

COVID-19'S IMPACT ON THE MARYLAND LEGAL PROFESSION IN 2020

Prepared For
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Best Employee Surveys
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Background And Objectives

This report presents the findings of an online survey among 293 practicing attorneys who are members of the Maryland ABA.

Best Employee Surveys conducted the research for The Maryland Daily Record and the Maryland ABA.

The survey examines the ways in which the Covid-19 pandemic has affected law practices in the State of Maryland.

The survey was conducted from May 10 through June 25, 2021.

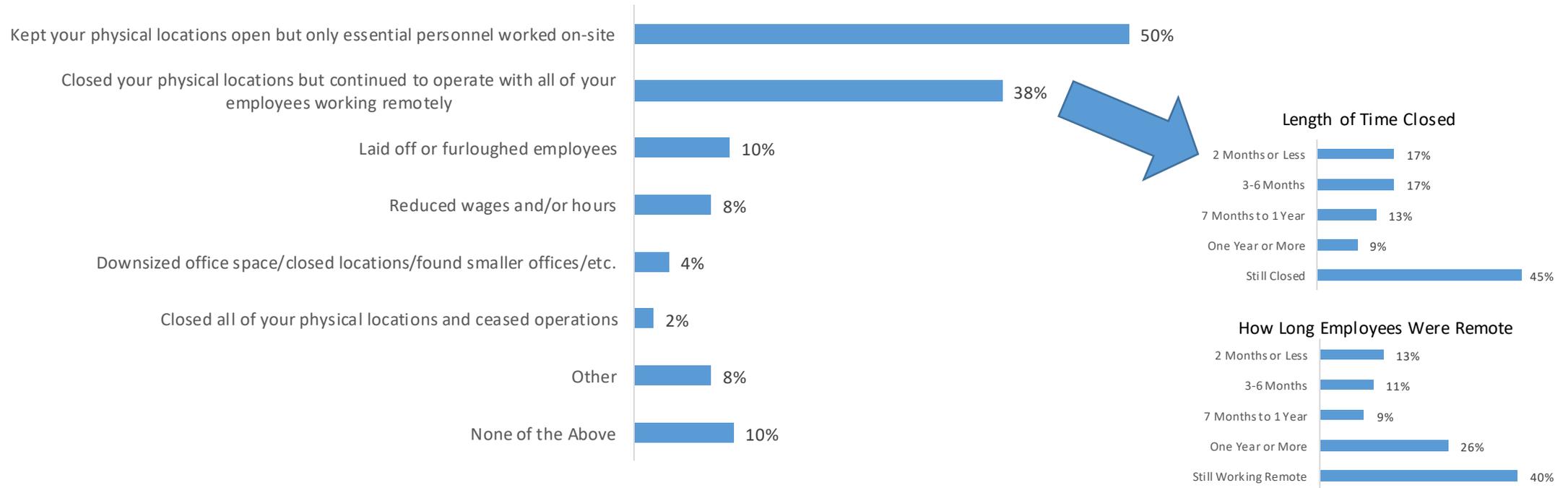
Survey results are projectable to the Maryland ABA membership at the 95% level of confidence. The margin of error is +/- 6%.

Key Findings

- Covid-19 caused over one third of MD law firms to close their offices for at least part of 2020. Almost half of those firms' lawyers have yet to return to the office. Overall, more than one in three lawyers that started working at home during the pandemic are still working from home.
- The most common safety precautions taken during the Covid-19 pandemic include:
 - Limit in-person client meetings
 - Permit employees to work from home when ill or symptomatic
 - Require social distancing at all times
 - Mandate that masks be worn at all times (excluding time at desk)
 - Sanitize/disinfect all offices/locations on a daily basis
- The pandemic's biggest impact on practicing law have been reducing the number of in-person client meetings, more delays, and more video depositions.
- More than one-third of the attorneys said that the pandemic had a larger impact on caseloads. More than one third of attorneys said that their caseloads have decreased and 39% of those who saw a decrease claimed their caseload fell by 50% or more in 2020.
- When asked what lasting impacts of Covid-19 will have on the legal profession, virtually all attorneys acknowledged remote client meetings. More than half signal remote document signings, remote staffs, more flexible hours, and video depositions.

Once Covid-19 was declared a pandemic (March 2020), half of Maryland law firms (50%) stayed open while 38% closed their physical locations. Almost half (45%) of those firms remain closed and 40% of all Maryland law firms still have employees working remotely.

Few firms reduced wages, cut hours or downsized their office space.



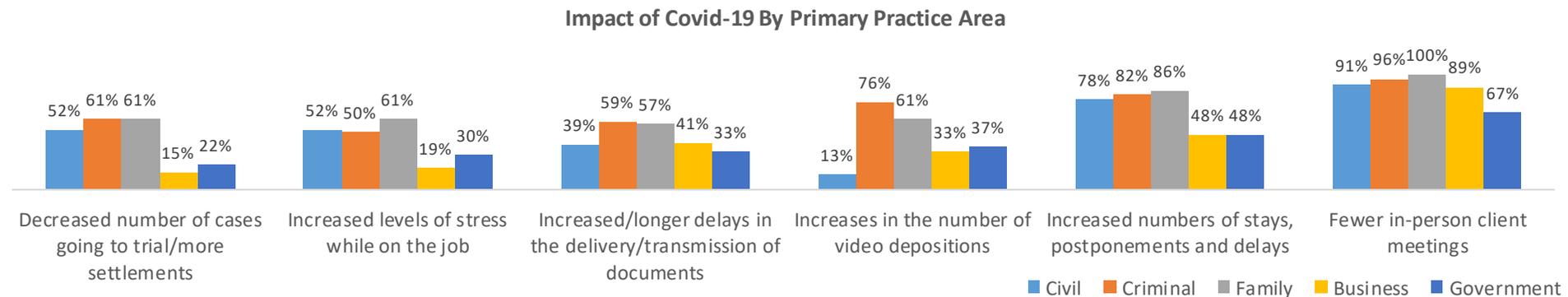
Most Maryland law firms that kept their physical locations open limited in-person client meetings (67%), permitted employees to work from home when symptomatic/ill (64%), required social distancing (61%) and masks (56%), and sanitized their facilities daily (56%).

Safety Precautions Taken As A Result of Covid-19 Pandemic (multiple responses accepted)	Total
Respondents whose firms had employees working at least one of its physical locations	118
Limit in-person client meetings	67%
Permit employees to work from home when ill or symptomatic	64%
Require social distancing at all times	61%
Mandate that masks be worn at all times (excluding time at desk)	56%
Sanitize/disinfect all offices/locations on a daily basis	56%
Limit the number of people allowed in any enclosed area (e.g. floor, office, elevator, restroom, building)	38%
Request that all employees get the Covid-19 vaccine	34%
Limit the number of employees allowed at a work location at one time	33%
Return employees to work at your firm's physical locations in phases	30%
Mandate that masks be worn at all times (including time at desk)	24%
Require physical distancing – desks and workspaces placed further apart	24%
Temperature screening for all who enter the workplace	20%
Erect plastic shields around workspaces/desks	19%
Business Travel Restrictions (e.g., no out-of-state travel, quarantining after out-of-state travel)	19%
Personal Travel Restrictions (e.g., no out-of-state travel, quarantining after out-of-state travel)	16%
Increase sick time allotment to ensure employees stay at home when sick	14%
Eliminate conference rooms	12%
Request masks be worn at all times (excluding time at desk)	11%
Require employees to wash their hands before starting work	11%
Require Covid-19 testing for employees prior to returning to work	8%
Require that all employees get the Covid-19 vaccine	8%
Prohibit employees from sharing food	8%
Request masks be worn at all times (including time at desk)	6%
Require Covid-19 testing for all clients who visit your firm's physical locations	1%

Almost 90% of the Maryland law firms experienced fewer in-person client meetings (89%). 68% experienced increased delays, while about half mention increased video depositions (51%), more delays in document transmission or delivery (49%), increased on-the-job stress (44%), or fewer cases going to trial (43%).

- Fewer in person meetings were a constant across practice areas. Law firms that primarily practiced in Government and Business were significantly less likely to experience these changes

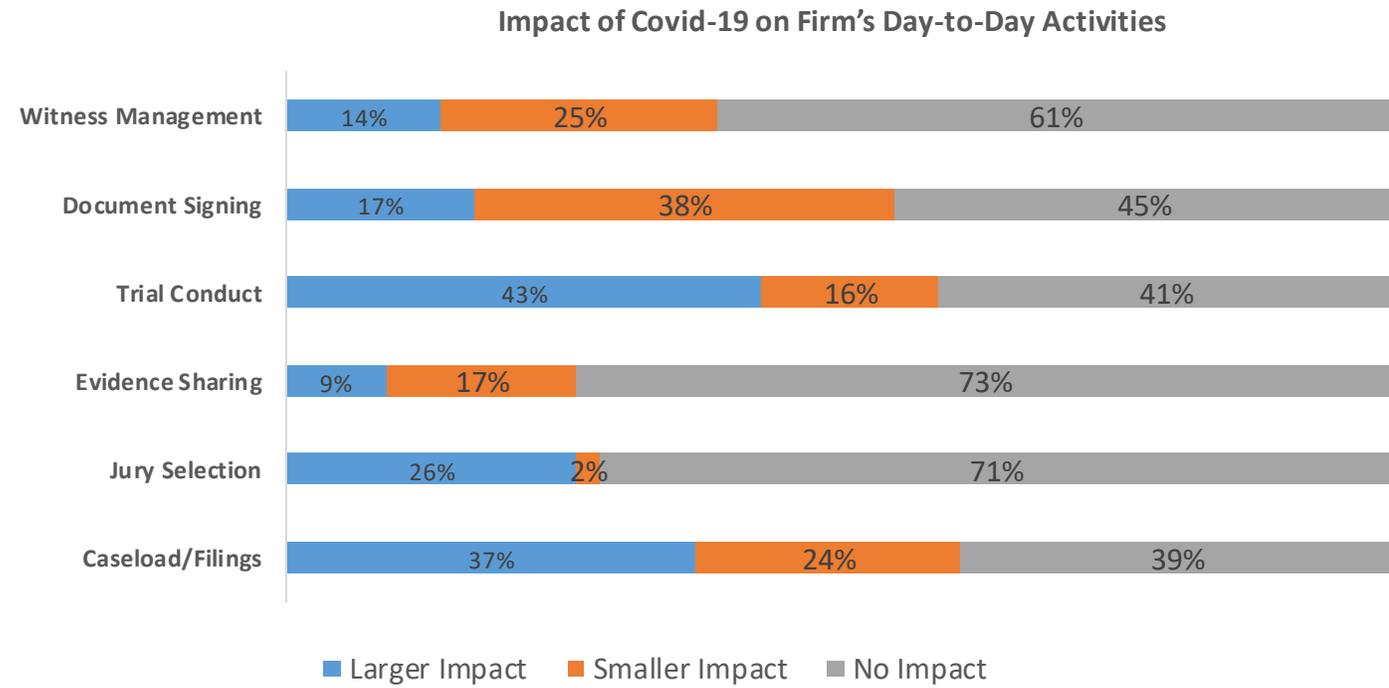
Impact Of Covid-19 Pandemic On Aspects Of The Legal Profession		Total
Total Answering		255
Fewer in-person client meetings		89%
Increased numbers of stays, postponements and delays		68%
Increases in the number of video depositions		51%
Increased/longer delays in the delivery/transmission of documents		49%
Increased levels of stress while on the job		44%
Decreased number of cases going to trial/more settlements		43%
Other		8%
None of the above		3%



Q4. The Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted industries in other ways as well. Please review and indicate which of the following you have experienced during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

