid an expensive reprint job.



# THE BEST WAY TO PACK

Having a system for packing will reduce the frustration of not being able to find things after you get to your new location. This is the system we recommend.



# 1. COLOR CODE YOUR BOXES BY ORDER OF WHICH TO OPEN

The last things you pack at your old office will be the first things you unpack at your new office. The things you pack three weeks prior to moving should be marked red; the things you pack two weeks prior to moving should be marked yellow; the things you pack the week before you move should be marked green. Then the green boxes should be all unpacked within the first week, the yellow boxes all unpacked by the end of the second week, and the red boxes all unpacked by the end of the third week.

- ☐ Make box-opening time-frames and put them clearly on the boxes. Using multicolored masking tape or duct tape makes this easier. The Green gets opened first, then yellow, then red boxes.
- ☐ Tape boxes securely. Tape once along where the flaps close and once in the opposite direction. Reinforce weak spots and don't use a box you don't trust.

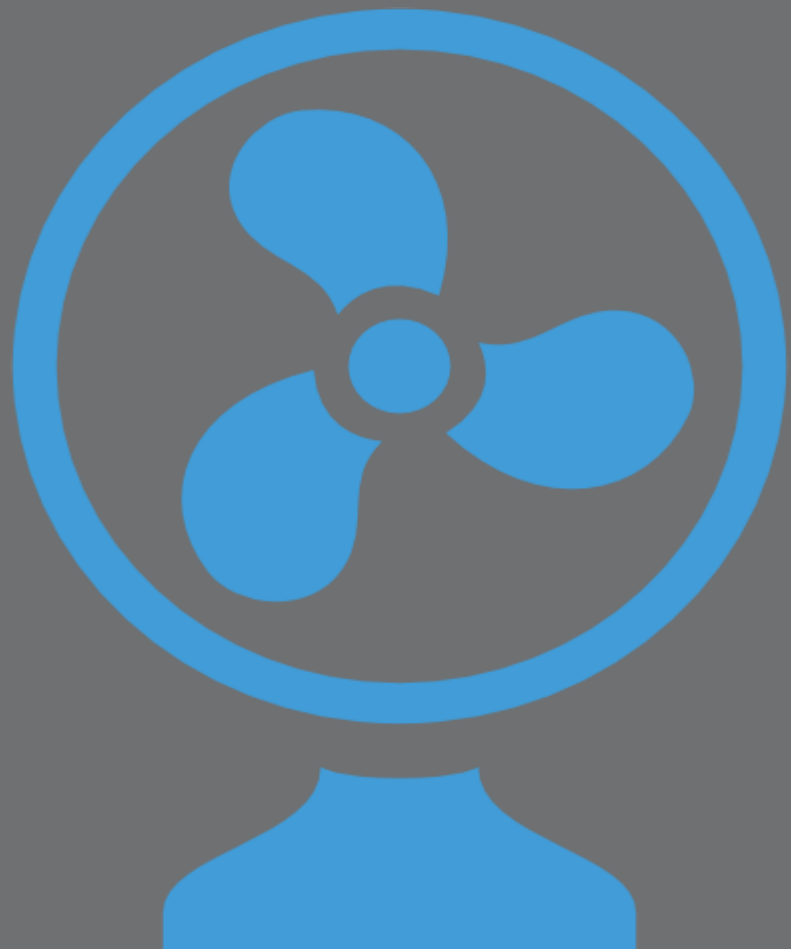
# 2. IDENTIFY WHAT ROOM EACH BOX IS GOING TO

Label each box with a room abbreviation and number and then add those labels to your asset tracking spreadsheet. The movers will want to have a count of all boxes, and this will be easy to give them if you have your complete asset tracking spreadsheet. Ask the movers to put the boxes in the appropriate room.

- ☐ Label boxes clearly with the largest black permanent marker you can find at the store.
- ☐ Label boxes on the two broadest sides so that you can see the label no matter which way the box is facing. Ask movers to stack boxes with the labels facing out so that it's easier for you to find items once the movers are gone.
- ☐ Label boxes with contents so you know where to look when you need something.
- ☐ Label boxes with the room name or initials if it's for a specific person or room.
- ☐ Label all fragile boxes as fragile.
- ☐ Check off the box on your spreadsheet once it has arrived safely at the new location.

# PACKING TIP:

Moving is messy business. Have plenty of ventilation and consider running a HEPA filter while you are packing because you'll be stirring up a lot of dust.



