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How to Tell Clients You Work from Home

I've been reading SOLOSEZ archives focusing on "home office." Luckily they've reflected how happy I am to be practicing from home. I'd like to know how/when you tell clients that you work from home. Do you mention it right away? When asked where your office is? Why this trips me sometimes, I don't know.

Julie S. Mills, Worthington, Ohio

If you have a home office, eg. a room set aside as your office in your house, then, why not just say you work out of your office? And if people want to meet you at your office, but you prefer that they not come to your office, tell them you have a home office and prefer to meet at their office or at a coffee shop, etc. Or, if they are going to come to your home office for the first time, you might mention it then, that you have a home office.

Michael A. Blake, Milford, CT

I am not typical to answer your question because I have both a home and downtown office; but when I set up a meeting to take place in my home office I first give the address, and if asked directions, and then say not to be alarmed if it looks like they are in a residential area because my Barrington office is in my home.

Shell Bleiweiss, Chicago and Barrington, Illinois

I've never had a problem (fact is, I never even thought about it much). But I do have a separate office with a door (by the pool) into it. Now, clients do have to come round back. When it's not too cold or too hot we conference by the pool.

Dick O'Connor

I have worked from the third bedroom since 1991. I tell my clients during the initial telephone conversation that I work from home, that I do not see clients in my home, that I meet with them at their home or office or at a convenient location, that I have two locations where I can use a conference room if they want to meet there. I also tell them that if this arrangement bothers them, I understand and will not feel slighted if they hire a different attorney. Incidentally, I have had numerous clients that I never met, having done everything by telephone and fax—even the filing of a complaint and negotiations of settlement.

Curtis Drew



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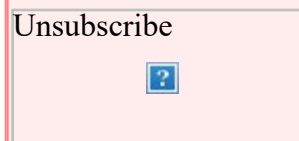
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I will echo Curtis' remarks except that I do see some clients in my home office. The 4th bedroom (which is really just another small room) is behind my garage, although connected to the kitchen. There is no direct entrance from the outside, so my clients sometimes have to trudge through. But I usually tell people right away that I have a home office. I truly believe that most people appreciate the fact that you are keeping your overhead and costs low, so as to keep their bills low. I can't tell you how many times I heard clients of the big firms I was in say something like, "No wonder our bills are so high!"

TJ Thurston, Huntley, IL

I say "my office is in my home, so you will be coming to a residential part of town," when they ask for directions for how to find my office.

Gini Nelson

Too simple, Gini—way too simple.

Dick O'Connor

I think it depends on your practice area really.

My bankruptcy clients don't seem to care one way or the other. In my case, if it comes up, I tell them. And I don't apologize for it. I think this is increasingly becoming a non-issue.

Seth Rogers, Longmont, CO

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