

March 2025

From the Desks of Your D.C. Bar Practice Management Advisors



Leaving Federal Service to Start Your Own Firm?

5 Quick Ways to Get Started

By Kaitlin E. McGee

1. Shift Your Mindset

Government legal work is just that, a job. Running a firm is a business. Ask yourself who do you intend to represent, how will you solve their problem, and how you'll value your problem-solving skills.

2. Set Up Your Infrastructure

- **Choose a Business Entity & Open Proper Accounts** (including IOLTA if handling advance fees or expenses).
- **Define Your Practice Area** to align with client needs.
- **Review UPL Restrictions** to be sure you're practicing only where you're properly admitted. If you rely on an exception for out-of-state or federal agency practice, your entire practice must fall under that exception and you must follow any required notices or disclaimers (e.g., "Practice limited to federal courts and agencies"). The unauthorized practice of law (UPL) means there is a geographic limitation to your law license.
- **Price Your Services** in a way that's both competitive and sustainable.

3. Build Visibility

A functional website and a solid LinkedIn profile are must-haves. Let people know who you are, what you do, and why they should hire you. What images and expressions explain the problem you solve? How do your clients think about the problem you solve for them?

4. Know if You Really Want to Be a Business Owner

Not everyone loves sales, marketing, and admin work. If you're not comfortable with these, joining an existing law firm or consulting firm might be a better fit.

5. Tap into Free Resources

Sign up for our Basic Training & Beyond program that is two days each month covering the nuts and bolts of launching and managing a law firm. And if you need a one-on-one consultation, email PMAS@dcbar.org.

Questions about ethics or compliance?

For free, confidential informal advice, call the Legal Ethics Helpline at 202-737-4700, ext. 1010, or email ethics@dcbar.org.

Stressed about the transition?

Contact the [D.C. Bar's Lawyer Assistance Program](#) by emailing lap@dcbar.org. It's free and confidential. For more resources, visit our [website](#).

AI for Law Firms

Have you used AI for marketing your law firm? If so, please email me at kmcgee@dcbar.org and

share your experience and favorite AI tools.

Here is guidance on [Attorneys' Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Client Matters](#), Legal Ethics Opinion 388.

If you are using AI in your firm, let us know how at PMAS@dcbar.org.

A banner for LSP Data Solutions. On the left, a blue background with a green square frame containing the text "Trusted Experts. Tailored Solutions." in white and green. To the right, a white background with the LSP logo (LSP in large white letters, DATA SOLUTIONS in smaller green letters below) and the text "Digital Forensics and eDiscovery services that fit your needs." in blue. A green button with the text "LEARN MORE" is positioned at the bottom right.

Trusted Experts.
Tailored Solutions.

LSP
DATA SOLUTIONS

Digital Forensics and
eDiscovery services
that fit your needs.

LEARN MORE

Basic Training & Beyond

If you're starting a firm, [Basic Training & Beyond](#) is a great jumping-off point. Day One will teach you the essentials to get your firm off the ground, and Day Two will help you grow and manage your firm.

Here is how to start, grow and manage a law firm in a large, urban market.

Our monthly [Basic Training & Beyond](#) is set for **March 4 & 18, 2025**, from **9:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** We will meet in person in the Williamson Conference Room on the third floor of Bar Headquarters. The program is presented monthly for members and law firm staff.

This program has been presented more than three hundred times for more than 4,000 lawyers over the last fifteen years, and many have launched and are now operating small firms. We stay connected with many small firms, and what we learn informs the content for this program.

Managing Money

Managing Money

Our next in-person session of Managing Money is set for **March 10, 2025**, from **9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

We also present Managing Money on request for a law firm or organization.



[Register for an upcoming session or schedule a session for your firm here.](#)

Lunch and Learn

PMAS will also be collaborating with the [Law Practice Management Community](#) to bring you the following [Lunch and Learn programs](#):

- **March 27, 2025** – Law Firm Partnerships: What to Know Before and After Tying the Knot
- **May 8, 2025** – AI in Action: ChatGPT & Descript for Law Firm Marketing

An LPM & PMAS Production

Register for any or all [here](#).

Successful Small Firm Course

Are you interested in a business incubator approach to growing your law firm?

Consider working with us on an individual basis. We now offer the **Successful Small Firm Practice Course** in a series of one-on-one sessions on Zoom.

The course serves as an incubator for solo attorneys and small firms and helps them work through their business and marketing plans with support, feedback, and guidance. Lawyers focus on the type of firm they want to create and work through the course at their own pace with

built-in accountability for achieving their business goals. If you are interested in this approach to creating and growing a law firm, contact PMAS@dcbar.org.

Resources

Our [Video Resource Library](#) offers free webinars on a variety of practice management topics. New programs are added regularly. Our full archive of recordings and materials is [here](#). If you have an idea for a program, let us know at lunchandlearn@dcbar.org

Missed any of these recent sessions? You can [access the recordings and materials anytime](#).

Here's a glimpse of some recent sessions:

- **Cyber Liability Exposures for Law Firms**
- **Interested in Adding Law Bono Services to Your Practice?** with DC Refers
- **Recruiting and Hiring 101: How to Get Started When You Need to Hire Help**

If you are interested in a practice management assessment, [click here](#).

– Kaitlin & Dan

In other news . . .

For more tips on transitioning out of public service, read our [latest article in Duly Noted](#).

For the recent results of the groundbreaking study on attorney mental health and well-being, [click here](#).

Read the [LAP Winter Newsletter](#).

For more information on PMAS programs, [click here](#).

CLE, Communities Events & Pro Bono:

Continuing Legal Education programs are [here](#).

Communities Events are [here](#).

Pro Bono Center training programs are scheduled [here](#).

As we return to D.C. Bar headquarters for meetings and events, everyone entering the building will need to comply with the [COVID Guidelines](#).

Our Practice Management Advisors are:

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Practice Management Advisors have a free and confidential relationship with D.C. Bar members pursuant to Rule 1.6(j) of the D.C. Rules of Professional Conduct.

District of Columbia Practice Manual

Every D.C. Lawyer's Must-Have Resource



This two-volume title, typically priced at \$495, is being offered to subscribers of this newsletter at a discounted rate of \$450. To obtain the discount code, please reach out to communitiesregistration@dcbar.org.



Serving our members so they can serve the community

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