## 3. Pack **HEAVY** and **LIGHT** items together

Place heavy and light things together in boxes. Don't put all books in one box and all Styrofoam in another. Keep boxes as close to 30 pounds as possible, 50 pounds maximum. Moving day is no time for injuries and ripped boxes.

- ☐ Pack heavy items in small boxes so the overall weight of the box is small.
- ☐ Stack boxes with heaviest on the bottom and lightest on the top.
- ☐ Pack areas so that the lightest boxes are on the inside and heaviest boxes are on the outside (first you come to) to make it easier for movers.

# 4. HOW TO PACK ELECTRONICS AND OTHER LOOSE PARTS

Keep your electronics and small parts safe and organized to make unpacking a breeze.

- ☐ Keep clear re-sealable baggies for all small parts that go with certain furniture, electronics, blinds, etc. Only put the small parts from one piece of furniture in each bag and tape that bag securely to the piece of furniture with painters tape or masking tape so you don't damage the furnishings, or mark it clearly with a sharpie and keep all the clear baggies together in a box.
- ☐ Take photographs of how things are put together and how electronics are plugged in. You may want to reference these later to make it easier to get everything set up.
- ☐ Use the original boxes to pack electronics and computer equipment. You should store these boxes for your next move.
- ☐ Double-box extremely delicate items and fill the extra space with biodegradable packing peanuts. Use at least 2 inches of biodegradable packing peanuts around all sides of each fragile item.
- ☐ Wrap each cord carefully and separately and hold together with twist ties. Label these cords. Never throw cords together in a box, and never pack an unlabeled cord.

# 5. PACK ESSENTIALS SEPARATELY

The essential items necessary to run your practice should be packed separately and stay with the owner or the Move Manager exclusively. These boxes should contain all federal and state forms, employee records, and sensitive working client files should a case emergency occur. Toss in business essentials like a stapler, tape, paperclips, ink cartridges, pens, pencils, an extra mouse and keyboard, and batteries so you can do some work in a pinch.

If possible, move your computer, printer and essential working files yourself before the move. Set them up in the new office, even if it's on a window sill, so you can work if the need comes up.

**Necessary Office Supplies:**

- ☐ Desktop/laptop computer
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Highlighters
- ☐ Stapler
- ☐ Staples
- ☐ Paperclips
- ☐ Binder clips
- ☐ Tape dispenser
- ☐ Manila folders
- ☐ Envelopes & labels
- ☐ Copy paper
- ☐ Letterhead
- ☐ Legal pads
- ☐ Printer

**Moving Supplies** (you might need more of the following right away):

- ☐ Extension cords
- ☐ Surge protectors
- ☐ Ethernet cables
- ☐ Phone cables
- ☐ Duct tape
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Flat-head screwdriver
- ☐ Hammer
- ☐ Level
- ☐ Phillips head screwdriver
- ☐ Picture hangers
- ☐ Tape measure
- ☐ Utility knife

# 6. CLEAN HOUSE

Clean up your old office space as you pack. If you pack one room at a time, this will be easier. You won't want to leave all of your cleaning for the last day. Use moving day for spot cleaning and touch ups.

If you can, go to your new location and verify that all utilities are on and working properly before moving day. Also perform an initial inspection and note any damages or problems. Arrange to have your new office cleaned before anything is moved in so that you have a fresh start.

