



ATTICUS®
Guiding Your Practice™

Coronavirus Preparedness for Family Law Firms

“Hope for the Best, Prepare for the Worst”

INTENTION

We have three goals:

1. Create a readiness plan to support you, your staff and your clients.
2. Protect your firm from disruptions.
3. Position your firm as the market leader in providing powerful resources and solutions for your clients.



Every Crisis Conceals an Opportunity

Hidden in this crisis will be challenges that produce breakthroughs which will propel you, your team and your firm to greater heights.



What's Your Level of Concern or Anxiety Around Coronavirus?

On a scale of 1 to 10:

(1 being I'm not worried at all; 10 being "my hair is on fire")

- Personal
- Family
- Firm



Leadership Matters

In a crisis, your team will look for your guidance more than ever.

It's your job to calm them, help them be responsive and lead them to the other side of this crisis.

So take care of yourself so you can lead your team in a rational, reasonable way.



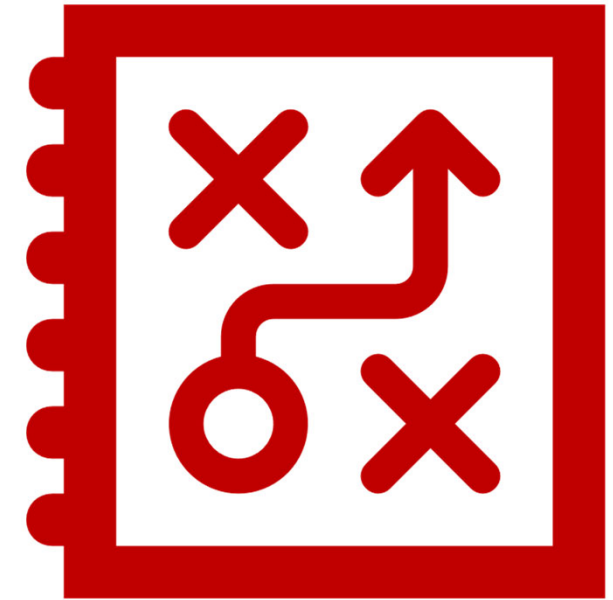
Start by Separating Emotions from Reality

What you *can't* control:

- Schools, courts and buildings closing
- State mandated lock-downs and quarantines
- People becoming ill

What you *can* control:

- Your attitude, anxiety and expectations
- Team member's ability to work virtually
- Your expenditures



