

Checklist

Natural Disaster Response

If you were given notice at 1pm today that you would not be able to return to your office the next day:

- What would you need to do?
- Could you work from home / remotely effectively?
- Could your staff / team work remotely?

Give yourself a score of 1 for each of the following you have implemented in your practice.

NB. 'Ability to access' means you have already used and tested this technology, and staff have been shown how to use it. All 'Essentials' should also be in place.

Essentials:

- ☐ Secure use-at-home computer equipment and internet access for all staff
- ☐ EFT Funds transfer authority for your trust account
- ☐ Secure remote access to your Practice Management System / Office 365. If not possible, a way of securely transferring client and accounting information.
- ☐ Video conferencing platform and hardware, video and audio recording e.g. Zoom/Teams
- ☐ Suitable place to work to ensure confidentiality of client documents, data and conversations. Desk and adjustable chair preferred.
- ☐ Redirection of phone calls to appropriate number(s), ability to alter redirection if needed
- ☐ Arrangements for collection of mail from mail box, or redirection.
- ☐ Appropriate cyber security arrangements to confirm internal requests and authorisations for fund transfers

Ability to access:

- ☐ Scan, copy and print facility
- ☐ An electronic settlement platform (eg, PEXA or Simplii) either using your own subscription (preferred) or a settlement agent
- ☐ Electronic Titles Office lodgements
- ☐ Court portals
- ☐ E-signing platform
- ☐ A remote client identification platform
- ☐ Secure messaging facility (not rely on email) eg: MS Teams messaging app or client portal
- ☐ Courier services
- ☐ Electronic safe custody records
- ☐ Postage supplies
- ☐ Email broadcast service to quickly provide updates to all clients and contacts of the practice
- ☐ Voice messages/forwarded calls. Updated recording if a voicemail box will not be monitored.
- ☐ Network of colleagues or access to a locum
- ☐ Checklist of vital documents, security keys, tokens, and passwords

How did you go?

1-4: Unless you are already working from home, it looks like you would struggle if you were unable to access your office. Call the QLS Ethics & Practice Centre for advice on how to implement some changes to ensure your practice is prepared.

5-9: You have made a start, but an unexpected natural disaster would cause considerable stress and time as there are many aspects of your practice that still require you to be in the office.

10-13: Great work, it looks like your practice would be able to move to a work from anywhere (ie home) model. There are some additional measures you could take which would make the transition easier.

14-18: Congratulations. It looks like your practice is prepared – you and your staff will be able to relocate at short notice and continue to provide professional services to your clients.

For more information please contact the QLS Ethics and Practice Centre's [Practice Advisory Service](#) for a complimentary consultation on 07 3842 5843 or ethics@qls.com.au.

Additional QLS Services

- The [Practice Advisory Service](#) can provide confidential guidance and support on a range of key business concerns including accounting and finance, business planning and management and human resources and employment.
- [QLS Locum Service](#) is available to provide sole to small practices with short-term assistance from an experienced solicitor.
- [Lawcare](#) is available to all members and their families and provides confidential counselling and wellbeing services across a number of specialist areas.

Resources

- [Guidance for law practices](#) where documents have been affected by flooding or extreme weather conditions.
- [Business Continuity and Succession Planning Guide](#) and other [practice management resources](#)
- Information on [work from home protocols](#), which may be useful for firms revising staff arrangements.
- [Legal Aid Queensland – Natural Disaster Legal Help](#)
- [The Law Foundation](#)

Cybersecurity Resources

- [Making your domestic equipment \(WFH\) safer](#)
- [Removable data storage best practice for law firms](#)