
Resource Guide for Solo Practice

Office of Career & Professional Development
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There are many reasons to start your own law practice, a desire to be entrepreneurial, setting your own schedule, interest in a niche practice, and serving a client base that is not being served by traditional law practices, to name a few. Many new lawyers are striking out on their own and opening solo practices soon after graduation. From the class of 2014, 2 percent went into solo practice, according to the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) in Washington, which tracks legal employment patterns.

Fewer firm jobs and a desire for autonomy may be drivers of this trend, and technology has made solo practice a viable career path for confident, tech-savvy lawyers. Software and web-based applications reduce or eliminate the need for administrative assistance, performing tasks from organizing files to billing clients. Online communities of other attorneys provide ready guidance and encouragement, making solo practice less solitary. Reaching out to alumni who have started their own practice is a good way to see if this is a good option for you. Finding mentors and developing potential client relationships will be key to your success.

Thinking about freelancing or going solo? Learn about the Bay Area Legal Incubator program and take a look at our list of resource below.

BAY AREA LEGAL INCUBATOR (BALI)

Are you a recent graduate interested in opening your own solo practice? Consider joining BALI, a two year training program for those recently admitted to the California Bar. BALI provides extensive support, mentoring, practice management and education on how to successfully operate a solo or small firm practice that serves the needs of the modest means community. We also provide office space at a reduced cost for up to two years. BALI is a collaboration between the Alameda County Bar Association Volunteer Legal Services Corporation and five Bay Area Law Schools, including Hastings. Hastings provides funding for up to three participants to join the program each year. The goal of the program is to provide long term employment for recent alums and to increase access to justice for people of modest means. For more information visit the BALI website <https://www.bayarealegalincubator.org/> and make an appointment with Fairuz Abdullah or Sari Zimmerman in the Career Office.

RESOURCES

[ABA General Practice, Solo & Small Firm Division](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/gpsolo.html) <http://www.americanbar.org/groups/gpsolo.html>

www.myshingle.com (Carolyn Elefant's website for solo practitioners)

<http://counsel.net/chatboards/solo/> (chat board for solo practitioners)

<http://practice.findlaw.com/how-to-start-a-law-firm/> (free resources related to startup issues encountered by solo and small law firm practices)

<http://www.washlaw.edu/legalforms/index.html> (legal forms)

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Garfinkle, Marc. *Solo Contendere: How to Go Directly from Law School Into the Practice of Law Without Getting a Job*. Full Court Press, 2010.

Modlin, Marina. *The Independence Track: How to Succeed as a Freelance Attorney*. D & L Books, 2011.

Guinn, Ann M. *Minding your Own Business: The Solo and Small Firm Lawyer's Guide to a Profitable Practice*, ABA 2010