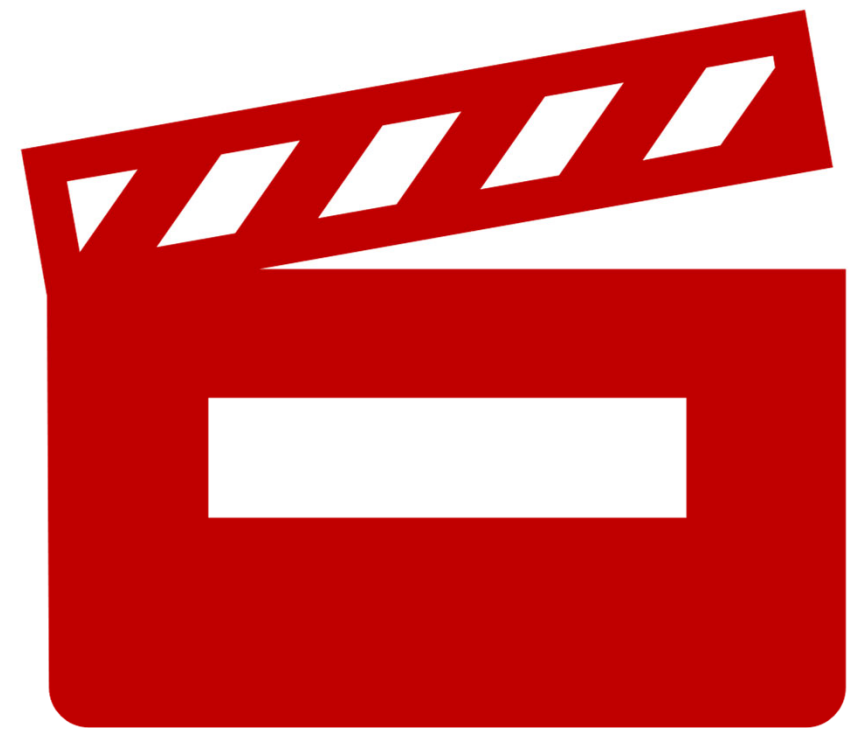
THE COVID 19 IMPACT RISK ASSESSMENT FOR LAW FIRMS™

Risk Factors		Hi Risk Scenarios	Low Risk Scenarios
Practice Type	Litigation firms heavily dependent on advertising, high-volume, in-person intake. Immigration firms serving high-risk groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transactional firms with document-driven work easily done by home-based staff or that can preform intake by phone or virtual means. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Remote Access	Firms with no prior experience in operating virtually.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Firms staffed by team members with remote access who telecommute regularly. <input type="checkbox"/>
Type of Clients	The elderly, those with underlying conditions, or travelers to high-risk areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 60, generally healthy and able, with no high-risk travel. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Team	Attorneys and staff already exposed or in high-risk populations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attorneys or team with no exposure, in low-risk populations. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Referral Sources	Those in and around high-risk populations (i.e., ALFs, Hospitals, Nursing Homes, SNFs, Veterans Facilities).	<input type="checkbox"/>	Those not typically in and around high-risk populations. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Location	Inside a locked down area or an area with confirmed community spread.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not in an area with cases or confirmed community spread. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools	Local schools close forcing parents to work from home.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local schools remain open, parents can remain at work. <input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Funds	Firm with no emergency fund, forcing them to seek loans or use partner-financing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Firm has built up an emergency fund, or has an open line of credit. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public Relations	Careless use of social media that broadcasts firm infections, issues, internal struggles, or other negative messages.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Careful use of social media to communicate with clients, offer helpful resources and build firm's reputation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Insurance	Firms who have no business interruption insurance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Firms who have business interruption insurance that covers pandemic situations. <input type="checkbox"/>

What are the Unique Concerns to Family Law?

1. Clients access to funds and ability to pay
2. Client's anxiety levels – toleration for proceedings
3. Your firm's ability to operate virtually if necessary
4. Opposing counsels or mediators ability to operate
5. Court schedules

What Can We Do
Right Now?



Strategy 1

Infection Control

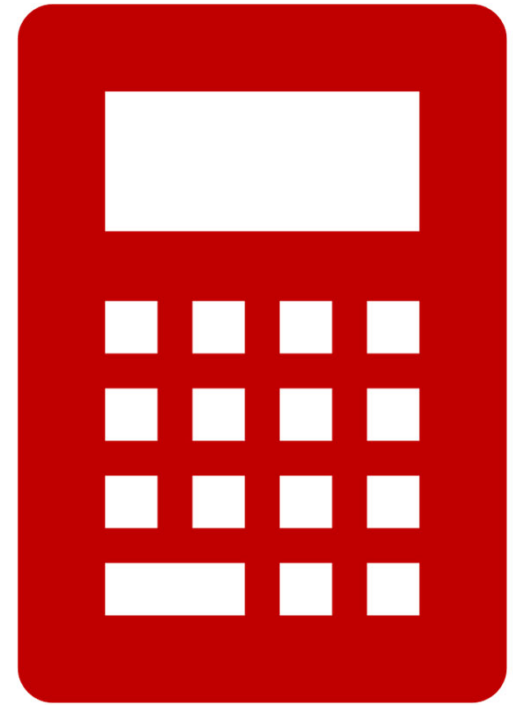
- Establish the basic CDC guidelines on handwashing, using hand sanitizer, not shaking hands, etc.
- Mandate that team members who have any kind of upper respiratory symptoms, exposure to anyone suspected of having the virus, or who have just returned from a trip to an infected zone, self-quarantine and work remotely
- Encourage *extreme* compliance by not penalizing them in any way:
 - Lengthen your sick leave pay policy to encourage self-quarantine
 - Insist they get tested when appropriate



Consider the Alternative

If a team member is sick but comes to work anyway, exposing the entire team – it will force a **firm shut-down**.

