

Westlaw Forms Quick Reference Sheet

SOS Billing Manager

SETTING UP THE BILLING FEATURE IN SOS

You must first activate the Billing feature in SOS before you can keep track of your firm's finances. To activate the Billing feature, click **Setup ► System manager ► System settings**. The **System Settings** box appears. Click the **Billing Settings** and place a check in the **Enable Billing for All Users – Will take Effect When Small Office Suite is Restarted** box. The next time you close and open SOS, the Billing feature will be activated.

CLIENT LEVEL VS. CASE LEVEL BILLING

SOS provides two levels of billing so you may view a single case's account or all of a single client's case accounts. In Billing Manager, highlighting the client will provide you access to all of that client's case billing information. If you are in Billing Manager and you highlight a client and case, you will have access only to that case's billing information.

TRUST VS. RETAINER

For SOS purposes retainers and trusts are distinguished as follows:

Retainer – Funds paid to a firm that are deemed earned at the time of receipt.

Trust – Funds paid to a firm for future services and not earned until the services are performed.

Because of the different perceptions regarding retainers and trusts, SOS has put the caption *non-trust* in front of the word *retainer* so you know not to accept trust funds as a retainer. It is important that you understand and feel comfortable with the distinction made between retainers and trusts because the lawyer is ultimately responsible for the application or misapplication of trust funds.

1. BEGINNING BALANCES

A. To create a Beginning Balance:

1. Click **Billing ► Beginning Balances**.
2. Highlight a client and case, then click **New**.
3. The **Create a beginning balance** box appears.
4. Fill in the requested amounts.
5. To the right of the fields you are filling in are comments in parenthesis.
6. These comments help you determine whether the balance should be a positive or a negative.
7. Click **OK**.
8. Repeat this procedure for as many cases as desired.
9. Click **Process All**.
10. At this point, the beginning balances for ALL contacts and ALL cases are created.

NOTE: The beginning balances are not created only for the highlighted clients and cases, but for **all** clients and cases when you click the **Process All** button.

2. SECURITY

NOTE: The Security option helps prevent unauthorized access to your financial information. Only set up security if it is considered necessary.

A. To set up security levels for your staff, perform these steps:

1. Click **Setup ► System Manager ► System Settings**.
2. Click the **Security** tab.
3. In the **Security Settings** area, click **On**.
4. A box labeled **Min Password Length** and a button titled **Staff** appear. Enter the number of characters in your password.
5. Click the **Staff** button. The **Staff Members** box appears.
6. Click **New** to enter a new staff member's information, or highlight the staff member for whom you are setting up security levels and click **Update**.
7. Enter needed information in the **Adding a Staff Record** box or the **Changing a Staff Record** box.
 - a. Set up the staff member's security level.
 - b. You may find descriptions of the five security levels on the screen of the **Security** tab.
 - c. Click **OK**, then click **Close**.
8. Click **OK**.

3. TRUSTS

A. To set up a trust account:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. On the **General** tab, click the **Edit Case Billing Settings** button.
4. The **Case Billing settings** area becomes active.
5. Complete the required fields in the section titled **Trust**.
 - a. Provide the amount of the initial trust deposit requested.
 - b. Place a check in the box if you want to automatically request a trust deposit when the trust account falls below the amount that you enter into the adjoining field.
 - c. In the field at the bottom, provide a message to place on bills when the trust account falls below the amount entered above.
6. Click **OK**.

B. To enter a trust deposit, refund money to the client, or transfer funds to the law firm:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click the **Trust Account** tab.
4. Click **New**.
5. The **Trust Transaction will be added** box appears.
6. Fill in the **Date, Transaction Type, Amount,** and **Description**.
7. Click **OK**.

C. To update a trust deposit:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click the **Trust Account** tab.
4. Highlight the transaction you want to update.
5. Click **Update**.
6. The **Trust Transaction will be changed** box appears.
7. Make the needed changes to the information.
8. Click **OK**.

D. To delete a trust deposit (Pre-Bill):

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click the **Trust Account** tab.
4. Highlight the transaction you want to delete.
5. Click **Delete**.
6. The **Delete Warning** box appears.
7. Click **Yes**.

4. CHARGES

A. To add a new charge:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click the **New Charge** button.
4. The **Billing Slip will be added** box appears.

5. Provide the requested information.
6. There are three slip types.
 - a. **Time charge** – lets you charge by the hour.
 - b. **Flat fee** – lets you charge a dollar amount.
 - c. **Expense/Markup** – lets you add a markup on goods or services provided.
7. Click **OK**.