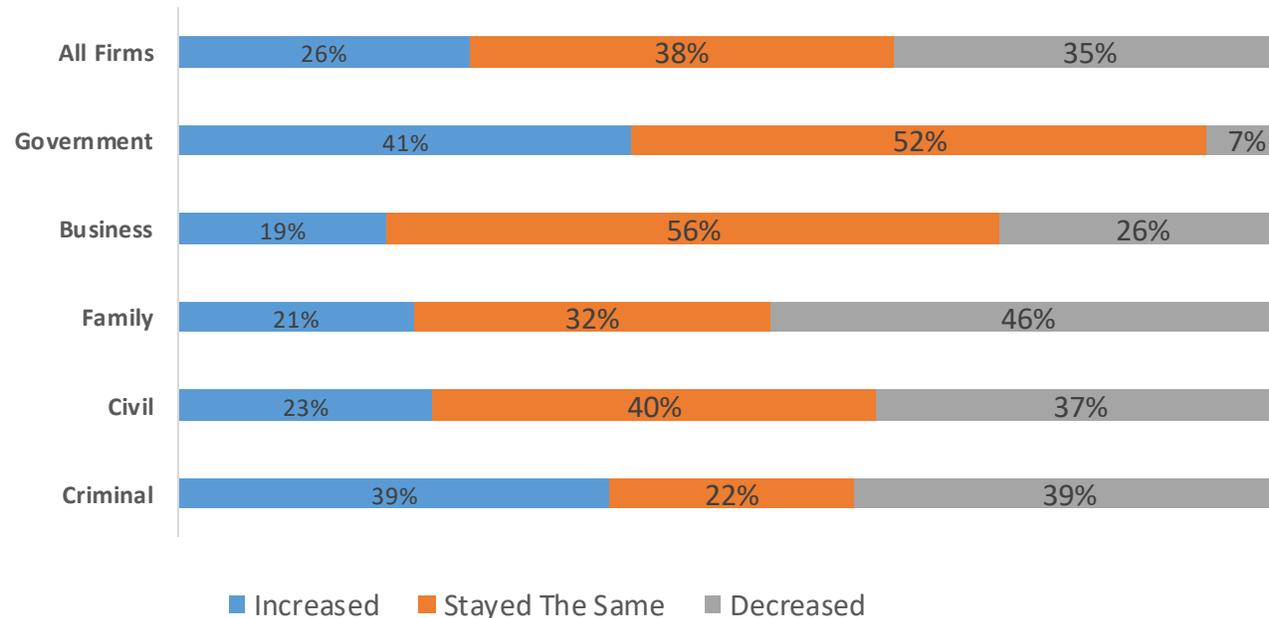
Total Answering 255
Caution Small Bases

Covid-19 had the most impact on Trial Conduct and Caseload. It had little or no impact on Evidence Sharing and Jury Selection. The impact on caseload was felt most strongly by firms that primarily practiced Civil, Criminal and Family Law.



More than one-third of the Maryland law firms (35%) noted that their caseloads declined during 2020, while approximately one in four firms (26%) experienced an increase.

Impact of Covid-19 on 2020 Caseload

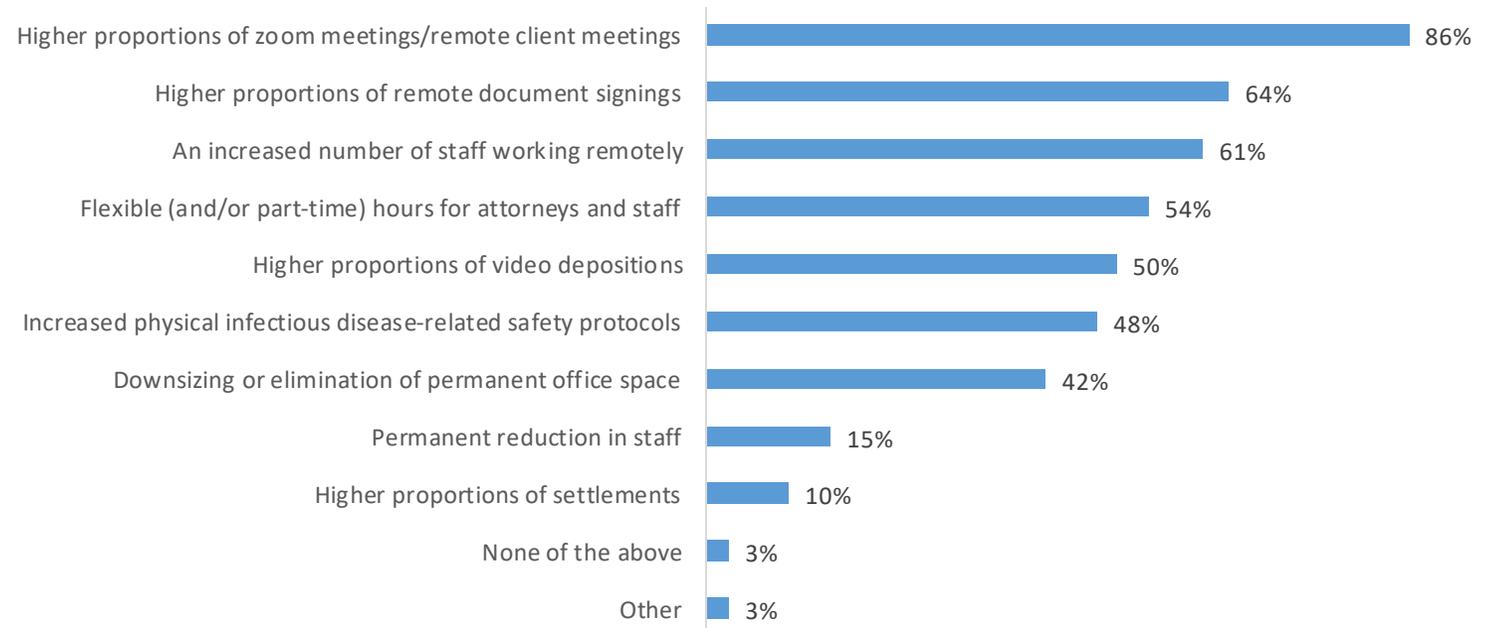


Amount of Increase (%)	Total
Total whose caseload increased	67
1%-19%	24%
20-29%	34%
30-49%	16%
50% or more	25%

Amount of Decrease (%)	Total
Total whose caseload decreased	90
1%-19%	18%
20-29%	23%
30-49%	20%
50% or more	39%

Most Maryland lawyers expect to conduct more of their business using non-in-person methods. They also expect to have more staff working remotely and working flexible or part-time hours.

The New Normal: Expectations for 2021



Law Firm Demographics

Primary Practice Area	Total
Total Responding	254
Civil	36%
Other	22%
Family	11%
Business Law	11%
Government	11%
Criminal	9%

Practice Areas	Total
Total Responding	147
Personal Injury/Accidents	37%
Business Law	37%
Other	37%
Family Law	26%
Estate Planning and Trusts	24%
Workman's	14%
Compensation/Employment Issues	10%
Civil Rights/Civil Liberties	10%
Health Issues	6%
Copyrights and Patents	5%
Consumer Rights	3%
Environmental or Energy Law	3%
Immigration	3%

Primarily Practice In . . .	Total
Total Responding	253
<u>Baltimore Metro</u>	60%
Baltimore City	26%
Baltimore County	18%
Anne Arundel County	10%
Howard County	5%
Carroll County	1%
<u>Washington Metro</u>	31%
Montgomery County	20%
Prince George's County	9%
Calvert County	1%
Charles County	*
<u>Other</u>	9%
Harford County	3%
Saint Mary's County	2%
Frederick County	1%
Garrett County	1%
Talbot County	1%
Wicomico County	1%
Allegany County	*
Washington County	*

*Less than 0.5%

Number Of Lawyers in Firm	Total
Total Responding	254
1	33%
2	11%
3	6%
4	7%
5	6%
6-10	10%
11-25	10%
26-50	6%
51 or More	12%

Respondent Demographics

Gender	Total
Total Responding	291
Female	39%
Male	43%
Non-binary	1%
Prefer not to answer	18%

Ethnicity	Total
Total Responding	254
Black/African American	8%
Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial	2%
Hispanic/Latino	3%
White/Caucasian	75%
Prefer not to answer	11%

Years in Practice	Total
Total Responding	254
5 years or fewer	8%
6-9	7%
10-14	11%
15-19	10%
20-24	12%
25-29	13%
30-34	12%
35-39	9%
40-49	15%
50 or more	3%

Age	Total
Total Responding	237
25-40	17%
41-59	46%
60 or older	37%

Appendix: Responses To Open-End Questions

Reasons For Increased Stress At The Law Firm

1. It is much easier to have productive conversations, interrogatory answers, intakes, and all such matters in person than remotely.
 2. Insurance companies offered less money to settle, daring us to file suit because they knew that litigation would proceed at a snail's pace, if at all.
 3. With no trials or the threat of upcoming trials, cases weren't settled, i.e., frustrated clients and no income for me.
 4. I have 75%-80% fewer new cases since the pandemic started because there has been less traffic, so fewer accidents. The financial stress is becoming extreme.
- Adjusting to new ways of doing business; temporary reduction in income to practice; need to obtain PPP loans to keep all employees; scheduling difficulties with courts and trial cancelled, rescheduled; double booking through 2023 of court calendars in order of take care of backlog
- As a result of delays and inability to hold scheduled trials, created adverse financial impact on firm
- Case loads are extremely high, nothing is being resolved, the ASA's are offering horrible plea bargains, there is no negotiation process, and our clients are still being infected with COVID at the pretrial facilities holding them.
- Cases in litigation became stagnant. Negotiations on cases not yet in suit became stalled
- Cases were not progressing forward through the court causing clients to be upset with delays, less hourly billing resulted in lower earnings, general stress of the pandemic regarding worry about contracting the virus etc
- Cash flow / revenue.
- Change in routine caused a great deal of stress.
- Clients are frustrated with delays, no one is paying their bills, and my rent is still due.
- Clients were more stressed due to delays that were beyond my control thus causing more stress on the job
- Concern for safety of staff and clients, decrease in new client intakes
- Concern for the health of staff and their families.
- Concerned about the timeliness of things because of pervasive delays, also I developed a sort of paralysis regarding work, had a hard time prioritizing and/or completing it (I'd start and then just kind of stare at it for hours....)
- Concerns about billable hours; concerns about delays in litigation; concerns about potential pay reduction prior to PPP loans
- Concerns about client and employee safety.
- concerns about infecting others and contracting the virus
- Concerns about money and long term health of the firm. I've been a solo for over 10 years and am aged out from being attractive to bigger firms if I have to seek employment if my firm shuts down.
- Constant change; directives from the Maryland Judiciary were incomplete and confusing; communications from state courts were poor; combination of state workers/court personnel working remotely and MDEC increased our workload substantially
- Constantly on call. No break between work and home life.
- courts in nonelectronic and partially electronic jurisdictions became unresponsive
- Deadlines continued in some contexts, and had to be completely restructured in others, but created constant worry. All the adrenaline of trial and camaraderie face to face practice dried up, leaving little to balance the grind.
- Dealing with daily and sometimes minute to minute changes in "proper" operating procedures for the safety of our workforce and our customers and dealing with the HR fallout of those policies was particularly stressful.
- Dealing with family commitments, kids at home, and trying to work.
- Dealing with irate clients because their divorce cases cannot get trial dates, or trial dates are postponed, or scheduled a year away.
- Decrease in personal injury settlements and court closures increased stress around payroll and cash flow.
- Decrease income and increase frequency with which clients are upset at the delays in their cases.

Reasons For Increased Stress At The Law Firm

Delayed documents and delayed hearings caused increased stress for attorneys to continue handling projects, matters, and litigation. Increased anxiety and stress working remotely - additional efforts required to maintain levels of communication with members of the law office and client.

Delays in receiving documents
Ineptitude if the postal service
Loss of income

Difficulties with technology. No reduction in need or amount of workload; however, a reduction in resources and staff. Working became more difficult and cumbersome, at the same and then increased pace. Personal issues related to pandemic, stress; but clients honestly had more time to focus on family matters, so more time to fuss and fight.

doing all remote work and handling all aspects of office from home

Doing two full time jobs at once. My attorney job and full time 5th grade teacher.

Drop in business, setting up the technology for office to home-office connections.

Due to delay in cases getting resolve in court there are twice as many clients to deal with and keep happy, all of whom expect immediate attention, all the time. Clients seem more anxious and demanding than usual.

Easier to see clients in person and more back and forth to get all documents and lower ability to assess potential clients for whether I wanted to take their case. I like to meet my clients in person

Employees slacking off, not working as much or as productively

everything took more time and some new procedures were bothersome and time consuming

Feeling pressure to return to work earlier than I was comfortable with; a few coworkers (one staff and one attorney) tested positive and we had to re-quarantine the office for a few weeks.

Fewer cases resolving but a lot of new cases coming in have increased workloads. I have worked fully remotely since March 2020 and have zero work life balance particularly with children home doing virtual school. I'm never fully home and never fully at work.

Figuring out new technology and how to make existing technology work; dealing with unexpected postponements and delays; reduced income; longer remote court hearings because of technological issues; having to lay off staff; having to apply for PPP loans and understanding how they work; handling the unemployment claims; figuring out how to resume work; fear that physical interactions with clients, staff, court personnel increased risk of contracting COVID-19; understanding all of the different court rulings setting forth court policies dealing with COVID-19; mail delays.