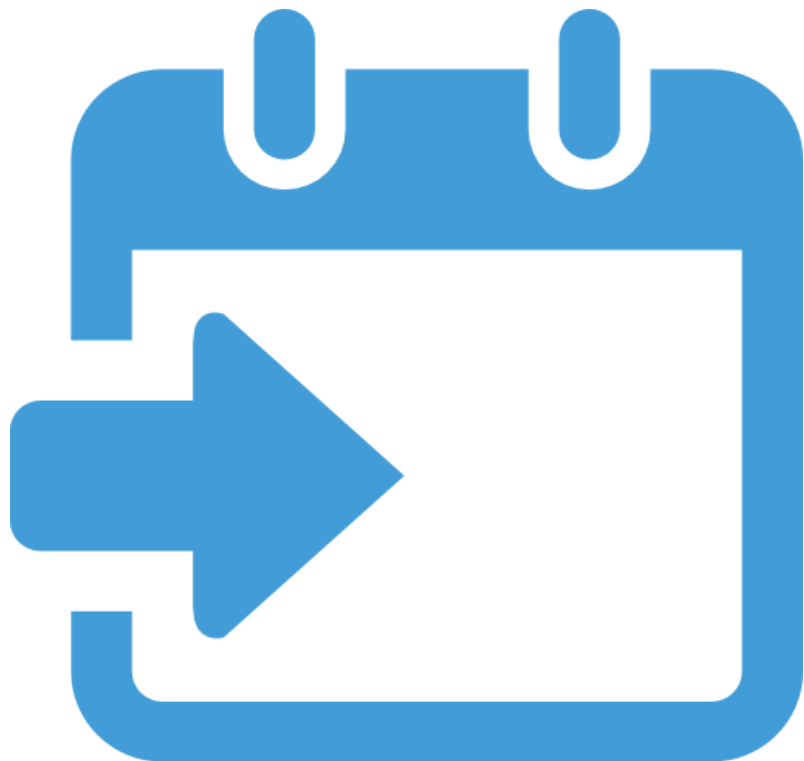


- ☐ Arrange to have your new office cleaned before moving day.
- ☐ Make any repairs that you will be responsible to make under your lease.
- ☐ Return any items you've borrowed from neighbors or moved into your unit from a common area space.
- ☐ Retrieve anything you've loaned out to your neighbors.
- ☐ Defrost and clean any refrigerator units being moved.
- ☐ Verify that utilities you are responsible for maintaining under your lease are working properly.
- ☐ Perform initial inspection of new office to note flaws.
- ☐ Deep clean your new office before moving in.
- ☐ Clean old office on moving day pursuant to lease requirements.
- ☐ If you can, clean all areas that you've already packed before moving day.
- ☐ Leave note in old office with your new address and contact information for forwarding any mail.
- ☐ Close and lock the windows and turn out the lights.
- ☐ Lock the doors and return your key to your landlord.
- ☐ Sign closing paperwork.



# MOVING DAY

Moving Day is the most important day. Start early, stay hydrated and well-fed, and be nice to everyone you encounter. Since you've planned ahead, you've minimized the risk of unforeseen problems. If problems should arise; keeping a cool head will help you come up with a solution. If you've referred to your checklists and stayed on schedule, this move should go just about as smoothly as any move could.



- ❑ Start early
- ❑ Stay organized
- ❑ Have food available (sports drinks and packaged energy bars)
- ❑ Get cell phone numbers of everyone involved and share them around. Have chargers available
- ❑ Have payment ready (including tips)
- ❑ Print out directions and maps for everyone who will be driving. (Don't rely on cell phones)
- ❑ Take movers through the house and explain exactly what your specifications are. Make a large poster board explaining color coordination or room codes if necessary

# THE 'SKINNY' ON TIPPING: Who should you tip and how much do you give?

## 1. The Moving Crew

It's customary to tip the moving crew, even on commercial moves. Tipping seems to be a gray area of uncertainty that movers are not anxious to tell you what to do. Often, when you ask a moving company how much to tip, you get an answer similar to: "*Whatever you feel is appropriate.*" By being vague, in most cases, customers over-tip. We have even heard of one instance where a customer tipped the crew \$300 for a \$1,200 move, and the moving crew complained that it wasn't enough. The person actually gave more! These guidelines will prevent you from being "that customer."

We contacted five reputable New York City-based commercial movers. Each said that the industry standard for tipping is 15% - 20% of the mover's total contract price. So if you pay your mover \$500, the tip would be in the range of \$75 - \$100. One moving company suggested that if the move consists of a limited amount of relatively light items (all pre-packaged boxes and no heavy furnishings), that it is appropriate to tip 10% - 15%.

INCIDENTALLY, WE ALSO ASKED FOUR OF OUR CLIENTS WHAT THEY WOULD TIP ON A TWO OFFICE, \$500 MOVING JOB WITH A THREE PERSON CREW.

The responses we received were generally consistent with the moving companies' suggestions:

- Attorney 1. \$30.00/person
- Attorney 2. \$50.00/person
- Attorney 3. \$80.00 for the job
- Attorney 4. \$100.00 for the job

The total tip for the moving crew should be given to the moving crew team leader; he will divide the tip among the individual movers.

## 2. The Freight Elevator Attendants

If the freight elevator is operated by a building employee (or if the freight area is supervised by a building employee), it's advisable to tip these people. Consider giving the tip to the person immediately before moving any items.

Moving crew personnel can be morons, and building employees are frequently cantankerous. It can be a bad mix. A little good will up front ensures everyone plays nice, and also makes the building employee more inclined to "bend" those nuisance building rules to make sure the move goes well.

