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## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION FOR NEW CLIENTS

(Effective January 1, 2008)

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### BUSINESS HOURS AND APPOINTMENTS

1. Our business hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
2. Technology has changed the ways in which we obtain instructions from our clients and how we serve them. We encourage you to use voicemail, e-mail and fax to communicate with us, which will result in fewer visits to our office.
3. Our preferred way of communicating is by electronic mail. We are moving away from paper files to storing materials in our files electronically, where possible. As a result, your file will predominantly be stored in electronic format, and the correspondence in your file will be sent in electronic format, whenever possible. If you have an e-mail account that you can rely on for private, confidential communications, we will use e-mail to communicate with you and provide you with copies of letters and other material that we send and receive on your file. If you do not want us to use your e-mail address for these purposes, please let us know. Unless we hear from you otherwise, we will assume that you check your e-mail regularly and that we may send this material to your e-mail account.
4. We need to be able to reach you promptly, particularly when dealing with a time-sensitive matter. If it is difficult or time-consuming for us to contact you, our legal fees may be higher as a result.
5. Although we encourage you to use e-mail as the primary method of communicating with us, we remind you that for urgent contact, the telephone is preferable. You may learn from the telephone whether the lawyer is in the office to help you that day, a feature not available through e-mail. If your lawyer is not in the office, someone else in the firm may be available to assist you.
6. You may be asked to provide your lawyer with written material in the course of our work for you. This is often an efficient way to get historical or detailed information from you to assist us in preparing court documents on your behalf. The written material you provide will be extremely helpful and will result in greater efficiency for us and reduced legal fees for you.
7. Our lawyers may be reached at the following e-mail addresses:  
  
Ronald F.B. Woyrnarski    rfbw@woynarski.ca  
  
Megan Reilkoff            reilkoff@woynarski.ca
8. Please note that e-mails are only received during normal business hours. E-mails sent on the weekend or a holiday will not be received by your lawyer until the next business day.
9. In special circumstances, appointments with your lawyer may be available outside normal business hours, that is, before

9:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.. Such appointments are the exception and must be scheduled with your lawyer directly.

10. Our lawyers are not available for consultation without appointments.
11. Weekend and holiday appointments are not available.
12. Certain aspects of law are crisis-oriented and, on occasion, lawyers are called to court on short notice or are required to stay in court longer than expected. Consequently, on occasion, appointments may have to be rescheduled on short notice. Every effort will be made to provide you with as much notice as possible should that be necessary. If you are booking an appointment with your lawyer on a day that is a court day for him or her, please call ahead and confirm the appointment with the assistant that day.

#### **TELEPHONE CALLS**

13. Lawyers charge for the time they spend on your file. You will be charged for all contact you have with your lawyer, including telephone calls, voicemail and e-mails. Therefore, your call may be directed first to the lawyer's assistant who may be able to help you.
14. We strive to return all telephone calls within 48 hours. However, if your lawyer is in court for a number of days in a row, phone calls will be returned within 48 hours of his or her return to the office.
15. This firm has a voicemail system. You may leave a detailed confidential message. The person you leave a message for will listen directly to your message.
16. You may also leave messages with a legal assistant, which will be promptly passed on to your lawyer. The messages may be used to relay instructions from you to your lawyer. Your lawyer may also leave messages for you with a legal assistant. When schedules do not permit

one-on-one contact between yourself and your lawyer, the legal assistant is an invaluable tool to ensure that the lines of communication between lawyer and client remain open and effective.

17. If an emergency arises in relation to your file, please do not leave a voicemail message. Please speak directly to one of the legal assistants.
18. Voicemail has changed the way business is conducted. It allows us to actually conduct business through messages, sometimes even back and forth. We hope you will use our system this way to ensure the smooth and prompt progress of your case.
19. It is very helpful to us, and is also in your financial interest, if you indicate the purpose of your call with any message. For example, if you are calling for a status report or want to know if we have received a particular document from the other party, the assistant can probably give you the information you need. Therefore, you may wish to speak to the lawyer's assistant first. Remember, though, that the assistants are not lawyers and, therefore, cannot give you legal advice.
20. Our lawyers are routinely involved in litigation and are often in court. When they are in court, and particularly, when they are involved in a trial, it is not possible for them to return telephone calls. An assistant will deal with your enquiries during such times.
21. There is a cost to you for every contact you have with your lawyer, so it is in your financial interest to make your contact with us valuable to both you and the firm. You should think of telephone calls with us as though they were long distance calls, for which you are billed by the minute. Where possible, minimize the contact you have with your lawyer unless the purpose of your contact can only be satisfied by a discussion with the lawyer.