Furloughs, the company took Earned PTO from every employee which caused 25% to leave, new employees were not hired, instead people got increased workloads without increased compensation. Without any PTO or paid sick leave for almost a year, I was forced to work sick or lose money - extremely stressful. Due to poor management, also looking for a new career opportunity plus working with this substantially increased workload.

Greater need for my services as an estate attorney. Zoom fatigue. More work for attorney because support staff could not work in the office.

Handling the various personalities and attitudes and lack of patience of customers and having to revamp how real estate closings are handled. Buyers and sellers signing separately, restricting number of people in office and attending closings including agents and loan officers attending.

having to keep the ship afloat when so much was unknown during the first couple of months

Having to manage a lot of the in-office operations myself because there are no employees on site other than myself.

Health concerns for attorneys who rely on public transportation but were required to work in the office.

health concerns going to court
no contact with co-workers
pressure from court to resolve cases
increasing backlog of cases
health concerns visiting clients in jail

I am an estate planning attorney, and my workload increased greatly. Clients had time to address estate planning needs, and were, perhaps, feeling more vulnerable.

I appeared for out of state case owners at Social Security disability hearings. When SSA closed, my business was eliminated because out of state case owners were able to conduct phone hearings from their remote locations.

I had multiple deaths of close family members simultaneously.

I normally worked from home and had office space to meet clients. Now I am working from home with two children here, and I have to make arrangements to leave for work reasons. My income has also been dramatically affected.

Reasons For Increased Stress At The Law Firm

I would prefer not to answer.

Inability to earn income because of closings, fewer clients because of COVID, fewer billing hours because of remote hearings- all added inordinate amounts of stress

Inability to process cases through the courthouse, land records and register of wills, caused stress since open matters could not be resolved/finished/closed.

income

Increased client demands for access 24/7; less work life balance

Inefficiency and shift of clerical work from staff to attorneys due to fewer clerical staff in workplace. Personal tension due to uneven compliance with social distancing, mask wearing, more stringent hygiene etc.

It is more difficult to collaborate while working remotely causing reduction in productivity. In addition, home and work life balance was hard to maintain while working from home.

It's a bit difficult/different to work from home without office resources (printing, copying, etc). Also, getting used to doing virtual depositions, hearing, etc

Job stress increased because managers think that because you are "at home" you should be working 24 hours a day. This is a microcosm of the larger problem that lawyers are not sufficiently trained in management.

Lack of effective communication between more senior attorneys and the pressure to return to the office even when there are not many safety precautions in place.

Layoffs, decreased revenue

LEARNING ZOOM. And added stress having to interact with clients for ALL day trials - they were IN my office.

Less in person meant harder to resolve issues

Loss of clients and fees.

Managing stress of remote trials and ever-changing court schedules and balancing work-from-home life with regular home life

Many of my clients were negatively affected by the pandemic and therefore there was a work surge, that was difficult to manage. Also, everyone was nervous about meetings or coming to the workplace (which was necessary at least some of the time).

Many of these "restrictions" were unnecessary overkill, and made everything more difficult.

More work related to Covid and fall-out initially, then more work due to courts and agencies opening up again at the same time, doing all work without support staff on-site, being on call all the time when working from home and needing to show I am working/productivity, etc.

Mostly anxiety about themselves or their family, and whether/when full work would return

Moving from a "paper" world to an electronic existence was not an easy roll out, so lawyers and staff alike had to deal with the change.

My supervisors were not understanding at all about child care/school closure issues.

Needing to keep up with the ever changing Orders coming out to know what was going on procedurally for the State as whole, but also each County was doing thing differently, so it was hard to properly manage client expectations if we ourselves didn't really know what to expect. Delays and COVID related matters also made it hard to advise clients.

No change in the expectation of your required billable hours despite less work, increase daily stress, and the ever changing state of turmoil in the United States.

No comment.

No trial dates for criminal clients and knowing 2021 would be a summer full of jury trials

Not knowing if cases were getting postponed = stress about physically going to court. Stress in meeting with clients, almost all of whom had covid at various points in the year

Reasons For Increased Stress At The Law Firm

Not limited to on the job. The anxiety caused by all the effort required not to die from COVID19 while living in the time of coronavirus is challenging.

paying for personal protective equipment with fewing fees and clients coming in; contracts for business rentals stayed the same, but clients revenue decreased dramatically; laying off staff was very tough

People were uncomfortable in common areas, or passing people in the hallways. One way travel instituted made movement more complex.

Pressure to return to the office based on partners being vaccinated before younger lawyers or any staff were eligible to become vaccinated. Partner assumption that in person is better than remote. Lack of empathy for employees with caregiving responsibilities. Lack of aybeffort to create alternative social interactions for the firm that was not specifically task related.

Productivity down, billable hours down, and fewer new cases coming in monthly for a year while overhead stayed the same financial concerns and difficult to plan for 2021 - 2022 staffing etc.

Reduced cash flow. Many clients had limited internet access making video meetings difficult. Co workers refusing to follow any protocols

Self reports of stress related conditions increased

Significant reduction in income. Frustrated clients take them out on their attorneys occasionally. Inconsistent responses to the pandemic by the judiciary and from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Significant uncertainty and the Courts are now forcing scheduling issues. This is causing massive scheduling problems, cancelled family trips/events, and relying on others to work on cases.

Technology glitches

technology issues, remote client meetings, increased caseloads that piled up as hearings were postponed

The appellate courts never ceased operations. In the beginning of the pandemic, the expectation was that we would continue to meet filing deadlines. This was extremely stressful especially as we were transitioning to remote work and with the schools closing and kids moving to virtual learning.

The Court system is a mess. Judges are out of control twisting arms and making rulings to force settlements, Clerks are making up new rules, Estates are being filed, opened and accepted that should never be, cases are being postponed into oblivion and prosecutors are dismissing cases out of what appears to be sheer laziness.

The demand was greater while working with less. It was difficult for support staff to truly support the attorneys and we worked long days often 7 days a week. Unfortunately, the caseloads increased and were/are even higher than pre-pandemic.

The difficulty in trying to balance the needs of the clients and the abilities to cope with the demands required to meet those needs

The economy faltered and our business decreased

The inability to personally interact with others and the stress of being confined to my home for extended periods of time increased my stress level. Also, the increased time it took to perform simple job functions due to not having access to client files added to the levels of stress.

The stress associated with my medical malpractice defense practice increased due to uncertainty regarding limited ability to contact with clients and expert witnesses, and scheduling trial and expert depositions in cases where our clients and medical experts were and are treating patients with COVID-19.

The uncertainty of the virus coupled with losing negotiation leverage with no trials.

The workday never ended!

There were decreased revenues and employee production as a result of the pandemic which translated into on the job stress. In addition the following issues increased on the job stress: ensuring that employees were safe in the office and that cleaning, social distancing, and mask wearing protocols were in place; dealing with issues surrounding employees who contracted COVID; understanding and implementing new federal leave laws at the outset of the pandemic; advising small business clients who were forced to shut down their businesses during the pandemic; and dealing with employees who refuse vaccines.

trying to get a actual trial

trying to keep up on billing with no court appearances, meeting with people that needed to meet in person-

Unable to get cases before a judge and therefore achieve equitable results for our clients when dealing with unreasonable adverse parties and counsel

Uncertainty about the security of my employment due to extended court closures. I'm a litigator. When courts pushed their second closure out from mid-April 2020 to fall 2020, I got nervous my job wouldn't see a way to keep me on. I was lucky to work for a large firm with the resources to ride out the uncertainty. Remote court appearances helped, but it was very hard to adequately prep clients or have matters heard on the merits in any sort of timely manner. Clients were all extremely anxious and irritable. I practice divorce law, so I'm used to catching people in bad moods. But the past 18 months has been dealing with everyone at their worst.

Reasons For Increased Stress At The Law Firm

Uncertainty around safety when meeting with clients. Clients were unable to enforce custody agreements which made them very upset. Unable to go to court for contempt in some instances giving clients fewer options. Uncertainty around what the courts were doing with covid.

Unknowns re. timelines for cases, whether clients will be laid off, whether clients will pay, etc.

We had a juror test positive for COVID during a trial in October. We had economic distortions, including work flow distortions.

We had fewer new client cases, so earnings decreased significantly. PPP loans were very helpful as we had to pay rent until lease ended about 6 months after start of pandemic. My partner and I have decided to retire a year earlier than originally planned and are now moving toward full retirement. Luckily for us, we had already downsized somewhat before Covid so had been working mostly from home other than client meetings and court hearings and financially can afford to fully retire in a few months. Still stressful, but count ourselves very fortunate.

When going in to work the level of stress was higher because of the vigilance of being safe.

With the delay in transmission and receipt of documents, we've had to work longer hours some days to meet deadlines and the uncertainty involved can be stressful.

Worried about decline in income

Worry about disease

Worry about income and safety.

Worry concerning deadlines imposed by courts on submission of briefs, documents, etc. because of problems with delays in receipt of mail as well as delays in mail reaching proper destination. Also, concern for clients' safety/wellness during pandemic (one client died, and trying to explain impact of death on other family members legally)

Would there be enough income?

Zoom meetings are very intense.

Large Impact on Caseloads

A large part of my practice includes representing students with disabilities, who were disproportionately affected by the school closures and needed immediate or more help.

All my court filings stayed and postponed until Phase V

An increase.

At the beginning of the pandemic people were panicking and wanted to get their estate planning done asap. After the initial couple months, then my caseload slowed way down and I had very little new cases coming in.

Attorney volume of work increased

cannot see anyone face to face

Case delays

Cases get filed in court but no trial dates to get them off of my desk- I now have over 200 open files.

Caseloads are only going up, nothing is being resolved.

Cases are not resolving and new

Cases are coming in.

Cases are not resolving as they get continued and rescheduled so handling much larger caseload than usual

Cases are significantly down

Cases are way down.

cases remain open that would have resolved, with new cases being added (though slower in some ways).

Cases up 33%

Cases which would have proceeded to hearings or other events that would have prompted resolution by agreement or by disposition were postponed; cases in the pipeline backed up; discovery process greatly hampered by third parties' remote work and reduced staffing

continued to get more case assignments while older cases weren't concluding

continuing backlog of incoming cases

Couldn't even get cases filed in some counties

Counties that don't do e-filing have had major delays and huge administrative headaches in simply processing pleadings. It's also tougher to get cases started when you cannot bring a client in to sign.

Court closures and uncertainty caused us to enter longer than usual settlement negotiations in personal injury cases.

Court hearings were reduced @ 75%

courts closed, cases dried up

Courts were closed and moratoria on collection activities were implemented for unknown amounts of time, these continue.

Dealing with state and local legislative initiatives to address the crisis was exhausting and time consuming

Large Impact on Caseloads

Courts were closed for a long time

Courts were closed. Economic conditions

Crime continued and some cases lingered so more active caseload. And we lost attorneys and then could not hire due to a hiring freeze

decreased business

Dip in cases/litigation.

District court throughout the state did not issue summons for cases that were filed on or after March 16, 2020.

When cases were filed in Prince George's county, we situations where the filing fee check was cashed but there was no record of the case being filed. In Prince George's County, in particular, trial notices for zoom trials have been being sent out very close to the trial dates and in some cases never received at all.

Due to being a personal injury and workers' compensation attorney, potential clients were not traveling as much or working; therefore, the number of cases referred decreased dramatically.

Fewer cases filed and assigned to defend, those in suit stayed for weeks or months where other lawyers or parties or experts not available for discovery

Fewer cases to file.

Fewer cases were filed, and pending cases were delayed.

Fewer cases while courts on limited operations.

Fewer clients

fewer clients

Fewer clients, particularly in my partner's primary area of law- employment. Fewer new clients.

Fewer quality employment law cases; more crazies asking for evidence like whether they can refuse to get vaccinated per their employer mandate. I have no patience or compassion for that BS.

Filings could not result in processing of cases as the employees were not working regular hours/days.

Huge number of cases coming in during the pandemic; lots of emergency proceedings with custody and family matters

I can't close cases due to postponements

I have fewer new clients

I have many more inquiries about employment law issues as relate to the pandemic.

I lost all my cases.

I took less cases because I didn't want to meet with people.

I work for US HHS. We've been busy.

