

The Hybrid Office

The past eighteen months have been challenging, to say the least. Brought on by the need to stay safe during this pandemic, changes to our day-to-day work lives have compelled us to be creative and flexible in how we approach our job tasks.



Working remotely replaced working in the office for some of us, and others have shifted to a hybrid model of remote work for a few days a week and in-office work for a few days a week. As office admins, paralegals, and legal office staffers seek safe working arrangements, we found that hybrid models grant legal offices the flexibility needed to navigate public health concerns while maintaining productivity and preserving client care. We spoke with some of you over the last few weeks to understand the perks and drawbacks of remote work; here's what we learned.

-- As some folks transitioned to remote work, others needed to continue using the office to work on cases and to draw from case files located on site. Access to materials is crucial, so a hybrid blend of 80% on-site and 20% remote work has worked out best for those we spoke with. With fewer employees on-site each day, those who do rely on in-office resources encounter fewer people on site and reduce their chances of exposure. Employers say they feel good about being able to offer work arrangements that keep their employees safer.

-- Meetings that had previously been conducted in large rooms with many attendees are occurring virtually, allowing on-site participants to attend from their individual offices along with remote workers. Remote courtrooms have similarly reduced exposures, although the value of on-site physical presence in courtrooms has become clearer in response to concerns about legal rights and equity, such as inconsistent access to adequate online connectivity for defendants. As participation in pandemic risk mitigation efforts increase, more courtroom activities will likely return to in-person.

-- Face-to-face interactions impact client relations, and the personal relationships that build and strengthen a legal practice are more difficult to develop using remote technologies. We're noticing how much of our interactions with clients, vendors, and colleagues has been fueled by the energy we cultivate in face-to-face, and Zoom meetings don't replace the connections we make in person.

-- Hybrid and remote employees have benefitted from having more control over their time, and in many cases, having more time in each work day. Cutting out the commute grants people a lot of extra time and reduces a major stressor at the start of each remote work day. Throughout the day, employees are finding more space to rest while maintaining their productivity levels. Employees noted that they enjoyed the autonomy that remote work brings, finding an increase in their abilities to problem solve independently. Control over cleaning protocols has reduced stress levels by knowing that the remote work environment is clean, that the air is filtered and flowing, and that the risk of exposure is reduced.

We learned from speaking to legal staffers that a hybrid blend of 60-80% on-site and 20-40% remote work seems to be a viable solution for the foreseeable future. Amidst the upheaval of the pandemic, we all have the opportunity to assess what functions best for you, your team, and your colleagues. If we keep listening to each other and finding creative ways to accommodate our needs, our work environments will continue to improve. We want to hear from you! How do you prefer to work?

Quarterly Newsletter from NorthStar Legal, Inc.

NorthStar Legal, Inc. is excited to present to you our quarterly newsletter, **POLARIS!**

Since early times, navigators have used Polaris, also called the North Star, to guide them towards their destinations. At NorthStar Legal, Inc., our goal is to assist you in navigating your hiring process.

A Note From the Editor

As the Fall begins, I start to remember more things that I love about Florida. For me, the beaches are for cooling off during those wickedly hot, summer days. The weather, now that is my Fall. The crisp, dry, comfortable air makes me want to go outside and appreciate my surroundings. But, the changes are what stay constant. Isn't it ironic? (*Don't you think?*)

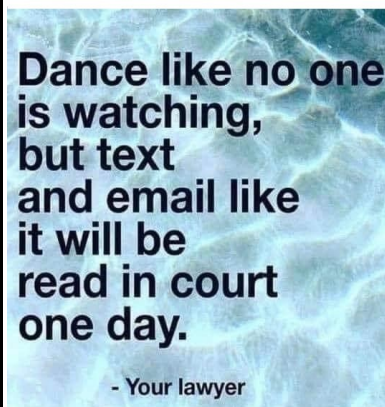
My opinion about those forced to work remotely during this pandemic is that it forced people to think outside the box. I like that. Switch things up. Try something different. Some found that it didn't work. Some found that they thrived. All in all, we learned something by trying something different. Remember this. We love your input. Do you have a subject that you would like us to bring to light? Please get in touch with us! We love giving back!

-Jennifer Magnusson, President, COO



Calendar of Events for October 2021

10/01 World Vegetarian	10/04 National TACO DAY!!!! (<i>on a Monday nonetheless!</i>)
10/05 World TEACHER'S Day	10/10 World Mental Health Day
10/11 International Day of the Girl	10/21 Conflict Resolution Day
10/15 BOSS'S DAY!!!	10/23 PARALEGAL'S DAY!!!
10/17 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty	10/31 ALL HALLOW'S EVE or Halloween!





**NORTHSTAR
LEGAL**  ©

**Maitland, FL 32751
www.northstar-legal.com**

555 Winderley Place, Suite 300