B. To update a charge (Pre-Bill):

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click on the **Charges** tab.
4. Highlight the charge that you want to update (you may only update unbilled charges).
5. Click **Update Charges**.
6. The **Billing slip will be changed** box appears.
7. Make the necessary changes.
8. Click **OK**.

Note: To Update a charge you must not have billed the charge. If the charge has already been billed, you should adjust the charge.

C. To adjust a charge (Post-Billing):

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click on the **Charges** tab.
4. In the **View** section, click the **All** or **Billed** radio button to view charges that have already been billed.
5. Highlight the charge that you want to adjust (you may only adjust billed charges).
6. Click **Adjust Charges**.
7. The **Billing slip will be changed** box appears.
8. Click **New**.
9. The **Added Charge Adjusting Record** box appears.
 - a. Enter the **New Fee Amount**, if the amount being adjusted is a fee.
 - b. Enter the **New Exp Amount**, if the amount being adjusted is an expense.
10. Click **OK**.

Note: To **Adjust** a charge you must have billed the charge. If the charge has not been billed, you should **update** the charge.

D. To delete a charge (Pre-Bill):

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. Click on the **Charges** tab.
4. Highlight the charge that you want to delete (you may not **delete** billed charges or adjustments).
5. Click **Delete Charges**.
6. A warning appears with the message **Are you sure you wish to PERMANENTLY delete this unbilled record?**

7. Click **Yes**.

5. PAYMENTS

A. Enter new non-trust payments:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Choose a client from the **Contact Name** list.
3. Click the **New Non-Trust Payment** button.
4. The **New Payment** box appears.
5. Provide the necessary information.
6. Click the **Split** button if you want to allocate the payment among the cases.
 - a. The **Splitting Payment** box appears.
 - b. Double click in the **Allocation** column that corresponds with the case for which you are making a payment.
 - c. Enter the amount to be allotted to this case.
 - d. Click **OK**.
7. If you have not started the case for the payment you have received, you may click on the **New Case** button.
 - a. The **Case for XX** box appears.
 - b. Provide the necessary information.
 - c. Click **OK**.
8. Click **OK**.

B. Update a non-trust payment:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Choose a client from the **Contact Name** list.
3. Choose the **Payments** tab.
4. Highlight the payment that you want to update.
5. Click on the **Update payment** button.
6. The **Update Payment** box appears.
 - a. If this payment has been billed, click **New**.
 - b. If this payment has not been billed, proceed to step 7a.
7. The **New Adjustment to a Payment Records** box appears. Enter the **New Amount**.
 - a. If there is more than one case for a client, you may allocate the payment among the cases by clicking the **Split** button.
 - b. The **Splitting Payment** box appears.
 - c. Double click in the **Allocate** column that corresponds with the case for which you are making a payment.
 - d. Enter the amount to be allotted to this case.
 - e. Click **OK** in the **Splitting Payment** box.
8. Click **OK**.

C. Delete a non-trust payment (Pre-Bill):

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Choose a client from the **Contact Name** list.
3. Choose the **Payments** tab.
4. Highlight the payment you want to delete.
5. Click on the **Delete payment** button.
6. The **Delete Warning** box appears.

7. Click **OK** to delete the payment.

D. Refund from a non-trust payment:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client.
3. Select the **Payments** tab.
4. Click the **New refund** button.
5. The **Refund will be Added** box appears.
 - a. If there is no unapplied money (money not allocated to cases) for the highlighted contact, a message box appears entitled **Money not available**.
 - b. Click **OK** to close the message box.
6. If there is money available for refund, complete the **Date of refund**, **Refund amount**, a **Description of the refund**, and the **Case to refund from** fields.
7. Click the **Split** button if you need to refund money from more than one case.
8. Click **OK**.

6. RETAINERS

A. Set up a retainer:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Highlight a client and case.
3. On the **General** tab, click the **Edit Case Billing Settings** button.
4. The **Case Billing Settings** area becomes active.
5. Complete the required fields in the section titled **Non-trust monthly retainers**.
 - a. Provide the retainer start date.
 - b. Enter the monthly amount of the retainer.
 - c. Choose the main timekeeper whose time will be billed against the retainer.
6. Click **OK**.

B. Generate a monthly retainer charge for a single client who is paying retainers on a monthly basis:

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager**.
2. Select a client and case.
3. Click the **Charges** tab.
4. Click on the button entitled **Charge Non-Trust Retainer for this Case**. A message will appear stating how many retainers were charged, or that there were no retainers to be charged.