Large Impact on Caseloads

If you Fewer new cases open

Income reduced by 1/2 million

Increase

Initially our caseload dropped significantly and now it is rising at a very fast pace as courts open back up.

Initially, the impact was much greater. Many of our attorneys and staff were working from home, and there was a great deal of fear surrounding the pandemic. As the pandemic continued, there were longer lasting changes to our day to day activities. Documents were executed outdoors or digitally; we significantly limited face to face contact with clients; court hearings and trials became virtual; mask, cleaning, and social distancing policies were implemented; policies were put in place to address situations in which employees tested positive for COVID. The pandemic was particularly challenging for working mothers with young children engaging in distance learning. Accommodations were made for those employees to ease the stress of that situation. PPP loans were obtained.

Insurance companies don't want to settle because litigation is pushed off for months or years.

Intake and investigations increased

lawyers were apparently desperate for money so they were constantly filing baseless and needless filings and motions

less appeals being filed, because less decisions made at circuit court

less cases

Less cases. Also, I am no longer at the firm I was with since December 2020.

Less clients and less filings

Less clients wanted to begin actions.

less new cases

Litigation delays; back log of cases; trials pushed 1-2 years

Loss of continuing clients

Lower bankruptcy filings clients have less funds

More cases

More cases and more work during pandemic due to impact on clients

More cases settling, but those that didn't there was more justification to delay filing especially in the earlier days when the Courts were asking us to pause everything but emergency filings

More mediations and arbitrations

Large Impact on Caseloads

Much lower

New business is down but due to criminal cases not getting resolved the workload is almost double

No one was calling.

not as many car accidents

Not as many cases filed during pandemic

not being able to meet clients in person

Not enough business coming in

Number of new clients is way down

People are more litigious than ever so my case load has increased.

see above

See answer to previous question. (Workload increased.)

See previous answer.

severe intake reduction

Spike in new cases

The insurance carriers have significantly lowered their settlement authority which has led to fewer settlements and more cases being filed. There is a tremendous backlog here, so those cases are piling up without resolutions.

There is a significant decrease in numbers of new cases.

Transition from hard copy files to all electronic was not seamless, to say the least.

very busy

Was not able to get rid of case load and as a result as courts reopened, they have tried to catch up and have created an overload in case matters to try in a short amount of time.

We are not filing new cases at the moment

We have to file in the drop boxes or by email and that means keeping track of original documents if you use email or continually checking why physical documents are not docketed if left in the overnight drop box.

Work in health care and review clinical trials. Workload increased 40%

Work slowed as clients' programs were postponed.

Workload has increased due to financial burdens on clients.

Small Impact on Caseloads

At first the impact on filings was greater. Now, we are filing and maintaining caseloads/filings as normal. Because it did. Limited time in the office made it much more difficult to create and/or respond to pleadings, filings, and legal research.

Between March and June 2020, business dropped significantly. But, around July last year, we started picking back up and have since resumed our normal workload, even while working remotely.

Business litigation down as companies' focus and resources are elsewhere.

busy remained heavy

case filings have been reduced

Caseload virtually unchanged

Cases got delayed due to court not holding jury trials, so files starting piling up as cases couldn't be closed.

Cases have continued to be filed nationally and hearings are held remotely. Just takes more time and experience with electronic meetings, Zoom etc.

Cases initially halted but have resumed.

client firms also working remote--lessened workload

Clients hesitant to visit office.

Concerns with delays in mailing pleadings due to USPS issues

Courts have slowed down processing of filings

Everything has to be filed by mail.

Fewer cases, Projects put off indefinitely

Fewer clients

Fewer employment cases being filed due to remote work

fewer new clients

Filings still needed but much harder to do and to get results.

got fewer cases

Handled almost same number of cases; just different type of cases. I do criminal defense work.

Have been surges in cases at times, then a decline in cases at other times.

I do bankruptcy work and for the first 9 months of the pandemic my work increased substantially.

I have fewer cases.

I probably lost some clients who were afraid to break their own quarantine to seek legal advice/were not comfortable with Zoom meetings.

I still had/have plenty of work.

Income loss

Lots of filings done remotely—we have a National practice

Managing changing court dates has been the hardest part.

Many of our business clients were allowed to work as essential, though scaled down, so we still had work.

Small Impact on Caseloads

More based on fluctuation of economic activity (including that related to COVID, but not exclusively).

More cases settled, but cases are also taking longer to resolve

Most cases could still be filed but the movement of the case slowed dramatically

My estate planning was in demand during the pandemic

My office is not that busy in the first place.

No comment.

not as easy to assess client needs

Number of cases is the same, but discovery has been more fraught

Only limited by the fact that the courts were closed.

Our regulations provide an absolute right to an in-person hearing. I've had an increased caseload in terms of reviewing cases in which the claimant still wants an in-person hearing, due to repeated postponements.

People still want to sue

Reduced number of mediation referrals

Several clients have extended their labor contracts for 1 to 3 years to allow for in-person negotiations. This has resulted in work I would have performed to be postponed to the future. This reduction of work has been off-set by an increase in employment litigation.

Simply actual result.

Some case load impact especially more trials back to back which is difficult

Some cases were slowed but others moved ahead.

The cases still come in but not quite at the pre-pandemic pace.

The firm kept more small cases in house rather than referring out.

There has been some decrease in the number of cases that the office has filed

There were fewer cases. We are a domestic or family law firm

There were many new issues to resolve.

We do some personal injury defense work. With fewer vehicles on the road, that has impacted the number of cases to a degree.

we found other ways to do business as our hearings continued after a 3 month pause

We had fewer new clients.

We have less work.

We still filed cases, there was a decrease in new case intakes

Work was a bit slower

workload not changed a lot

Workload stayed fairly steady.

Large Impact On Jury Selection

awful to pick jury outside of courtroom in a different arena then have them show up later or another day
Can't pick a jury on same day. Distancing makes it hard to recognize jurors
Choosing a jury at a different venue than in the courthouse presented many issues to address that the court did not consider until the very last minute. Social distancing issues could not be overcome given the venue (the American Legion in Towson) and my client was not vaccinated.
Courts closed
Courts have been closed
courts not helpful with restrictions
Courts were closed
Courts were closed and jury trials were all postponed
Courts were not allowing jury trials.
COVID protocols changed everything about jury selection
COVID-19 requirements implemented in courthouses.
Difficult to see the clients where court ordered masks but did not provide clear ones. Jury selection took longer and was largely trial and error. Many otherwise qualified jurors did not want to serve. It is possible the older and people of color citizens were least likely to appear because of their vulnerability to COVID
Have had no jury trials during this time period.
I have not had a jury trial since the pandemic started
I have not picked a jury in over a year.
I have not selected a jury since the pandemic.
inconsistent approaches to jury selection across different counties; reluctance of jurors to serve
It stopped.
Juries not empaneled; cases not proceeding.
Juries were not meeting.
Jury cases postponed
jury trials have been suspended during most of the pandemic
jury trials postponed
Jury trials stopped completely
Many jurors have not been vaccinated. Jury selection has been off-site.
Most civil jury trials have not gone forward at all, and those that have will be remote, presenting new challenges.
my jury trials have all been postponed at least a year.
No civil jury trials in the jurisdictions where I practice
No criminal jury trials for over a year
No juries for most/all of the time since March 2020.
No juries till recently
No jury matters were about to move forward.
No jury trials
No jury trials
no jury trials
No jury trials

Large Impact On Jury Selection

No jury trials
No jury trials
no jury trials
no jury trials available.
no jury trials for a year
No jury trials for a year
No jury trials for long periods
no jury trials for me
No jury trials for months
No jury trials for nearly a year
No jury trials in 14 months and counting
no jury trials since pandemic
no jury trials!!!
No jury trials.
No Jury Trials.
None done
PG County ceased jury trials for over a year. Significant backlog in criminal cases.
Postponement of all jury trials.
Remote jury selection via zoom not good
selection of juries remotely inferior to live selection
Speaking objections through headsets and remote voir dire very difficult
Suspended for much of the year, the returned with greater complexity.
There were no juries.
There were no Jury trials until May 2021
Um, there haven't been any juries until recently, so
Video jury selection
Video voir dire not as effective
We are not having any civil jury trials.
We haven't had jury trials during the pandemic, but there was no option to decline this item.
We still do not have large pool jury selection procedures in some counties.
When the state shut down jury trials all of our set trials were cancelled and new trial dates for many cases originally set in 2020 are not until 2022.

Small Impact On Jury Selection

Trials postponed.
Trials were postponed
No pending jury cases prayed
I've only had 1 trial since courts reopened and we did it in person. It took longer but we were able to get it done
Our jury in October 2020 trial ranged from 18-31 years old.
The process of jury selection in Maryland has never allowed the parties to discover implicit bias; now potential jurors also wear masks, which means that parties and their attorneys cannot see or properly judge facial expressions.

Large Impact on Evidence Sharing

Attorneys who aren't adequately tech-savvy to practice in 2021 have used the pandemic as an excuse to provide meager discovery. And to take forever to get around to it.

Delayed mail slowed production of records.

Delays is delivery, ability to deliver.

During depositions and hearings, logistics can break down. Prior coordination needed, which uncivil or inexperienced counsel sometimes won't engage in.

everything had to be pre-filed as exhibits which was time consuming, costly, and non-productive

everything switch to technology based which saved money on mailing fees

Evidence from other countries couldn't come in because of mail issues.

Evidence was mandated to be shared three days before trial - previously attorneys sometimes handed each evidence in the trial

exhibits must be filed and exchanged in advance...adaption to developments during trial consequently more rigid had to do much in advance and via downloading

Had to move entirely to Google drive for document production.

Having to learn new document-sharing technologies and being extremely organized with electronic documents and trial outline

It was not shared timely.

It's been more difficult to obtain medical records due to offices being shut down due to COVID.

Mail times slower, not able to drop off docs at offices. Worried docs were exposed.

No comment.

Opposing counsel often citing covid for delays

PG County required drop off of exhibits in person one day prior to trial. So everything in order, previously marked etc...

required pre-filing of trial exhibits is burdensome and complicates pivoting when matters require.

Sharing a Zoom screen was very complicated in the beginning and now if you a large number of documents, it is unwieldy.

SO hard during trial to deal with extra copies for jurors and the manipulation of documents.

The degree of competency of attorneys and staff with technology related to electronic document formats, workflows, large file sharing, and the like became critical overnight. Working with offices which were up to speed pre-pandemic was as-usual; however, offices which were unprepared, either with staff knowledge base or available software and services, became an intractable mess to work with.

Use of drop boxes and electronic transmissions.

We have learned to share exhibits online and it is an amazing tool that saves on printing costs, and is more efficient and requires more planning, and ultimately improves trial performance and presentations.

Small Impact on Evidence Sharing

Able to send things electronically.

Able to use email

Adapted to more digital sharing.

Anything that was mailed took longer to receive

Clerical staff reductions seem to be impacting opposing parties' ability to provide discovery.

Clients need to get used to receiving everything online

constantly changing how we give evidence to courts (POs used to be primarily evidence just presented day of, but now more advanced preparation)

delays

Discovery stayed about the same

Everything was more difficult.

Evidence is now shared remotely

Evidence was transmitted electronically, at least in so far as paper copies would be concerned

Exhibits submitted in advance.

Forced opposing counsel to share evidence which was a positive.

getting documents timely from providers to produce same to parties

Hard to track the rules of filing exhibits in different courts.

Harder to get, share documents

I can't go to the State's Attorneys Office to review evidence like I did previously

Incarcerated clients and being able to visit and share videos etc more difficult

Initially, it was difficult to gather evidence from clients due to closures, working off site, limited staff, etc.

it has to all be filed on line prior to trial now, you can just submit your evidence at trial, which is a real pain.

It was moderately harder to transmit information.

mail stunk

Most attorneys use electronic sharing of documents, but a few don't and mail delays caused problems as mail service declined significantly over the year. Also, as closed down office due to Covid where we got our mail, had issues with getting mail forwarded and timely delivered.

Most document sharing is now electronic anyway so it only had a small impact more so on my ability to get evidence from clients

Most documentary evidence is shared electronically.

Most things can be shared electronically already.

no trials

One hearing the attorney claimed he did not have the documents or could not see them clearly.

our business operates on communication with our customers and we always share that information

Previously, attorneys would come to our office to review records of the agency. We now copy and deliver them to the attorney because the office is not open to the public.

We usually email anyway

X

Small Impact on Evidence Sharing

Shared remotely.

Slow US Postal Service delivery caused concern about meeting deadlines for filing documents with Court.

