

## RECEPTIONIST'S DUTIES

The telephone is the top priority even when doing other tasks. If someone is at your desk, excuse yourself and answer the phone.

Do not let the telephone ring more than three times. A backup system should be arranged within the office to handle busy situations.

If you must be away from your desk, find someone to cover for you before leaving.

Take care that your messages are clear and complete. If you are handwriting a message, write legibly.

Do not tell callers you will "have the attorney return their call." Tell them you will see that the attorney gets the message.

Repeat the caller's name and telephone number before hanging up. Ask the caller to spell their name even if the name is "Brown," because the caller may spell it "Browne." Nothing is more irritating to a lawyer than to call a wrong number or ask for a wrong name.

Do not leave the caller on hold for too long without checking back to see if the caller still wishes to hold.

If you are on one line and another line rings, ask the first caller to please hold. Answer the second line with the firm name and "Could you please hold?" Complete the first call ASAP and return to the second call with "Thank you for holding. May I help you?"

If there is more than one call coming in use this procedure:

First Line:	Firm name and "Could you please hold?"
Second Line:	Repeat same procedure as first line.
Third Line:	Handle as you would a single call. Then return to first line with "Thank you for holding. May I help you?"

When the caller on the first line has been taken care of, proceed to the second line and repeat the procedure.

If your office uses voicemail, review the PLF practice aid, *Using Voicemail in the Office*, available at [www.osbplf.org](http://www.osbplf.org).

Do not leave your desk to hunt for the person being called. Check to see if the person's telephone light is on or use the intercom to page the person.

Do not discuss cases, clients, or any information learned in the office with friends or relatives. Stress confidentiality.

Do not leave file materials or confidential information in plain view for others (clients, attorneys from other offices, etc.) to see.

Do not leave information on your computer screen in plain view for others to see.

Do not discuss client matters with other firm members when clients or visitors are in the reception area.

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Do not discuss client matters with other firm members at lunch, in the elevator, hall, restroom, or any other public area.

When greeting people who come in, remember to ask their names and whom they wish to see. Most people will tell you this before you ask. If the person's name is not on the calendar for an appointment, immediately write down the name so you won't forget it and have to ask again.

If the person has no appointment and the attorney is in, indicate you will check to see if the attorney can see the person.

If the attorney is in but already has someone with him or her or has a client waiting, suggest making an appointment for the person at another time.

Do not ask clients or potential clients what type of matter they have or their reason for being there.

Do not tell the client that the attorney has not come in yet, is not back from lunch yet, whom the attorney is with, or how long the attorney has been gone.

Do not discuss the case or ask questions about the case with the client unless you are verifying their message.

Offer no information to callers or persons visiting the office unless authorized to do so by the attorney.

Do not react to the client's message or statement.

Do not quote fees or talk about money.

Do not read magazines, newspapers, or books at the front desk. Do not play computer games, check personal email, log in to Facebook, or surf the Internet at the front desk. If you have nothing to do, try to look busy or ask someone for something to do.

Do not make or receive personal phone calls on your cell or the office phone while at the front desk if clients or visitors are present.

Do not eat or chew gum at the front desk.

Do not take your shoes off at the front desk.

Do not have coffee cups and pop bottles all over the front desk. Keep it neat and tidy.

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

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