

CALLSHIFT

Law Firm Client Intake & Responsiveness Audit

A practical self-assessment for evaluating how prospective-client inquiries are received, handled, followed up and measured.

Built for practical use

Use this audit to test the systems behind your intake process - not simply to rate how the process feels. Verify actual phone coverage, web-form routing, ownership, follow-up, consultation handoffs and measurement.

Firm / Practice

Completed by

Audit date

Free practice-management resource

Prepared by CallShift | callshift.pro/resources | No registration required

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to use this audit

This workbook is designed to be completed by a managing lawyer, administrator, intake lead or small practice team. The most useful answers come from testing the process directly rather than relying on assumptions.

1. Test before you score

- Call the firm during business hours and, where relevant, after hours. Note what a prospective client actually experiences.
- Submit a test inquiry through the website and confirm where it goes, who receives it and how quickly it is acknowledged.
- Review voicemail, shared inboxes, chat/SMS routing and staff coverage during absences or high-volume periods.
- Pull a sample of recent inquiries and verify whether outcomes and follow-up were recorded.

2. Score each criterion

Score	Rating	Use when...
2	Established	The practice is defined, consistently followed and can be verified.
1	Partial	A process exists but is informal, inconsistent, incomplete or not measured.
0	Gap	No reliable process exists, or the firm cannot verify that it is followed.
N/A	Not applicable	The criterion genuinely does not apply to the firm.

3. Calculate the overall percentage

Scoring formula

Points earned ÷ (2 × number of applicable criteria) × 100. Exclude items marked N/A from the denominator. Use the percentage as a directional indicator - the evidence and action plan matter more than the number.

Audit snapshot

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Overall %
_____	_____	_____	_____

Important: This audit is a general practice-management resource. It is not legal, ethical, cybersecurity or professional-responsibility advice. Firms should adapt intake procedures to applicable rules, obligations, practice areas and jurisdictions.

SECTION 1 OF 6

Accessibility & Coverage

Confirm that prospective clients can reach the firm through the channels it offers - and that those channels are actually monitored.

#	Audit criterion	Established (2)	Partial (1)	Gap (0)	N/A
1	Our main phone number is answered or reliably routed during advertised business hours.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	The firm has a defined process for calls that arrive while staff are occupied or unavailable.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	After-hours calls receive an experience consistent with what the firm advertises or promises.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Voicemail greetings, instructions and routing are current, clear and tested.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Website forms, chat, email and other inquiry channels are periodically tested end to end.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Prospective clients receive clear information about what will happen after they contact the firm.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Verification checklist

- ☐ Business-hours phone test completed
- ☐ After-hours experience tested, if applicable
- ☐ Website form submitted and receipt confirmed
- ☐ Voicemail greeting and routing reviewed

Evidence / notes

Section result

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Section %
One improvement to carry forward Before moving on, identify the single change from this section that would most improve reliability or visibility in your intake process. 			

SECTION 2 OF 6

Response Standards & Routing

Determine whether the firm has clear expectations for how quickly and consistently new inquiries are acknowledged and routed.

#	Audit criterion	Established (2)	Partial (1)	Gap (0)	N/A
1	The firm has a defined response-time standard for each major inquiry channel.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Staff who handle intake know the response standards and understand when an inquiry is considered overdue.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	New inquiries are routed to a monitored person, queue or shared system rather than an individual inbox with no backup.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The firm has a backup process for lunch periods, meetings, vacations, illness and other coverage gaps.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	High-priority or time-sensitive inquiries have a defined escalation path.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	The firm can verify whether response standards were actually met for a sample of recent inquiries.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Verification checklist

- ☐ Written or documented response targets located
- ☐ Shared inbox / routing reviewed
- ☐ Backup coverage tested
- ☐ Five recent inquiries sampled for response time

Evidence / notes

Section result

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Section %
One improvement to carry forward Before moving on, identify the single change from this section that would most improve reliability or visibility in your intake process. 			

SECTION 3 OF 6

Ownership & Accountability

Make responsibility visible. Every new inquiry should have a clear owner, backup and next action.

#	Audit criterion	Established (2)	Partial (1)	Gap (0)	N/A
1	Each inquiry channel has a clearly identified primary owner.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Each inquiry channel has a clearly identified backup owner.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	New inquiries cannot remain indefinitely unassigned or without a next action.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Staff can determine who most recently contacted a prospective client and what happened.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Ownership remains clear when an inquiry moves from intake staff to a lawyer or another team member.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	There is a defined process for reviewing unresolved or aging inquiries.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Verification checklist

- ☐ Primary and backup owners named for each channel
- ☐ Unassigned / aging inquiry queue reviewed
- ☐ Handoff responsibility verified
- ☐ Current unresolved inquiries sampled

Evidence / notes

Section result

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Section %

One improvement to carry forward

Before moving on, identify the single change from this section that would most improve reliability or visibility in your intake process.