Some were delayed in responding due to inability to meet with clients.

Sometimes people are providing documents at short notice or not at all for remote hearings.

Still could exchange electronically

still mostly using electronic methods

technical difficulties

The issue is that when we subpoena documents, the responding institution may have reduced staff which can lead to delays in obtaining documents through subpoena and an increase in the asking for additional time to provide information. I am not sure if that is "evidence sharing" but it is an impact on evidence.

The ongoing backlog of cases has caused some delays in receiving discovery from the state.

The pluses vs. the minuses of moving to an electronic world largely balanced out. The devil was in getting the parties to learn the new procedures.

The requirement to provide all exhibits in advance interferes with effective trial management.

We usually email anyway

Large Impact on Trial Conduct

Administrative litigation - all remote / digital now.

Again, Criminal Docket is taking priority. As a civil litigator, all 1-2 week jury trials have been continued

All court room appearances since last March have been either postponed at the last minute or virtual.

All delayed or suspended

All hearings are virtual.

All matters have been remote thus far

All of the delays, the juror who tested positive, the dirty courthouses and the Sheriff Deputies with masks at their chins...

All trials have been via Zoom.

All trials online since Covid. Some delayed for months so had to prepare a second time. Use of evidence was difficult and caused time delays to pull up docs - different courts handled evidence differently.

All trials were delayed.

Almost all of our trials are being heard through Zoom for Government. This is a huge change but it has worked quite well.

Almost no trials. Only a couple of small, district court trials in over a year. A solo practitioner in personal injury law cannot earn a living like this.

Appearing in a mask is very uncomfortable and will make arguments/presentation to a jury/judge very difficult.

Cannot get trial dates

Completely different setting, procedures, preparation

Conducting any trial or hearing at which more than a couple of exhibits of a few pages each would be in play became practically impossible. Court protocols for sharing of exhibits, uploading of exhibits, and working with exhibits during remote hearings were present in some jurisdictions and completely absent in others. Attorneys were uploading dozens of trial exhibits within 24-hours of trial, requiring massive time and effort to download, organize, collate, print, and otherwise make useful versus being handed a courtesy copy at trial.

Courts Closed

courts closed for months

Courts cly

Courts were closed

Courts were closed and moratoria on collection activities were implemented for unknown amounts of time, these continue

Courts were closed for a long time

courts were closed or limited

COVID-19 requirements implemented in courthouses.

Delays and more deays

Delays; virtual proceedings

entire new set of procedures

Everyone was on edge having to be in court

Everything became virtual.

Federal courts were closed and immigration courts remain closed in non-detained cases until sometime in June 2021.

Few trials

Fewer trials. Restricted courtroom movement.

Getting used to handling things virtually

Had Zoom rather than in person trials.

I have had zero trials of my family law cases

I have not had a jury trial yet

I have not had a trial in over a year.

I haven't had a real "trial" since the pandemic began, but I have participated in a number of video hearings at which evidence was presented and received. The courts and practitioners have become better at it since they started.

Large Impact on Trial Conduct

I haven't had a trial since the pandemic was declared due to delays in the court system.

I lost all my cases

In addition to the fact that it was impossible to get trial dates for several months, almost all of the trials were remote or via zoom and that presented a lot of difficulties especially when it comes to exhibit it is quite difficult, in my opinion, to conduct a trial, with several witnesses, and a lot of evidence, via zoom. It does not have the same impact as having the witnesses in court in front of a judge with the evidence physically present there as opposed to on a screen.

Jury trials didn't happen for a long time. Now, in any medical malpractice trial, the courtroom is filled with reminders (masks, plexiglass dividers, etc.) of how health care impacts everyone's life.

Lack of jury trials

large delay in trials and those hearings using Zoom are less formal and less effective overall.

Less trials, more settlements!

Long delays

Masking: protocols.

Masks was a huge distraction and I at times had great difficulty as bench conferences were not on a device. Also, your typical motion in limine could no longer be a day of issue where the court requested the motions be litigated in advance as to not inconvenience the jury - hard for trial strategy.

Masks, social distancing, etc

Most cases not going to trial; trial logistics have changed substantially

Most hearings conducted remotely

Multiple postponements.

my jury trials have all been postponed at least a year.

My role is trying cases before a jury. I have not had a case go to trial since the start of the pandemic.

No circuit court criminal trials

No court appearances

No jury trials

No jury trials for a year, and now, Covid restrictions on in person attendance

no jury trials since pandemic. All cases continued.

No trials

no trials

no trials

No trials for a year now

No trials for me in last year

No trials for the most part.

No trials in 14 months and counting

No trials occurring.

No trials scheduled

No trials scheduled timely

No trials to date.

NO TRIALS! when there has been a trial, - if remote, very different strategies. In person trials are awkward because of social distancing and masks.

No trials.

None conducted since pandemic

Not meeting for trials. Doing more remotely.

Now virtual.

Numerous case continuances, once things normalized somewhat video trial were available.

Large Impact on Trial Conduct

Only one trial to date

Postponement of all jury trials. '

Reconfiguration of courtrooms, remote bench conferences, remote client communications, juries split between rooms for social distancing, plexiglass dividers that create glare and sound issues, using white noise machines, etc create new and stressful obstacles to ensuring fair trials

remote

remote and very different

Remote trials are just a pain.

Remote trials are more difficult to manage

see above....greater opportunity for collusion in testimony

Sharing a Zoom screen was very complicated in the beginning and now if you a large number of documents, it is unwieldy. You cannot confer with your client in the same way you would in person.

technical difficulties

Technology glitches and difficulty for all parties sometimes understanding how to navigate the technology has made remote hearing longer and more challenging.

The majority of trials/hearings have been virtual which is completely different from the normal courtroom experience.

The wait for a trial date has been extended from a few months to a few years in some counties. The back ups and delays are wreaking havoc in my cases. Some people are revisiting settlement negotiations, but some people desperately need a judge to intervene. Unfortunately, they're going to have to keep waiting.

The way that evidence is produced is very different and at sometimes chaotic. There is also the distinct possibility the court does not have your evidence. It is more awkward to introduce and go over evidence. Clients seem less relatable through zoom trials. Every little face gesture is over emphasized/over focused on the zoom calls. It is difficult to ascertain witness credibility through just a snap shot of their heads. I see less respect by witnesses in the trial by zoom process.

There were no trials for many months

There were none

They were suspended.

trials are now being held virtually

Trials by Zoom

trials have been suspended during most of the pandemic period.

Trials on zoom are in many ways better than in person trials, allowing more witnesses who otherwise could not have appeared, allowing parties who would have been disruptive to simply be muted, requiring calculations about cross examination and the disclosure of possible exhibits in advance, leading to challenges never before experienced with the court.

Trials were halted.

trials were remote and they tended to be much shorter, less formal, more unpredictable, and less helpful

Very different procedures in place for jury selection, being masked in the courtroom, unable to see juror's faces, jury deliberations taking place in the courtroom

Very hard to try cases remotely. Hard to try cases with masks on. Hard to try cases with plastic everywhere.

Video trials

Virtual family law trials and delays in family law case resolutions, masks, not being able to have client at trial table in civil cases etc has impacted

Virtual hearings impact use of documents, communication, etc.

Virtual trials - preloading exhibits

Zoom Trials

Zoom trials differ from physical trials

ZOOM!

Zoom, no in-person, no witnesses in person, worried coaching, hard to judge credibility.

Small Impact on Trial Conduct

as above

Challenges with Zoom hearing and trials

Combination of Zoom trials and in-person trials with masks. Overall it did not significantly affect my practice, other than reducing by about half to 2/3 the average number of trials I do in a year.

courts closed

delays

Delays in scheduling hearings, etc.

Electronic exhibits and masks hurt projection, clarity of speech and nonverbal cues.

Familiarizing client with document sharing and keeping the phones mute when not talking.

General lack of decorum on behalf of attorneys and witnesses.

getting used to Zoom hearings especially the viewing and sharing of exhibits took time

Have to upload documents in a way that hadn't had to do before.

I actually love to try cases on Zoom and have had several bench trials using this platform. I find the experience to be quite similar to trying a case in person, only more convenient without the travel time to a courthouse.

I did not have many cases go to trial during the pandemic. I had a few Protective Order cases where I was required to appear in person. My uncontested matters were changed to virtual, or any trials in counties that required in person for contested cases were delayed.

I don't do a lot of trial work.

Initially all administrative hearings were suspended but as remote working continued, hearings were started again and done virtually

judges behavior also stressed

Jurists not understanding technology slowed things down.

Learning to adjust to different approaches to jury presentation

Lots of postponements.

Many hearings via zoom, which has its own challenges.

Masks and dividers are a small inconvenience

Masks are challenging in the courtroom.

More hearings conducted remotely, which I believe should be a permanent thing for hearings such as scheduling conferences, 1 hour motions hearings and uncontested divorces.

More hurdles and barriers, but trial is trial.

More zoom/ remote trials

no trials

not sure if jury is listening, phones, looking up things etc

Only trials were bench trials. Felt limited in arguments due to masks.

Plastic shields, social distancing, limits on court room attendance by family members of clients

prefiling of exhibits

Remote hearings have worked well for the most part. Now that we are no longer required to wear masks in the courtroom there is very little change.

Remote proceedings have been increased but the conduct of the trial remains the same.

see 5c

See 5c.

Some hearings have shifted to zoom

Trials have been conducted remotely rather than in person.

Was interesting getting to learn virtual

We moved from in-person oral arguments to virtual oral arguments.

Wearing masks and handling exhibits was difficult.

X

Large Impact on Document Signing

All document signing conferences have been conducted out of doors per the Dr. Fauci recommendation. During the winter that was a challenge.

Any document that requires witnesses or notarization needed special arrangements. We did a lot of will executions in parking garages.

Clients don't know how to use AdobeSign or other electronic signature services and sometimes mess it up or don't send anything back at all.

Clients wanted to come in to sign documents and I did not want that. Clients are largely illiterate and could not do e-signing or handle documents being mailed for signature.

Completely had to revamp document signing. From outside on folding tables to sterilization procedures.

Difficulty w. Notary, wet signature requirements.

Document signing had to be done outside, masked

Document signing is done remotely

For the better. Electronic signatures are easier to obtain where accepted by the courts.

I had to come into the office to do signing of documents for the most part because my printer/scanner is better at the office than what I have at home.

I'm glad we have MDEC—made signed originals unnecessary, but still hard to get people to sign wills and other docs that do need ink signatures and definitely made notarized signatures difficult!

In person meetings require social distancing, mask wearing. Coordinating scheduling is troublesome. Virtual notarization protocol is (necessarily) burdensome.

it caused everything to be signed remotely because clients were not coming in to the office and also they often did not have scanners in their homes

less personal contact

Limited in-person, no contact, hard to notarize.

Limiting in person meetings has affected the execution of documents.

nearly all electronic currently

Nnnnn

No in-person signings.

No signing in person for several months. Remote signing was completed and difficult to achieve

Now all DocuSign.

People could not sign in person, so everything was electronically done or signed and scanned and emailed.

Remote notary was very difficult through COVID-19. Extraordinary measures had to be taken to have documents signed. It was more difficult to ascertain one's ability to understand the documents by not meeting them in person.

Some documents require "wet signatures" and it has been difficult navigating how to physically do that with all of the COVID-19 limitations. This challenge is easing somewhat.

We are routinely using online signatures for many documents, and when people sign in person we handle things differently.

We have adopted DocuSign for nearly all of our signature requirements.