Is it more expensive to pay additional sick leave to keep team members at home – or *shut down the firm*?

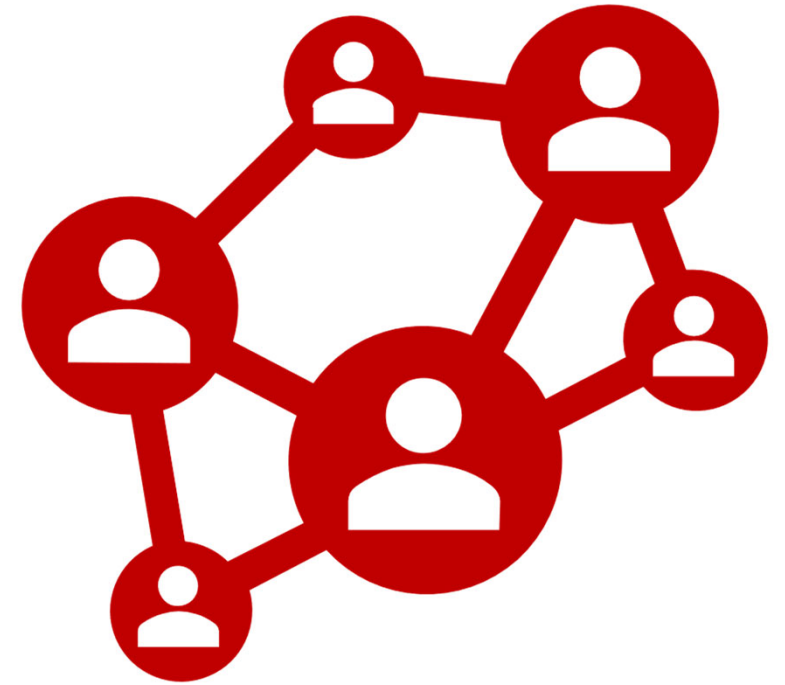


Strategy 2

Form a Crisis Preparedness Team

Depending on the size of the firm, this may be you or a group of your managers:

- Assess the impact of the crisis on clients, staff, cash flow and operations
- If necessary, how and when the firm will switch to working remotely
- Establish a line of command to make firm decisions when emotions are running high and people are confused
- Protocols for staff, client and referral source communications that sound calm, rational and reliable
- Protocols for CDC hygiene: washing hands, not shaking hands, etc.



Strategy 3

Educate, Inform, and Reassure Staff, Clients, Referral Sources

Using email, social media, blogs, webinars or the phone, let each community know that you are on top of the situation.

Communicate with confidence and empathy for their fear, concerns or frustrations.

Provide each community with value.

Tell them three things you are doing right now to help them:



Value for Staff, Clients, Referral Sources

Staff/Team

- Provide policies on sick leave, paid time off, and working from home
- Work with them on childcare
- Straight talk issues that impact them directly