22. Organize yourself before you phone and ensure you have all the information you need available for the telephone call. Also, consider taking notes during your meetings and telephone calls with your lawyer. This is common sense and good business practice.

### **LEGAL AID ONTARIO CERTIFICATES**

23. If you are a client who has retained one of our lawyers pursuant to a Legal Aid Certificate, all practices set out in this information package apply to your file. One distinction to note, however, is that your lawyer's hourly rate is prescribed by Legal Aid Ontario and our accounts are submitted directly to Legal Aid Ontario for payment on your behalf.

### **PERSONNEL**

24. Below is a list of the professional and support staff in our law firm:

#### **Lawyers:**

Ronald F.B. Woynarski

Business Law, Wills and Estate Planning

Megan Reilkoff

Family Law, Civil Litigation, Wills and Powers of Attorney

#### **Law Clerks:**

Barb & Carol

#### **Legal Assistants:**

Laura

### **ACCOUNTS**

25. If you have questions about our accounts, please feel free to contact us.
26. The more work you do for yourself, the less work you will need done by your lawyer. If

you can save time for your lawyer, it will save you money in fees.

27. Anytime you are giving your lawyer a collection of documents, such as court documents or financial documents, it is in your financial interest to put those documents in chronological order and to prepare an index or list of the material you are giving us. This will reduce the amount of time that we will have to spend to organize the material for you, which is the first thing we will do when we receive the documents.
28. Come to meetings with your lawyer prepared, possibly with a list of questions or subject areas you need to discuss.

### **YOUR LAWYER'S ROLE**

29. Your lawyer will provide leadership to you in a difficult time by providing legal direction to you, by identifying and helping you understand your legal options, and by identifying and minimizing legal risks. You will make the decisions: your lawyer will act upon your instructions. This will help you experience ever-increasing confidence and independence as you work through legal challenges and personal difficulties, as the case may be.

### **THE CONDUCT OF YOUR CASE**

30. Most of our clients do not want to litigate their case in court and would prefer to negotiate a settlement. In many instances, negotiations result in cost-effective solutions. However, settlement is not always possible. Some long negotiations end up costing more than court proceedings. If, after several months of negotiation, no progress is being made, we will start a court proceeding on your behalf. This is a tactical decision that your lawyer makes.

### **FILE TRANSFERS**

31. If you are transferring your file to us from another lawyer, it will be necessary for us to review the correspondence and documentation provided and ensure that it is complete and organized. You will be billed for this time

spent and for any time spent organizing the material received. You can minimize this expense by making sure that the material from your previous lawyer is put in chronological order.

32. If you are transferring your file to another lawyer from us, you need to remember that we will have already sent you copies of all letters and court documents during the time that we were working for you. You should keep all of the documents that we send you, as this may make such a transfer to another lawyer more quick and economical. If you have not kept the copies that we sent you, we will provide you with electronic copies of the correspondence between solicitors and court documents, and will return to you any original documents that you provided us with. You will be billed for the time involved in preparing the file for transfer. If we have to make additional paper copies of material we have already sent you, you will be billed for that as well.

discussions unless you have given your lawyer specific written instructions to permit that discussion to take place. Also, since the time spent by your lawyer will be time spent on your file, you will be billed for any time spent discussing your case with anyone at your request or in the context of your file.

#### **PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION**

33. You must provide us with two original and valid forms of identification, including one piece of photo identification. Valid forms of identification include a birth certificate, a social insurance card, a driver's license, a credit card, and a current passport. We will make a photocopy of your personal identification cards, which may be stored by us in electronic format indefinitely.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

34. All information you provide to our office is kept completely private and confidential. All the details of your case will be handled with the utmost confidentiality by the lawyers and support staff.
35. The privilege of confidentiality between solicitor and client belongs to you, the client. Therefore, it is up to the client, only, whether or not that confidentiality may be waived. We are frequently contacted by new partners or other family members or friends who want to discuss your case. We will not entertain such