We have tried to do outdoor signings or electronic signings when possible

Small Impact on Document Signing

able to do remote signings and notarization.
Accepting more electronic signatures.
All fee agreements became electronic.
Arrangements easily made for curbside signings, e-signatures.
Cannot have people sign documents in person.
Clients hesitant to come to office.
Clients needed to find their own notary.
Clients were asking not to come in so we had to send notaries to people's home to watch them sign
Delays in in person meetings to sign documents
Different ways to sign documents
Difficult to have signed in front of notary.
Distance from clients was hard to explain of understand.
Documents signed remotely
Don't have auto-sign
Early in the pandemic, there was concern about personally appearing before a notary for signing.
Early pandemic notaries, witness signatures very difficult. Even now USPS won't get signatures for certified mail.
easier
Electronic signatures are more widely accepted now
electronic signing of contracts is up
Enhanced measures were taken more lead time to get people in to execute documents safely.
E-sign now
For some clients the ability to electronically sign was easy but for others with no computer resources, impossible
Greater use of electronic signatures
Had to add electronic signing software expenses
Had to allow for and provide instructions for remote notary
Had to develop workarounds for electronic signing documents that didn't already have that capacity.
Harder for in person
having to deal with different software providers from various offices to various offices causing software compatibility issues
I no longer use a mediation agreement as getting it signed is too cumbersome.
In cases in which actual wet signatures have been required on documents (particularly those requiring notaries) it has required me to find work arounds, e.g., going to the bank for a notary, dropping documents off at FedEx boxes, etc.
Initially, we did not believe it was safe for employees or clients to execute documents in the office. Different methods were implemented to address this including executing documents outdoors and electronic signatures where possible.
Instead of exchanging originals, documents were signed, scanned & emailed.
It can be difficult to get claimants to sign documents and return them to us because claimants often do not have access to scanners, and our field offices are closed.
It was difficult at first when clients were executing documents
It's a hassle to send documents to clients and have the clients look for a notary instead of coming to the office and having documents notarized here.
It's more difficult to get documents signed when people are not physically present together.
Less in person contact, more electronic signings.
Many document-signing issues were resolved by executive order.

Small Impact on Document Signing

MDEC will accept electronic signatures but those counties/city not on MDEC have to provide wet signature which is difficult in a pandemic.

More electronic signatures.

More electronic signings

more PDF's and e-signatures being accepted (save wills and deeds)

More people want to sign documents remotely.

More reliance on DocuSign which we were already using.

most but not all clients can sign and return by email or fax; mailing documents to those who can't is much slower than having them come to the office to sign.

Most courts started to allow electronic signing, so eventually not difficult but not all clients are tech savvy and so some difficulty.

Most signatures were obtain electronically without issue

Moved to all electronic signatures

New and technology not always compatible between firms.

no huge change

no in person signing

Not everyone is technically competent enough for e-signing.

Not seeing clients in person meant a lot of weird virtual work arounds.

Obvious inconvenience. Adobe insertes

Occasional difficulty getting required signatures due to signers working remotely.

online

our agency (USCIS) now allows us to submit with facsimile signatures, which is a welcome change

Our clients that were not tech savvy or older had some trouble signing documents

Our firm has returned to wet signatures.

Our government agency had to write and issue new procedures to allow for digital signatures and transmission of documents.

Our office had to learn how to sign documents electronically

Prior to pandemic, most cases were in e-file jurisdictions. Only notarization has been a challenge

reliant on inefficient post office and fedex costs tripled

Remote signing takes longer

Sanitized pens, cleaned signing area.

See the foregoing

signors remote

Since office is closed, no notary in person to notarize documents.

Some logistical issues to be addressed, but usually handled.

sometimes after intake we are unable to get the retainer signed back and lose touch.

Sometimes we had to use DocuSign or PDF

Switched to e-signing instead of paper documents.

the advent of electronic signing was a blessing

Use docu-Sign

Small Impact on Document Signing

Use of remote signing works
using electronic signatures
Using more electronic signatures.
Virtual notaries
Virtual signatures became the norm
Was able to get DocuSign
We are used to meeting with clients personally or dropping documents that needed signatures off to clients. As a result of the pandemic, we were forced to implement an electronic signing system for clients and it sometimes still has its issues.
We focused on the digital signing of contracts and realized our contract management system was awful. Getting a new one later this year
We have been able to handle electronic signing.
We have done a lot of e signing.
We have established work arounds/ protocol to handle signing documents.
we now use DocuSign routinely
We pivoted and started using electronic signing.
We signed mostly via docusign now.
We utilized more electronic signing.
We were able to quickly switch to DocuSign for documents to facilitate signatures
We were already shifting to Docusign, so this has expedited that considerably.
went to e signing all pleadings.
Were able to transition to online document signing
We've had to organize will and other estate plan documents to be signed out of office or we've had to change how we witness/notarize documents to limit the number of people in the room at a time.
What a pain to get signatures when office access was limited, and mail service during this period was often non-existent as well.
Zoom and Telecom

Large Impact on Witness Management

:Didn't meet in-person with witnesses.

All meetings via zoom. Difficult until people became accustomed.

Courts clt

Describe a remote hearing for purposes of a subpoena was completely unaddressed by the Rules and the courts. Enforcement of s ubpoenas to appear at remote hearings was completely unclear.

easier to manage witnesses in person at courthouse

Had to sit outside in vehicles, had to be called in by court staff. Had to prepare via telephone or zoom, etc if technology was available.

Harder to prep and harder to be "present" with the witness in deposition; harder to schedule and get witnesses to attend matters.

Harder to prepare witnesses remotely

Harder to prepare witnesses when not meeting face to face.

I have reduced the number of witnesses to just the parties in most cases.

In my firm's medical malpractice defense practice, we were unable to personally meet with our clients and expert witnesses or travel to out of state depositions. Virtually all client and expert contact is still phone or by remote video.

In-Person meetings with witnesses are key to preparing individuals for hearings/testimony - with COVID, in-person meetings were prohibited or discouraged resulting in shifts to virtual witness preparation, which proved less effective.

It was much harder prepping clients for trial remotely, as opposed to face-to-face.

Kkkkk

Need to prepare remotely. Harder to look at exhibits that will be used, or create exhibits.

No face to face meetings

No trials no witnesses

Not all witnesses had the electronic means to participate virtually.

not showing

Personal meetings (and the attendant COVID-19 formalities and safeguards) are often required or desirable.

Prepping clients and witnesses for testimony in a face-to-face meeting is key. People just don't listen as well over Zoom. And conducting trials by Zoom has caused all sorts of headaches about who else is really in the room with the witness, what else is going on in that room, etc.

Schedule coordination, rules/protocols for appearing all difficult

See above about trial conduct.

See above. We have been able to call more witnesses and be more efficient with them because they can testify from anywhere without disrupting their lives by coming to court.

Sometimes would not be able to have a witness participate because they either comply with the court's COVID-19 policies (ie, no in-person appearances if traveled out of state but witness fails to inform anyone until they arrived at court) and court would have to be rescheduled or technological difficulty in remote appearances. Also concerns regarding proper observing appropriate behavior such as not discussing their testimony with anyone or others in the background helping witness give testimony.

They were difficult to find.

Used zoom

Virtual hearings have made witness management difficult.

Virtual waiting rooms

Witness stress when they lack personal contact, difficulty sometimes providing documents or communicating during depositions

witnesses are all over the place as far as covid fear, willingness to mask or be vaccinated.

Witnesses are prepped via video call instead of in person meetings.

Witnesses in Zoom - waiting room forever, and remotely. They are no longer "in the hallway". And in cases of delay or wait time, witnesses had to be called to let them know what is going on.

witnesses were remote - so it was difficult to handle the logistics, timing, technology, etc.

Small Impact on Witness Management

Able to call witnesses in my hearings, but time limited because of technology issues, some didn't have online ability so limited ability to call them. Most were able to use zoom ok.

Actually made it easier to get witnesses to cooperate with testifying since they could do so remotely, which was much less of a disturbance to their day.

Again remote prep really is a bit of a mess that's compounded by clients not tech savvy.

All depositions have been remote since the start of the pandemic.

All interviews were conducted by video conferencing

As a defense firm we have good cooperation and high level of proficiency working remotely. As for opposing witnesses the ability to meaningfully depose plaintiffs,

Their experts and fact witnesses requires more time because of remote depositions, and effectiveness can be affected.

Because that's how I see it

By phone

Covid exposure created delays

Easier access to those out of state witnesses.

fewer cases, fewer witnesses

Fewer in person meetings.

Frequent Use of Video Conferencing

Getting used to handling things virtually

Had to decide if our clients and witnesses could participate remotely or whether we had to risk having them testify from our office space.

Hard to track down witnesses willing...

Harder to meet.

Have to assure witness has necessary software and internet connection

I did not meet with witnesses in person, and largely switched to telephone conferences or Zoom.

I don't deal directly with witnesses, but my sense is that lay witnesses are harder to manage on the telephone, and sometimes technical issues hamper the proceedings. Expert witness management is the same as it was before the pandemic, because most of our expert witnesses had already been appearing by telephone prior to the pandemic.

I don't meet most witnesses in person anyway, phone or zoom call is good enough.

I may never see a witness in person until the trial. But, the same issue for anyone participating in zoom goes with witnesses as well - it is difficult to ascertain credibility with only looking at facial features alone and with the inevitable distraction with something in the background or technology mistakes.

It is hard to know if your client/witness should be with you or remote during this time.

Logistics of virtual hearings

More remote preparation

More use of the 2-800 Rules

More video prep sessions with witnesses

Most witness management takes place by phone normally so there were few impacts

mostly done by phone instead of in person

Much of this has been done virtually.

No comment.

Small Impact on Witness Management

No difference in the way of preparing them for trial, but managing them during trial is difficult if they are not in the same room as me. You cannot control them at all.

No in-person meetings, mainly zoom meetings or phone calls

Not all witnesses are familiar with virtual platforms

not being able to meet in person and having to navigate with clients remote access

Not meeting with witnesses face-to-face as frequently

Often conducted remotely

People are less responsive. More excuses why they don't want to come to court to testify.

People I would usually meet with in person, I now have to corral on Zoom

Phone and video testimony works very well in most situations. Witnesses can appear in person for more complex hearings and trial.

remind people to wear masks and limited access to court remote

Remote video depo prep vs. in person.

See 5e

Small

Some folks have had difficulty with the technology.

Some witnesses need or request remote appearances, which we've been able to accommodate with the new technology.

Some witnesses succumbed to the national hysteria and were very resistant to meet (if at all); others were not.

Some witnesses were less likely to want to come because of COVID - especially those travelling but not wanting to. Also, the delay affected witness preparation and memory.

Sometimes there were technical issues in getting witnesses on Zoom.

The District Court set more restrictions on who could come inside.

Using clear masks for witnesses while they testify makes hearing their testimony more of a challenge and is slightly awkward during trial

Video depositions

Virtual hearings

We are doing all meetings remotely, including preparing and presenting witnesses for deposition.

we did things as we had but with distance and masks

We still need to meet in person with witnesses to prepare them. Most of our clients don't use computers. The immigration courts don't cancel their hearings until just at the last minute (twice on the day of the scheduled hearing), other times just a few days before), so we have to do the witness preparation as usual...but with masks and in a larger room so we can be farther apart.

Witness interviews have been by phone or video rather than in person.

witness management has been done via video conference.

Witnesses are testifying remotely and we have had to make sure that they have the technology to do so.

professional witnesses are available remotely and like the flexibility to be able to continue to work until it is time for their testimony.

Witnesses uncomfortable with attending trial

Witnesses were concerned over safety

ZOOM meetings work to prep and meet

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

A lot of work was actually accomplished more efficiently since it was not required to go to court for all the very short hearings that were handled much better through Zoom.

Accelerated adoption of technology to e sign and video

All face-to-face meeting have been replaced by virtual interaction.

All meetings remote. Travel reduced 100%. Less personal efficiency as I am doing things with document preparation and preservation that my legal assistant would have done if we were in same office and working there.

All negative.

all of the above

All remote meetings and depositions. Less travel time. Less time to process.

Almost everything done remotely

An increase in the number of mediations that is not opted out of the process with a sustained level of settlements

Answering such open-ended questions is not a skill.

bad offers from insurance carriers when no threat of trial in near future

Businesses were closed so very little work.

Certainly we have less face to face meetings, lunches, office celebrations.

Client acquisition--it is very difficult to rethink how to market and bring in new clients when we can no longer attend events, have lunches/dinners, etc.

Client contact is essential to how I practice. Small, friendly office. If everything is done remotely, a client can call a large, T.V. advertiser, get a clerk or paralegal on the phone to handle the case and never get my 43 years of experience to guide the client through the case for the best possible result.

Client development has been difficult.

Clients changed their focus on how they wanted to pursue their litigation

Clients have a more urgent need for representation, reduced ability to pay for it, and the courts can't offer them resolution quickly. It's been a mess.

Clients seem to be working at all hours and therefore need access at non-traditional times.

Clients tend to be more cautious to come to in person meetings

Corporate clients reducing "legal spend" has caused restrictions on typical work

Court clerks' offices became ineffectual overnight; difficulties associated with MDEC - that is, challenging features like tracking filings as they move through the system, talking to clerks to make sure everything is reflected in MDEC as it should be, etc. - became impossible because you couldn't get a clerk on the phone. Once courts reopened, clerks wanted trials set on 3 weeks' notice, etc., and all scheduling was taking place by email, quadrupling the number of emails overnight.