C. Generate a monthly retainer charge for all clients who are paying retainers on a monthly basis:

1. Click **Billing ► Generate bills ► Monthly Retainers**.
2. Choose the **Billing Month** and **Billing Year**.
3. Click **OK ► Start**.

7. GENERATING BILLS

A. Pre-bill a client for all of his/her case(s):

1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager.**

2. Choose a client.

3. Click the **Generate Pre-Bills for this Client.**4. A box entitled **Select a Printer for Billing** appears.

Confirm that the printer you are using is the printer selection that appears in the box.

5. A message box appears asking, **Do you wish to PREVIEW this Report?**6. Click **Yes** and the report will be displayed on the screen.

You will be provided the choice to exit the view, print a single page or print the entire report, or

7. Click **No** and the report will start printing.**B. Pre-bill all of your firm's cases:**1. Click **Billing ► Generate bills ► Pre-bill monthly bills.**2. A box entitled **Monthly Billing Setup** appears.

a. Select the month and year that you want to pre-bill.

b. Choose the number of copies that you want to print.

c. Verify that the printer you want to use is selected.

d. If you do not want to pre-bill cases with a zero balance, place a check in the box entitled **Skip cases with no activity and a zero balance.**

3. Click **OK – Begin billing.**

4. After browsing through all of the cases and accumulating the necessary information, a box entitled **Pre-Billing completed! – Press OK to continue** appears.

5. Click **OK.** The pre-bills will start printing at this time.

NOTE: Check the accuracy of pre-bills before generating final bills. Once a final bill has been generated, you may only make changes by adjusting amounts. The adjustments will appear on the client's next bill.

C. Generate final bills for a single client:1. Click **Billing ► Billing Manager.**

2. Choose a client.

3. Click the button entitled **Generate Bills for this Client.**4. The **Select a Printer for Billing** box appears.

5. Confirm that the printer you are using is the printer selection that appears in the box.

6. Click **OK.**7. A message box appears asking, **Do you wish to PREVIEW this Report?**a. Click **Yes** and the report will be displayed on the screen.

You will be provided the choice to exit the view, print a single page or print the entire report, or

b. Click **No** and the report will start printing.

8. If you choose to view the final bill before printing, the Report Preview window appears.

a. If you print the final bill, the billing process is complete.

b. If you cancel at this point, the final bill will not be generated.

D. Generate final bills for all of your clients:1. Click **Billing ► Generate bills ► Final Bills – Monthly billing.**2. Choose the **Billing Month** and **Billing Year.**

3. Set the number of copies that you want to print.

4. Make sure that the correct printer is chosen.

5. Place a check in the box entitled **Skip cases with no activity and a zero balance**, if you only want active cases with actual balances to be billed.

6. Click **OK – Begin billing.**7. A box entitled **Billing Completed! – Press OK to continue** appears.8. Click **OK** and all bills will print.**8. UNBILLING****A. Unbill a bill:**1. Select the client and case for which you want to **Unbill** the current bill.2. Click on the **Bills** tab.3. Click the **All** radio button that appears in the **View** section.

4. Highlight the most recent bill that appears on the screen.

5. The **Unbill** button activates. Click the **Unbill** button.6. The **Unbill Process** box appears.

a. The **Preparing to Unbill** warning states: *You are about to unbill a final bill. All items for all the cases on the selected bill will be set to unbilled.*

Note: Any write-offs will be reversed and any unbilled adjustments to this bill will be deleted. If you are sure this is what you want to do, press **OK** to proceed, otherwise press **Cancel.**

b. Press **OK.**7. At this point the **Posting Transactions and Retainers** or **Unbill Messages** box appears.

a. If the **Posting Transactions and Retainers** box appears, you are in the last stage of the unbilling process. Once the unbilling process is complete you will return to the **Billing Manager** and the bill that you had highlighted will be removed from the list of bills on the **Bills** tab.

b. If the **Unbill Messages** box appears, the field named *The unbill process has generated the following error messages* displays the list of message(s).

8. Click **Close** to exit the **Unbill** feature.**9. GETTING ASSISTANCE**

If you have questions regarding the message(s) that appear after reading the **Unbilling Messages** section, please call Westlaw Forms Technical Support team at 800-759-5418, option 3. To schedule a free training session or to contact your trainer, call 800-759-5418, option 4.