Clients/Prospects

- Flexible hours
- Remote sign-up
- E-signing

Referral Sources

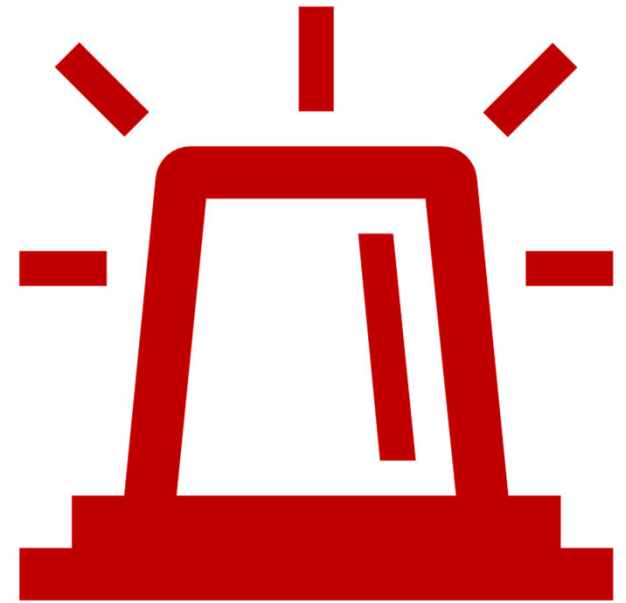
- Webinars for dealing with the crisis
- Care packages
- Office space if their building gets shut down

The Post 9/11 Syndrome

Some clients will hunker down and begin to withdraw.

Use this time to:

- Maintain close connections with them
- Become a helpful resource for them
- Communicate -- in their preferred forms of communication



Strategy 4

Protect Your Talent

If you want to preserve your team, be aware that many of them lack a financial cushion and may be one or two paychecks from a financial disaster.

- Consider no-interest loans.
- Keep an eye on the economic relief packages now being discussed by government officials.
- Be straight. If there is a pending layoff, give them the opportunity to prepare.



Be on the Lookout for New Talent

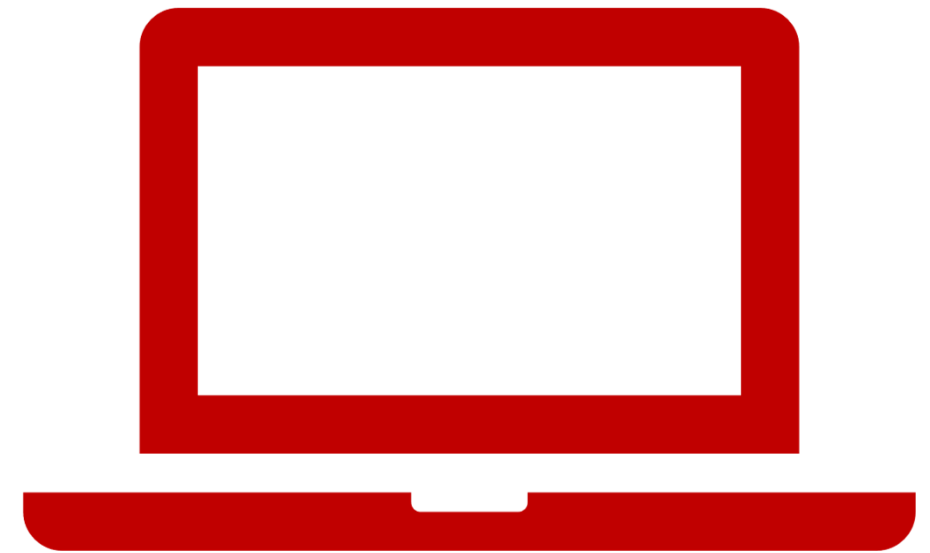
If you are in a financial position to do it, keep an eye out for talent that may be leaving other firms.



Strategy 5

Practice Working Remotely

- Set up everyone's laptop with the appropriate level of access now and conduct needed training in case they have to work remotely. Have each department work from home for a couple of days.
- Have team members take laptops home every night in case a team member reports an exposure and the firm has to shut down quickly
- Experiment with forwarding phones to remote receptionist



The Trigger Points

Possible triggers for your law firm to switch to a virtual operation:

1. Your office is exposed to someone who becomes ill and all have to self-quarantine (this includes clients, visitors, vendors).
2. Local schools close (either partially or a full shutdown)
3. Your community goes on lockdown