Court would have to affirmatively track down litigants

Courts have been conducting hearings remotely, which is much more convenient, especially for things like settlement conferences. No time is wasted traveling to and from courthouses, parking, etc., which means more productive time during the day.

Covid has actually given me more time to practice law and less time sitting in court waiting for settlement conferences and scheduling conferences. I can continue working in my office and have the remote hearing open so that when the court officer appears, I can pick up at that time. I hope that many of the remote hearings and conferences continue. It is much more efficient and less costly for the clients.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

Customer service was the biggest negative impact. More questions and harder to respond in a timely fashion.

Dealing with uncharted waters in providing legal advice to clients was highly stressful. Legislative initiatives albeit well intentioned but without much actual benefit for anyone were rampant and took much work to craft into something worthwhile

Decided to retire

Did I miss something? This survey seems entirely geared for law firm attorneys, which I am not, just like last year. MSBA should take a hard look at its survey questions. I am a federal employee. I feel like I'm skewing the results just by answering "no impact" when in fact none of these questions such as "jury selection" apply to me. In fact, that would only apply to litigators, a definite subset of attorneys in Maryland. Maybe hire a consultant to write your survey questions.

Document review work eventually transitioned to remote work at home. However, the work was funneled through servers in Virginia that have lower attorney wages. Even though no one had moved, we were penalized at the profit of big firms.

drop in income

Everyone is full of anxiety and on edge all the time.

Face to face meetings ended but video conferencing soared. That has been a great timesaver

Fewer clients

Fewer in office visits, more video sessions. Increase in courier costs.

for the good: likely increased use of video court proceedings

forced us to implement newer technologies much more quickly

Foreclosure moratorium (while necessary) significantly decreased bankruptcy filings.

Wills/estate planning increased.

Going remote fully

Government agencies have adopted electronic filing and email more readily for communications, which has streamlined work

Government backlogs means I will feel the impact for years as cases could not go forward

Government offices closed or on reduced staffing

Government work seems to have less of a specific impact because other things like executive orders govern.

Great decrease in income.

had to develop case/document management system at home; had to buy a printer and other equipment

Harder to do in person meetings

Has not impacted my transactional practice very much

Have done entirely virtual mediations for 14 months.

Have had to juggle staffing, handle uncertain mail (including collections issues).

Have started doing remote signings for closings

having to be able to handle all aspects of office remotely

Having to pivot between in-office and from-home work multiple times; getting used to certain team members working from home primarily and some in the office, and some going back and forth

Helped it grow

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

Huge amounts of extra time due to the reduced need to use the roads for court appearances and depositions. Much more productive. Court hearings were easier to prepare for, due to the lack of a commute and file transportation issues. Put no impact for the trial questions above, but not really applicable since I had no contested trials during the pandemic.

Hurt marketing, not meeting potential clients in person (particularly when volunteering at the courthouse).

I am back to a solo practice after the small firm I was with decided to downsize.

I am busier than I have been in 40 years of practice.

I am not a litigator so these other questions do not apply to me.

I am not a litigator, so I cannot comment, but my business practice has been steady and busy, thankfully.

I am now suffering with multiple court appearances on the same day in different locations

I am on the computer even more than usual, and rarely go anywhere else. It has made me more sedentary and to the extent in-person interaction is important, I have lost that. On the other hand, eliminating travel time to meetings and court has allowed me to work longer on substantive matters.

I am still not meeting in person with clients.

I appreciate the increased use of technology to accomplish matters that don't need an in-person hearing

I did not renew my lease for my office when it expires in December 2020.

I do captured above

I do not have a litigation practice

I do policy work for the Federal government. I do not practice law.

I have lost the daily interaction with colleagues that was possible when we were in the office, which has not been made up for by increased reliance on Zoom and other communications. I am a mediator in DC and have found the exclusive use of video mediations to be almost uniformly positive. I also appreciate the ability to appear and participate remotely in court hearings all over the country.

I have not had to travel to court for Scheduling Conferences or Settlement Conferences, which has been beneficial. In counties where they did not choose to make adjustments, I have had to travel for a 15min hearing, which I felt was a waste of my client's time and money. They also would not accept scanned documents or things by email, they required original signatures which meant a lot of unnecessary mailing back and forth.

I increased my volunteer mediations as I had more time, and they are all online so that was a positive. Commute time decreased as no longer had to get mail from office after closed office location.

I practice as a neutral. All of my work has been remote.

I've seen a number of my colleagues struggling to maintain a high level of work while their families are falling apart as a result of COVID.

I'm a public defender. seeing clients has been completely upended

I'm not a trial lawyer, so that is why I said "not at all" affected for anything that was related to a more litigation focused practice. I meet with clients on Zoom now rather than in person, for the most part, and document signings are held outside.

In every possible way.

In many ways it is allowed us to be much more efficient because the pandemic eliminated many of the archaic norms in our practice and forced us, or actually gave us an excuse, to think outside of the

In one way it has allowed me to look into other practice areas that are less reliant on in person meetings and less reliance on matters requiring court intervention or involvement. As a result I have substantially change my area of practice.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

Increased comfort with remote capabilities

Increased our ability/ technical skills in collaborating remotely

BTW, many of the above questions are only relevant to litigation practice, which we do not do

increased stress.

Interest rates are low and the volume of real property sales and refinances is very high.

Ironically, it has made much of what we do more convenient. As everyone mobilized for videoconferencing, clients who once traveled long distances to our office may meet with us from the luxury of their homes or offices. I believe that this practice will survive the pandemic, cutting down on in-person meetings while retaining the personal touch of a face-to-face meeting via Zoom.

It closed my small business. Since SSA has not reopened, my business remains closed, probably permanently.

It has dramatically changed our practice in that we have less support staff and we are likely to remain a mostly remote office now. It has helped in that we have developed more streamlined procedures and we all have more flexibility in our day to day schedules with the ability to work mostly remote.

It has fundamentally changed everything we do, how we do it, and frankly not for the better.

It has just been a huge mental slog.

It has made me realize that in the field of guardianship law, the hearings have all been remote and it has been extremely successful. Many hearings should stay remote.

It has made things more streamlined. Our industry significantly lagged with technology. I also prefer working remotely and hope to not see a future where I should be required to be an in office.

It has provided more freedom due to the ability to work from home.

It has significantly increased some areas of my practice, such as Will preparation.

It is more difficult to prepare clients on Zoom.

It made everything good bad, and everything bad, worse.

It raised new, pandemic-related compliance issues for clients.

It was dangerous to interact with clients.

It's all electronic now, which has been a vision of mine since I started law school in 1997. I am very happy about that.

It's been an exhausting year. More work, less support. I maintained my employee's salaries even when there were lulls in the work that I could give them.

I've been able to represent more clients due to not spending time commuting, waiting in offices for meetings that would take half a day, etc.

just the day to day operations and seeing everyone in office

Lack of face to face interaction with others decrease marketing opportunities and new assignments

learned more technology solutions

Learning how to manage most of practice on computer rather than hard copy; e-filing; becoming more proficient with Adobe and e-discovery programs

Less business

Less clients calling for appointments.

Less commute time.

Less direct learning and mentoring

Less efficient working remotely. Greater stress on IT systems/personnel. Frustration with IT systems and glitches.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

Less in-person meetings with clients
Less interpersonal contact. Less spontaneity
Less work.
loss of client stream, loss of income, added stress, had to work much harder to earn 1/10th the income
loss of revenue. difficulty collecting. clients can't pay. employees are only working about 1/2 as much as before
Lower income
Made delays the norm in going to court
Made some of us overworked and exhausted and still continues with no real end in sight....maybe 2022?
Many
Morale is very low.
More accepting of teleworking and accommodating of people having to change a scheduled meeting because of family obligations.
More administrative decision making required.
more difficult finding work to do
More face to face interaction with clienta through Zoom
more quality time for personal life
More remote meetings
More stress
More time spent on regulatory and government interference issues.
more working from home, less working in the office
Most of us have not seen each other in person for more than a year. This is bound to have an effect on long-term morale and relationship building. While attorneys and legal assistants have been able to work remotely for the most part, secretarial support staff have had to come to the office frequently with added risk of exposure despite following the CDC and Md. Department of Health guidance.
Most were previously mentioned
Mostly the transfer of information with my staff at a moment's notice has had the biggest effect but we have implemented a new system that works for us.
Much harder to collaborate with isolated colleagues.
much less income
My partner retired, i closed our office, I terminated my assistant and I relocated to a home office
My personal practice prior to COVID-19 involved up to 40 weeks of out of state travel per year. Since COVID-19 my travel schedule has been reduced to 15-16 weeks of out of state travel. For the Firm the biggest impact is the inability to interact and collaborate on matters in the office. Working in the office promotes more informal collaboration and collegiality.
my practice involves much more estate planning and dealing with the elderly.
My practice was already remote.
My routine is completely unended on a regular basis based on child care issues. Covid has been a disaster for working parents.
My support staff is stretched thin and weary. I have taken on a lot more secretarial tasks because it is difficult to manage this remotely.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

new client meetings have been all virtual.
no clients seen in person for an entire case
No comment.
No criminal jury trials for over a year
No impact.
None not covered by the above.
None. Was moving to mostly online practice before Covid.
not having jury trials for such an extended time, had a large impact on my practice
Not many other ways
not materially
Not much.
Not practicing
Not sure.
Nothing else.
Office morale is down a lot, lack of coordination and sharing of ideas that naturally happens in an office.
oh ffs why did I agree to this survey
Overall, I have enjoyed working from home, however not being able to talk to a colleague in the hallway or walking to someone's office has made interactions different and some interactions less efficient.
People are angry, helpless, hopeless, emotional, tired, stressed, much more demanding, and impatient. This is very bad for family law matters which are emotionally taxing in any event.
People are more receptive to remote/Zoom meetings.
Please answer "Q6" before continuing.
Positively. It has been a good 15 months for environmental law and real estate law
Rarely go to the office to work a full day.
Reduced workload and client base resulting in dramatic reduction in income
Reduction of income
Release from the government have caused my clients to not receive work permits and Social Security cards. The uncertainty of knowing whether or not we would have court cause significant stress to my clients. The immigration court would be closed but the online system would not be up-to-date and showed cases going forward, And my clients would be very anxious that they were missing court cases, even though they were not
Remote document execution.
Remote interviews of incarcerated clients cuts down on lost travel time and is very convenient. On the flip side, in person interviews at the local detention center are more difficult as it is harder to hear them due to wearing masks.
Remote work has been more efficient by eliminating unnecessary travel. I hope remote meetings and hearings and mediations continue.
remote work increased
Required more diligence in keeping my team connected.
Required that we invest in excess of \$12K to upgrade and enhance technology for remote participation with multiple people needing to access and use the same account on one ISP.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

Said no impact at all in the above as I do not do litigation. Been busier as I review COVID related documents. Main client is academic medical center so its legal team was busy with dealing with COVID - so turfed more to me as outside counsel.

scared people to go to court

secretary died, did not replace her

See above

See above; nothing else significant

See previous answers

See previous answers.

Shifted everything online.

Slowed everything down. Made communication more difficult. In person communication is almost always more effective in getting matters resolved. Courts are moving too slowly

Slowed income, changed to video work more. Increased electronic dependency including needing computers in court.

Slower paying clients.

Slower payment from clients. Essentially financing clients and other businesses is difficult for a small practice.

Solo practitioner - isolation in the office. At times, cash flow has been unpredictable. Digital / remote hearings have been beneficial.

Some cases must be tried and could not be. Those are either delayed, or the client took less than fair value out of frustration.

Some of the older partners continued working from home for longer periods of time and they were often the parties who had to sign off on matters or operational activities which necessitated a weekly drop-off of documents and/or scheduling a time where they would come in to address certain matters. Because we have not established paperless practices, working from home on several matters is very difficult if not impossible.

Some people use it as an excuse for non-coinage and to obtain delay.

some summonses not issued in cases filed spring 2020

Staff with children in school or daycare had a tougher time returning to work due to school and daycare closures the Court moved to MDEC for all documents and our transcripts were converted to digital. This is a positive development.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented regular and persistent challenges in our medical malpractice defense practice as our clients are primarily physicians. All of our cases require physicians to serve as expert witnesses. Our ability to meet, much less speak to, our clients was severely limited however remote Zoom meetings allowed us to conduct business.

The delay in USPS has caused a lot of stress and resulted in people hand delivering documents and increased use of FedEx.

The increased use of remote appearances has allowed us to increase our caseloads. It has reduced time wasted on travel, waiting in court, and rescheduled meetings.