For a quick move with one to three trips up the freight elevator, \$20 at the beginning of the move buys a lot of good will, and another \$20 at the end (if the guy has been particularly helpful) is a nice touch. Of course, if you are making 5 – 10 trips up the elevator and it will be a multi-hour move, consider giving \$75 – \$100 total. Give half up front and the balance at the end. Say to the guy, *"We really appreciate your help. We plan to take care of you, and here's a little advance to show our appreciation. Let's hope for a smooth move tonight!"* At the end of the night, you can adjust up or down based on how helpful the guy was.

**"Moving crew personnel can be morons, and building employees are frequently cantankerous. It can be a bad mix."**

### 3. *The Super of the Move-In Building*

Having a good relationship with the Super of any commercial office building is invaluable. The Super wields a lot of power in a building, and he can make your life infinitely better, or completely miserable. A commercial building has a never-ending list of rules that seem to change on a whim, and frequently without prior notice. The end result is delays and more expense every time you try to do something in the building.

If you have a good relationship with the Super, you would be surprised how often the rules just get overlooked. In the long run, fostering good relationship with the Super will pay for itself many times over.

For example, say you arrive at the building with a rental van full of Ikea furniture. The checkout lines were extra-long that day and you miss the freight elevator window by 15 minutes. Have a bad relationship with the Super and you'll be scrambling to find temporary overnight storage and a rental van for a second day. If you have a good relationship with the Super, he might just "look the other way" while you bring all the boxes up to your office via the passenger elevator.

It's not difficult to foster a good relationship with the building staff and Super. The building staffers are underpaid, underappreciated, hard-working guys often put in the difficult position of managing the tension between the landlord, who wants to spend as little money as possible on building upkeep, and tenants who expect high quality services. They get dumped-on by the landlord. They get dumped-on by most of the tenants, or just plain ignored like second-class citizens. Show some appreciation for the things they do in the background so you can keep your business running seamlessly.

If you move into a staffed commercial building, you are going to need the aid of the building staff to navigate all of the building issues. A \$50 - \$100 tip at move-in will make sure you can get their attention when you need it, and it will pay off many times over during the course of your tenancy.



### *Summary*

- ☐ Get cash for tips
- ☐ Moving crew \$\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Freight elevator attendant (move-out building): \$\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Freight elevator attendant (move-in building): \$\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Super (move-in building): \$\_\_\_\_\_

# AFTER THE MOVE.

Once your boxes are moved in and unpacked, the move still isn't over yet! Schedule some free time to your calendar during the weeks following your move to make your new office perfect. Have your employees pitch in.

This is your opportunity to create the organizational systems that will last for years. Need a new filing cabinet? Now's the time to get it! Think hard about each person's access to the files and equipment he or she uses on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Create efficient systems so that your employees can easily perform their tasks.



## *Summary*

- ☐ Note any damages made by movers and alert them once you know all of them, but before the insurance runs out.
- ☐ Unpack according to your plan (color codes and open me firsts) Have trash bags and recycling bins ready to go in each room before beginning unpacking
- ☐ Unpack a certain amount of boxes each day until they are all unpacked
- ☐ Change the locks and make copies of the new keys
- ☐ Run electronic cords where they won't be in the way before you get them all plugged in. Don't turn anything on until all cords are where they will ultimately be, and until everything's plugged into a surge protector.
- ☐ Confirm that your mail is arriving
- ☐ Confirm that all utilities at your old office have been canceled and are no longer in your name
- ☐ Verify your new address as you interact with your bank, credit card, IRS, loans, insurance, newspapers, magazines, licenses, schools, and membership associations
- ☐ Get local phonebooks and maps
- ☐ Confirm that your insurance is updated

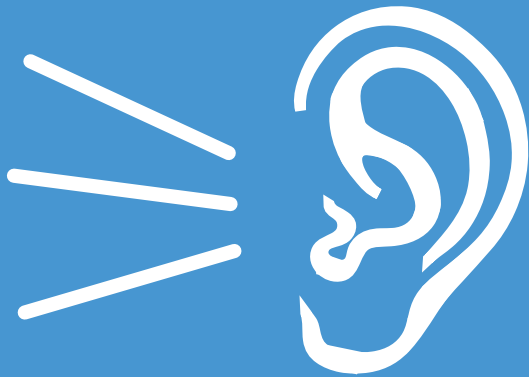
No move happens without a hiccup, no matter how well planned. But if you follow these steps, you'll be prepared to overcome any challenge you encounter.

# GOOD LUCK!



# LAW FIRM SUITES GIVES ME...

- ✓ Referrals to offset my rent.
- ✓ Collaboration with other lawyers just like me.
- ✓ Easy networking while I work.
- ✓ Staff that's like an extension of my firm.



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