Three Phases



Work together, but with rotation and social distancing



Some work at the firm, some work at home



Entire firm works remotely from home

Cyber Hygiene

Security and liability

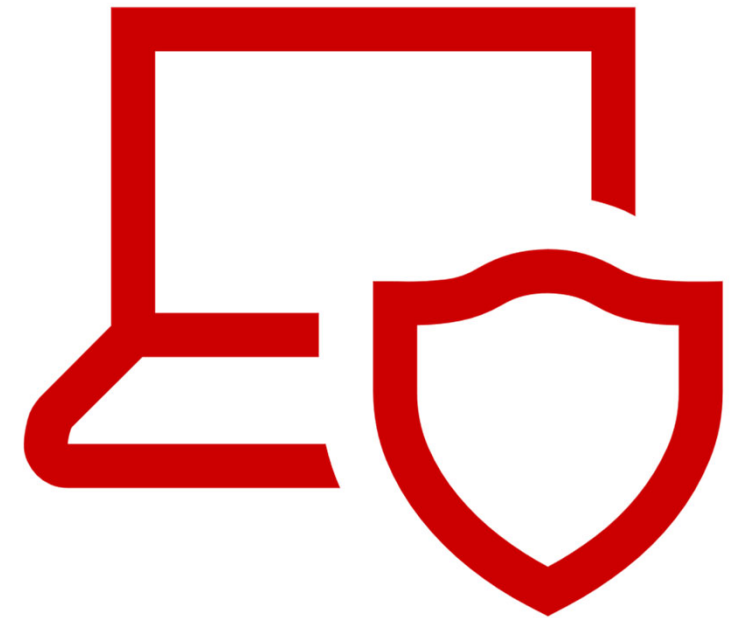
1. Liability insurance won't cover problems that occur due to team using private laptops. They must be firm owned.
2. To be covered, these laptops must be equipped with appropriate firm software, encryption capabilities, firewalls and password protections with different levels of access for different people.
3. Be careful of team using wi-fi in locations where others may be able to sign on easily and access your data. Make sure wi-fi is password protected – make the passwords difficult.



Be Alert

Scammers will be out in force.
Your problems are their opportunities.

Don't make it easy for them to access
your data and use it inappropriately or
hold it for ransom!



Protect Your Files

Team members may take hardcopy files home (try to scan as much as possible ahead of time).

If they do, they should:

1. Protect documents – family members, roommates, etc., should not be able to see anything sensitive. Lock them up.
2. Be careful when printing out materials (don't leave them on the printer).
3. Be careful leaving sensitive information open on the computer screen.



Triage Cases - Work In Progress (WIP)



Cases that need immediate attention due to statute of limitations or other pending deadlines (hearings, trials are being rescheduled)



Cases that drive cash right away



Cases that will need attention in the coming month to 6 weeks



Cases that can be put on the back burner for now

Strategy 7

Cash Flow & Financial Planning

Assess

Assess essential and non-essential expenses. Start reducing non-essential expenses now.

Preserve

Preserve cash – draw down credit lines and move money to separate bank.

Prepare

Prepare an austerity plan in the event of a long term slow down.

Establish

Establish a cash flow projection system and monitor bi-weekly.

Prioritize

Prioritize billing against trust accounts.

Downsizing

- Most of you will want and need to preserve your team. How long many months can you afford to pay them?
- Downsizing levels depend on Financial cushion, ability to borrow, healthiness of WIP, not being over-staffed, ability to negotiate lease and reduce other fixed expenses

Downsizing

Level 1:

- Financial cushion can cover 3 months, a lot of work in WIP, new client inquiries are steady,
- **Possible options:** draw down or get LOC, eliminate non-essential expenses, put off purchases and hires and wait it out

Downsizing

Level 2:

- Financial cushion not great, WIP half-full, firm over-staffed, unable to reduce lease and other fixed costs substantially
- **Possible options:** Shareholders/owner reduce draw and seek loans, selective team members are furloughed or paid on project basis, pay cuts for remaining team

Downsizing

Level 3:

- Financial cushion non-existent, can't qualify for loans*, not much value in WIP, no money in trust, can't negotiate on fixed costs
- **Possible options:** Shareholders/owner foregoes salary, shareholders lend money to firm or seek loans, team members go on unemployment leaving a skeleton staff