The main effect of COVID is less face to face contact and clients are fine with that as well.

The number of cases and clients decreased, which impacted revenue.

The pandemic largely did not affect me because I was already working from a home office and used to communicating with clients by phone and email.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

There is no court pressure to resolve cases, to force the state to be honest about what they can prove or what witnesses they have available, and defendant's who are innocent and being held for years before seeing the inside of a courtroom.

This survey appears to be very focused on litigation. That is not the only thing lawyers do. This survey may be more applicable to the profession as a whole if you thought about the diversity of practices. I'm a mediator in private practice and I saw a big decline in my caseload

TONS OF FILES AT MY HOUSE!!!! I did not and do not physically go into the office every day. I remain working from home, and go to the office once a week, if that.

Tough to collaborate with colleagues

Tremendous affect many more virtual mediations, settlements, delayed trials, virtual meetings.

Trial delays

UNK

Use zoom

Less travel

very little

Video meetings with clients not based here have become the norm.

Virtual and remote platforms are being utilized for all functions and will continue post COVID in a hybrid fashion. Productivity has increased and access to services is easier for complainants using remote and virtual options

virtual mediations now

Virtual remote hearings have made time management better because I don't have to spend time travelling to and from court hearings.

We are in the office half days only, doing work from home at other times. The flow of new clients is very slow. Old long-time clients almost entirely stopped making payments for most of 2020, but have resumed payments in 2021. We are expecting to be working in the office full time this summer, now that we are all vaccinated.

We had to make investments in computers and technology. We use a lot of video conferencing software

We had to switch to having remote meetings with clients. This worked well for many clients, but other clients struggled with the technology.

We have all learned new skills that will benefit everyone in our practice going forward.

We have become more electronically savvy. We have found ways to better serve our clients in innovative ways. Our more senior attorneys have become adept in the use of new technologies.

We have found that some of the processes and adjustments we had to make during the pandemic have been beneficial and will continue to be implemented.

We have had to adjust to working remote

We have limited litigation activity with our firm practice.

We lost opportunities to go to hearings and trials.

we needed more advance time to prep

We were only able to survive and not lay off any employees because of the PPP loan. As a criminal defense attorney, violent crime seems to be greatly increased whereas arrests for small crimes have decreased. Bottom line: more stressful felony cases with more demanding, anxious clients.

We've had fewer contact with clients, which has changed the dynamic of client-attorney relationships.

With delayed trial dates, cases have moved along more slowly.

Other Ways Covid-19 Pandemic Impacted Practice

Witnesses experienced illness

work from home

Worked from home; virtual hearings. Love it.

Working at home.

Working from home is really a pain.

Working on a hybrid basis (remotely and in the office)

Working remotely and not having to deal with the physical aspect of going to court (the commute, parking, waiting, going through security) have VASTLY improved my enjoyment in practicing law.

X

Zoom meetings when possible to limit contact with clients who are comfortable with such arrangements. Also, arranging for electronic payment of legal fees, as well as filing fees for applications filed with US DHS.

Zoom meetings, remote hearings

Reasons Caseloads Increased

Attrition and administration change in federal Government

Because all of our client agencies and other agencies were also working remotely.

Because I work in health care - review clinical trials, etc.

because older cases were not resolving while newer cases were coming into the system

Broader geographic reach for new client's

Caseload is not really the proper word for my practice but the need to manage customers and personnel in appropriate ways demanded more time, thought and the creation of new policies everyday. Dealing with new and sometimes well intentioned but business killing legislative enactments was also an enormous challenge

Cases in the pipeline were not resolved by judicial determination or deadline-driven or hearing-driven settlement. New cases requiring prompt action were taken or cases already in the intake process when the pandemic occurred became part of the caseload.

Closed courts

COVID-19 related advice and counsel and increased litigation.

Cyclical nature of crime

Due to staff leaving and management not replacing just shifting work to others

Easier accessibility for complainants using remote and virtual platforms

Federal money.

Fewer dispositions but only a marginal decrease in new filings

Financial problems of clients (both new and existing).

For a number of reasons, most un-related to the pandemic.

Greater number of external complaints filed

I can only assume families being forced together.

I have no idea.

I kept getting new cases as old ones weren't going to hearings

I practice employment law, and there were many new laws about which my clients needed advice.

I practice entirely in the world of unemployment insurance benefits, so the combination of the pandemic and the government efforts to deal with the large numbers of unemployed workers was a double fisted hit.

In the past people waited a while before opening probate. I now have clients who may need the funds in the estate so probate clients have substantially increased for my practice.

Increase in bankruptcy filings and distressed debt.

Increase in causes of actions and a decrease in the number of attorneys.

Increase in domestic violence and handgun arrests as well as bail reviews.

increase in marketing.

Increased demand for affordable housing

In-house attorneys were less able to handle their workload.

It was a very good year in environmental law

It was our second year in a new practice. We expected our caseload to increase.

Lots of clients needed our services

More cases have been filed and older cases are not settling and are getting postponed.

More cases related to covid, mask wearing, etc

More cases taking longer to resolve

More clients wanting to pursue a divorce during COVID; more clients wanting to file emergency petitions based on alleged COVID safety issues

Reasons Caseloads Increased

More focus on company assets brought clients in and activated existing clients

more folks in need of services (low income, job loss, needing public assistance) and more capacity to assist because more time

More new clients.

more people needing assistance with protective orders and not being able to access more mainstream services

More people realized that they needed wills and trusts. People wanted to update their documents in case they got sick.

more people were having Wills prepared and were doing estate preparation in general.

More separations and divorces.

more violent crimes that summer - not sure why

Much more business due to Pandemic, particularly in leasing work

Natural growth and ability to respond to virtual life more quickly than others.

New Clients

New questions arising about COVID-19 and new legislation passed regarding COVID-19.

No clients were entering guilty pleas or going to trial

not sure

Nothing is being resolved or closed out.

People had time to address their estate planning needs and were, perhaps, feeling vulnerable.

People were home more?

Rates stayed low and housing market was strong with sales and or refinanced

Real estate closings

Real estate closings increased significantly - huge workload while managing sanitation guidelines, social distance guidelines, masking, etc. No fun!

Real estate was busy.

The number of cases received remained constant, but the ability to resolve them was severely impacted by not being able to have trials so a huge backlog ensued

There was a pandemic.

Took on more work because pending cases were thrown into limbo or postponed into oblivion. People are angry and more litigious, spike in domestic cases, spikes in commercial breach of contract cases and collections.

We are a family law firm. COVID related visitation issues skyrocketed, emergency issues increased and increase in number of clients.

We handled emergency COVID motions for modification/release. I'm not sure why it increased otherwise, but it did.

We signed up more new cases than the year prior

worked more

Reasons Caseloads Decreased

At the beginning of the pandemic our corporate clients struggled. They have since rebounded.

Because we did not have as many clients calling or retaining us and because the courts were physically closed I believe potential clients didn't understand that court was still ongoing and that we could do virtually everything that was needed. Also because legal fees were a luxury that many people did not feel they could afford.

because we're immigration lawyers and no one can get into the country!

Business dedicated less resources and attention to litigation.

Businesses were closed. No ability to market

Client base reduction, no court appearances, no new case filings

Client had less funds, court action lower

Clients postponed their programs and that reduced the amount of legal work they needed.

Collections activities and eviction activities ceased due to COVID moratoriums

Court ordered matters reduced

Covid

Covid, no one had money to hire lawyers, everyone heard courts were closed, everyone was working from home

Defense firm; fewer cases filed and fewer cases referred for defense

downsizing and change of direction of client firms

During the lock down and with more people working remotely, fewer people were driving their cars thus fewer accidents.

Employment cases went way down- people got laid off due to Covid, etc. Family law cases decreased- lay offs impacted people's income and ability to pay for legal fees, etc. Fewer people reaching out with other legal matters- most people stayed at home for months and limited their outside activities, etc.

Fear and laziness on the part of people and courts who didn't want to work, were genuinely (though irrationally) afraid to leave their homes.

fewer arrests

Fewer auto accidents and DUI arrests I presume

Fewer car accidents

fewer cases filed and processed

Fewer cases were brought into court, and many cases closed.

fewer clients looking for counsel

Fewer drivers led to fewer auto accidents, and also the pandemic led to fewer people wanting to seek treatment for their injuries to avoid exposure.

Fewer litigation assignments from clients. Fewer attorneys.

Fewer new clients.

Fewer offices and businesses were open. Fewer entertainment and social gatherings. Fewer cars on the road. Fewer accidents. Fewer people injured. Fewer clients.

For about 4 months, we had no new clients or movement on existing caseloads.

General decrease in new clients/new matters

Guess

i cannot see anyone in person

I could earn better pay doing copy-editing than doing document review.

I have a criminal practice. Number of arrests down

I really do not appreciate surveys that require answers to questions that are not relevant to my practice, therefore I am not accurately answering any additional questions.

I stopped taking asylum cases, which account for at least half of my practice, because preparing an asylum application is just too difficult to do remotely. The clients were not going to have their preliminary hearings this year anyway, and so I did not see the urgency and taking those cases and exposing myself to clients. For the most part I told them to go elsewhere if they wanted to meet in person, which is what they did

If you were people on the road means fewer accidents and fewer people working means fewer Worker's Compensation cases. In addition fewer medium to low level crimes resulting arrests

Reasons Caseloads Decreased

In the early days of the pandemic, there just seemed to be far fewer people being arrested, which led to less criminal cases.

It's hard to say. Some people did not want to deal with family law matters during the pandemic. And after the initial fear, people became unmotivated again to get their estate planning done. That's my guess. also, knowing how far behind the courts are, I think people wanted to wait.

Lack of client continue

Lack of drivers on the road

I do auto accidents and DWIs

Large gap in filings

less appeals because less circuit court decisions were made. i expect it to significantly increase in late 2021

Less arrests in the city

less cars on the road

Less cars on the road meant a reduction in personal injury leads / clients

less cases

Less clients came to our practice

Less driving means less car accidents. Not going into work means less Worker's Comp. claims. Less arrests means less criminal or traffic defense work.

Less filings because trial dates couldn't be had and because statutes of limitations extended

less people driving and less people working

Less referrals

Less travel, fewer accidents, people fearful to come in???

Marketing is much more difficult. Clients postponing legal services. Clients cannot afford legal services.

Most of my clients are people seeking legal status in the US and the immigrant communities are not comfortable with Zoom meetings, preferring to see a lawyer face to face to discuss even the simplest of matters.

Most potential clients were not traveling as much as compared to previous years and a lot of clients were out of work due to the pandemic; therefore, the number of personal injury cases and work-related injury decreased.

My practice has a heavy concentration of debtor bankruptcies, education (special Ed), & litigation. All of these areas saw a decrease in activity.

no ability to meet with clients and lack of working people causing less injury to workers

No comment.

No trials scheduled

Nobody is filing cases

Not as many clients working, less disputes.

Not as many filings from run-off and/or reduction in clients getting out and engaging attorneys.

Not as many people deciding to litigate cases.

Not sure

Pandemic

Partly because of lack of networking, visibility

people put their disputes on hold - didn't have money to pay for litigation.

People were less willing to initiate suits

People were not driving or going to work so there were fewer auto accidents or on the job injuries

People were not out and about; fewer interactions = fewer legal conflicts

People were not out committing crimes and police were not conducting proactive enforcement. Family law clients did not want to move forward on divorces due to economic uncertainty

People were required to stay home, which means they didn't drive. People who didn't drive didn't cause accidents that hurt people. People who didn't get hurt didn't call me. I opened 4 cases in 2020.

practice reduced

Reasons Caseloads Decreased

reduced ability to pay, reduced service offerings with courts not hearing merits trials.

Reduced mediation referrals. By caseload, I am using the number of mediations conducted, not the number referred, though the one flows from the other.

scheduling issues to keep rooms and venues clear with reduced numbers present

See 5a answer

Social distancing and maintaining low levels

Some people wanted to meet face to face when I wasn't willing to. Others put off projects that were in the pipeline

stupid question

The Social Security Administration closed.

Unknown

Unsure

Various reasons

We are a divorce and custody law firm and the reality of the pandemic eliminated a lot of options for potential clients. Some of them were concerned about the finances of litigation, some of them were unable to move out of the family home, and some of them didn't have the emotional bandwidth to deal with a pandemic and a separation or custody litigation

We did not start getting any new clients until late 2020.

We had fewer new clients contact us

we were not permitted to file new cases after march.