SECTION 4 OF 6

Follow-Up

Evaluate whether the firm follows a repeatable process when an otherwise appropriate prospective client does not respond immediately.

#	Audit criterion	Established (2)	Partial (1)	Gap (0)	N/A
1	The firm has a documented or consistently understood follow-up sequence for unanswered inquiries.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Follow-up timing and number of attempts are appropriate to the practice area and inquiry type.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Permitted communication channels are used consistently and thoughtfully when follow-up is appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Each follow-up attempt and outcome is recorded in a place the team can access.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Staff know when to stop follow-up and how to record the final disposition.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Management can identify inquiries that received no successful contact or incomplete follow-up.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Verification checklist

- ☐ Follow-up sequence documented
- ☐ Sample of five unresponsive inquiries reviewed
- ☐ Final dispositions checked
- ☐ Incomplete follow-up cases identified

Evidence / notes

Section result

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Section %

One improvement to carry forward

Before moving on, identify the single change from this section that would most improve reliability or visibility in your intake process.

SECTION 5 OF 6

Consultation Handoff

Review what happens between successful contact and the point where the prospective client either retains the firm or exits the process.

#	Audit criterion	Established (2)	Partial (1)	Gap (0)	N/A
1	Qualified prospective clients can move to consultation scheduling without unnecessary handoffs or delays.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Consultation details, expectations and required information are clearly communicated to the prospective client.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Confirmation and reminder procedures are consistent for scheduled consultations.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The lawyer or consultation provider receives relevant intake information before the meeting.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Missed or cancelled consultations trigger a defined follow-up process where appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	The firm records whether consultations were attended and whether they resulted in a retained client or another disposition.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Verification checklist

- ☐ Consultation booking process tested
- ☐ Confirmation / reminder messages reviewed
- ☐ Pre-consultation handoff checked
- ☐ Missed-consultation workflow verified

Evidence / notes

Section result

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Section %
One improvement to carry forward Before moving on, identify the single change from this section that would most improve reliability or visibility in your intake process. 			

SECTION 6 OF 6

Measurement & Quality Assurance

Determine whether the firm can measure the full path from inquiry to retained client and use that information to improve the process.

#	Audit criterion	Established (2)	Partial (1)	Gap (0)	N/A
1	The firm can report the number of new prospective-client inquiries received in a defined period.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	The firm can report how many inquiries were successfully contacted and how quickly.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	The firm tracks consultations booked and consultations attended.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	The firm tracks how many consultations or qualified inquiries become retained clients.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	The firm records source and outcome information consistently enough to identify where opportunities are being lost.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Intake performance is reviewed on a recurring schedule and results lead to specific process improvements.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Verification checklist

- ☐ Last full month of inquiry volume located
- ☐ Response / contact performance located
- ☐ Consultation and retention outcomes located
- ☐ Recurring review owner and cadence confirmed

Evidence / notes

Section result

Points earned	Applicable items	Maximum points	Section %
One improvement to carry forward Before moving on, identify the single change from this section that would most improve reliability or visibility in your intake process. 			

TURN FINDINGS INTO ACTION

90-day intake improvement plan

Do not try to fix every gap at once. Select the three improvements that reduce the greatest operational risk, remove the most uncertainty or create the clearest measurement capability.

Overall status

Status	Score	Interpretation
Established	80-100%	Foundational processes are defined, tested and measured. Focus on consistency and incremental improvement.
Developing	60-79%	Core practices exist, but gaps, informal handoffs or inconsistent measurement remain.
At Risk	Below 60%	Multiple parts of intake rely on informal practice, unclear ownership or unverified follow-up.

My overall percentage: _____%

Status: ☐ Established ☐ Developing ☐ At Risk

Three priority improvements

Priority improvement	Owner	Target date	Success measure

Review cadence

Next review date	_____
Review owner	_____
Meeting / forum	_____
Evidence we will bring	_____

OPTIONAL MANAGEMENT COMPANION

Monthly intake scorecard

Use this page during a monthly practice-management review. The goal is not to create perfect reporting immediately; it is to make the client-intake journey visible enough to manage.

Metric	This month	Prior month	Target
New inquiries	_____	_____	_____
Successfully contacted	_____	_____	_____
Median / typical response time	_____	_____	_____
Consultations booked	_____	_____	_____
Consultations attended	_____	_____	_____
Retained clients	_____	_____	_____
Unresolved / aging inquiries	_____	_____	_____
Primary loss reason	_____	_____	_____

Questions for the review

- Where did the largest number of prospective clients stop progressing?
- Which inquiry channel had the slowest or least reliable response?
- Were there any inquiries with unclear ownership or incomplete follow-up?
- What is one process change we will test before the next review?

Management notes

Continue the assessment

For a faster diagnostic, firms can also use the free Law Firm Intake Score at callshift.pro/resources. This audit is designed to complement that score by documenting evidence, ownership and corrective action.

Prepared by CallShift | callshift.pro/resources