Strategy 8

Marketing & Intake

- Step up your marketing efforts; do not reduce spending here
- Use the slow down to overhaul your digital and social media platforms
- Experiment with alternative intake methods: remote signup, video signup, drive-in signup
- Ensure you have a social media policy – not posting about people that have colds and no jokes about the Coronavirus



Marketing Ideas

1. Check in on your best contacts. E-mail, office or drive time calls
2. Increase your activity on social media, especially LinkedIn.
3. Co-author articles with referral sources.
4. Facilitate a webinar for referral sources or clients

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Deferred Demand

For most law firms, new client in-take will fall off over the next couple of months.

Most of that demand is still out there, it is just deferred until the prospective clients are ready to engage an attorney.



Strategy 9

Backup Attorney

Solos should have a designated backup attorney if they fall ill to protect them and their clients:

- They should have access to client files and information in the event of your unplanned absence
- They should have authorization to review files and determine which clients need immediate attention



Strategy 10

Stay Informed:

Coronavirus Law Firm Response:

- Check our Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn Pages and use your community's expertise
- Coronavirus Preparedness Hotline – Daily

9-10 am EST*

Dial-In: 813.769.0500

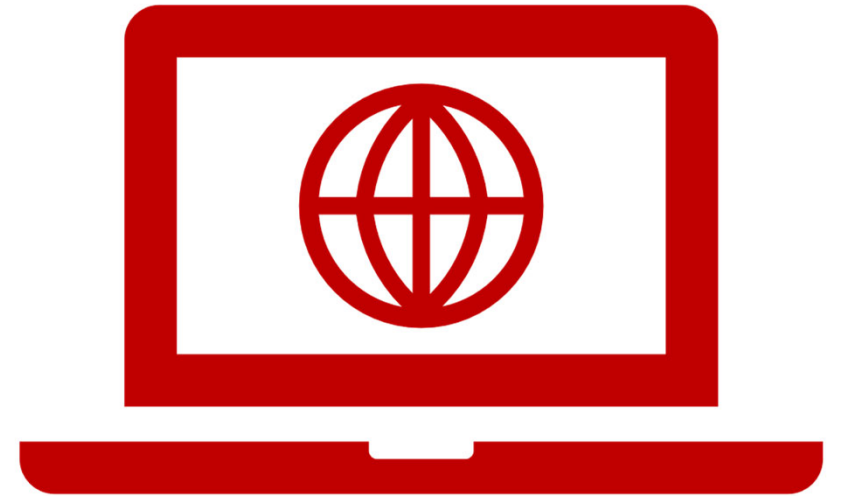
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If you can't make the call, email grow@atticusadvantage.com and a practice advisor will contact you ASAP.



Practice Specific Webinars:

- **Personal Injury and Litigation**
(March 25th, 11:00 am ET)
- **Estate Planning & Elder Law**
(March 26th, 1:00 pm ET)



Stay Informed:

Specific Response Plans:

- Protecting Your Marketing Pipeline & Preparing for Deferred Demand
(March 24th, 1:00 pm ET)
- Preserving Cash Flow in an Economic Slowdown
(March 26th, 3:00 pm ET)



Dominate Your Market 2020 Dates

April 16 & 17 – Virtual Session – Christina will be sending details

- Current circumstances necessitate that we stay focused first on adjusting to emergency measures but come April we will then need to reassess your firm's 2020 trajectory. The next month will give us more data to plan and adjust our course where we can.

July 16 & 17 in Dallas, TX

- (Live at this point, but we will monitor and adjust if needed)

October 21, Wednesday in Washington, DC

- Begin at 8 am until 6 pm and cocktail reception from 6 to 7 pm

November 5 & 6 in Orlando, FL, The 2020 Summit

- Begins at 8:30 am on Thursday and concludes at 3:30 pm on Friday

QUESTIONS

Thank You!

grow@atticusadvantage.com
