

Legal Services National Technology Assistance Project



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Becoming a Paperless Law Firm

Using paper is on the way out, and for good reason. Paper is bad for the environment, even if you are conscientious about recycling there is still an environmental impact associated with creating the paper and even producing new paper from recycled paper. The ideal path is always going to be going digital, which has a number of other advantages including saving money, delays associated with finding and filing documents, poor organization and other problems. ??????

There are a lot of benefits to going digital as well, such as:

- Lower costs associated with purchasing and labor
- Improving communication with clients and other organizations
- Document automation, e-signing etc. [Click Here](#) to read our blog entry on e-signing methods
- You won't have to drag in a large box of documents into court and (if properly prepared) you can simply access your documents from your cellphone. What will look better in front of a jury? Digging for files and having issues finding them or having everything at hand?
- Don't be confined to the office. If you are traveling, in court or working from home you will always have your files at hand.
- Make finding things easier. Say you want a specific case file, but need it right then for a specific moment. If digitized you can search for a keyword, if not you will be having to sort through documents.
- You will always have a backup of your work for emergencies. No fire, or flood or mishap will ever cost you those files you spent so long putting together.

Stop Creating a Big Mess

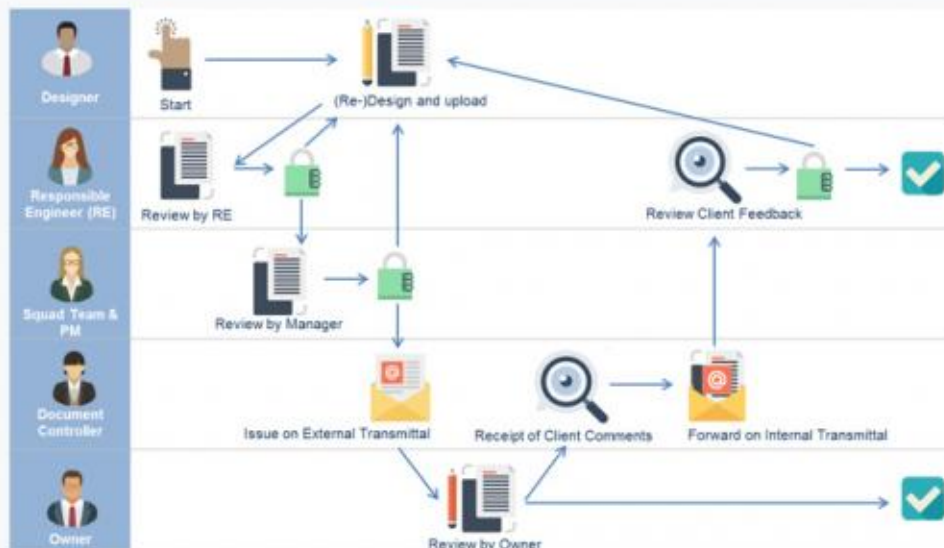
There is a few things I would suggest you get on top of ASAP:

- Digitizing files, moving your old paper files to the cloud
- Managing and organizing your documents
- Coming up with a standard method in your office for doing things

Design a paperless workflow

In order to make the switch to a paperless office you need a plan in place for your organization and for your individual workers. For example, if a paper document is mailed to your office how is that document managed? It needs to be scanned, tagged, put in the right part of the cloud and then sent to the proper people in the office. Do the people in your office have a plan for this? Are they ready?

Many find it helpful to physically write things down, and to create an actual written up flowchart for how these kind of situations would be handled.



Training Members Of Your Firm

There will need to be regular meetings to ensure people in the office are following procedures put in place for organization and digitization. Everyone should know exactly what to do when they receive a document or something needs to be filed. For those that aren't particularly tech savvy, this could require extra work. Remember your process only works as well as the weakest link in your procedures.

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<http://www.lsnatp.org/node/174/becoming-paperless-law-firm>

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