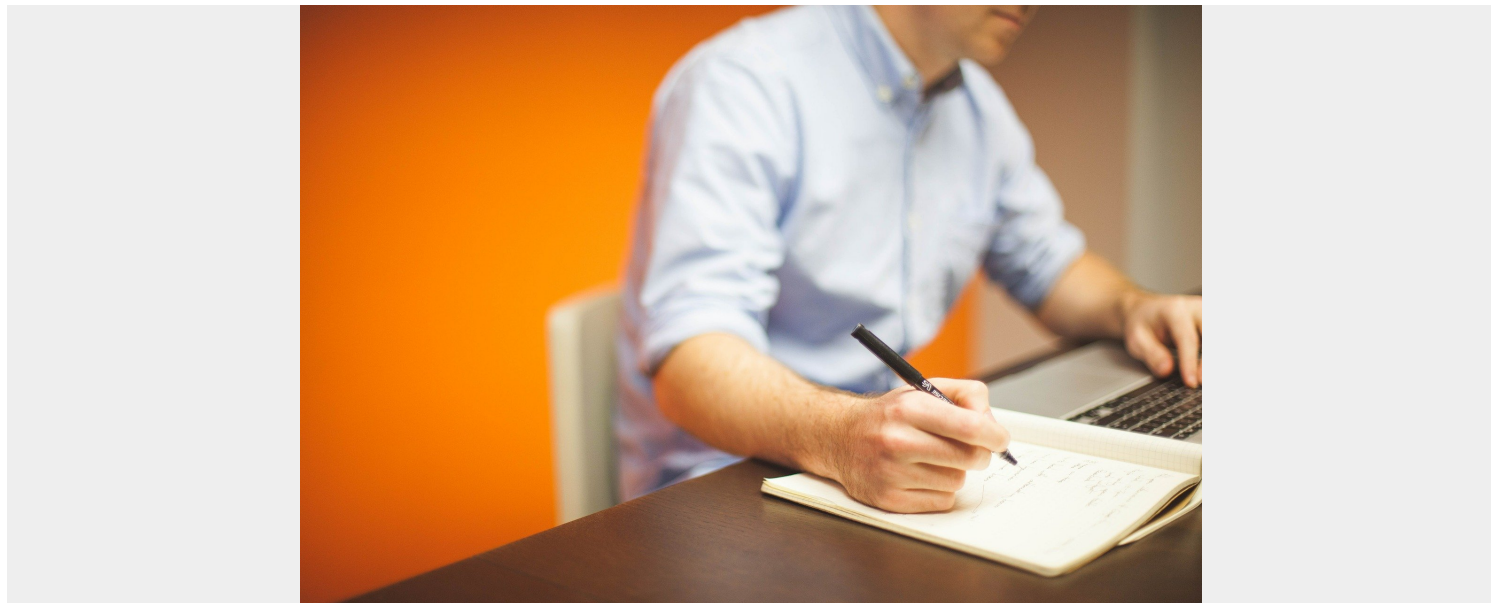


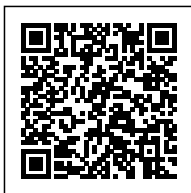
SWISS LAW FIRMS AT THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

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Category: [Focus](#)

Tags: [Baker McKenzie](#), [Coronavirus](#), [Ex-Featured](#), [Froriep](#), [Lalive](#), [Lenz & Staehelin](#), [Loyens & Loeff](#), [Niederer Kraft Frey](#), [Pestalozzi](#), [remote work](#), [Tax partner](#), [Vischer](#), [Walder Wyss](#)



Considering the accelerated spread of the [coronavirus](#), in this moment a lot of people are probably **working from home**, legal sector included. This may be because their law firm or [in-house legal team](#) has decided on home-working as a new Covid-19 era policy, or perhaps the business is trying to battle on regardless, but some employees have been able to opt-out and stay home. This situation would probably be **the biggest collective experiment** that will show if legal sector is able to work from home and still function. There is not only one challenge: legal sector has actually to ensure the normal quality of [service to client](#), to comply with safety measures for both staff and client and to survive the challenging time of this pandemic.

Switzerland declared an "**extraordinary situation**" under the Epidemic Act, causing a near shut down and allowing the government to adopt severe measures to protect the public. The Federal Council declared the extraordinary situation until April 19. Grocery stores and healthcare facilities remain open, while school closings have also been scheduled for two weeks. As for law firms, some of them had already taken some measures, others react slightly later. Others instead opted for some online initiatives. Below is an outline of how some Swiss law firms are reacting to the pandemic.

[Walder Wyss](#)

This law firm has announced to have chosen remote working since last Friday. "The first

experience is positive, our systems are functioning well and our employees are highly motivated to overcome this crisis together with all of you”, they write. As new ways of working, Walder Wyss specifies: “we will replace physical meetings by other means of communication such as video conferences if possible”.

Lalive

“Our priorities are to act responsibly vis-à-vis our community, to keep our employees and our clients safe and to ensure continuity in the provision of our legal services” is the vision of Lalive, which bases its measure based on recommendations and requirements issued by national and international authorities. They activate the continuity plan, which “enables all of our lawyers and sufficient support staff to work remotely and to avoid full office closures”.

Pestalozzi

It’s not specified in their release if remote work has been the answer. However, they have taken “several measures to protect the health and safety of our employees and communities. We are doing everything we can to limit the spread of the virus while assuring business continuity”, they write in a statement. At the same time their “partners and associates remain fully available via their usual telephone numbers and email addresses”.

Loyens & Loeff

They state to “take no risks in relation to the health and wellbeing of our people and clients, their families, and society at large”. That’s why Loyens & Loeff asked to all its employees to work from home, unless there are urgent reasons not to do so. “Our It infrastructure is set up to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our email and documents system in order to securely work both in the office and remotely”. They specify as well that precautionary measures for anyone who has to work in has been implemented and that any in-person client meetings or events will be postponed or organized through telephone or video conference.

Froriep

This law firm does not specify if staff is working remotely. But an interesting initiative is taken: an online forum Covid-19 which offers legal information on the effects of the corona virus. They provide a platform where you can find answers to the most frequently asked questions (free of charge).

Vischer

As for their operations, they specify the intention “to reduce the risk of transmission and thus contain the spread of the virus”. Vischer writes to have taken already measures to enable employees to carry out a considerable amount of their work from home. “whenever possible, we hold both internal and external meetings in the form of telephone conferences or video conferences”.

Lenz & Staehelin

“International and national travel of our staff has been severely restricted and participation in external conferences and events has been cancelled for the time being. Whenever possible we have asked our staff to replace meetings with telephone and video conferences”, Lenz & Staehelin writes in a note. At the same time, they say to have implemented their business continuity plan to face the possibility of an office closure. “Our staff are fully prepared and equipped to work remotely, accessing firm systems by means that maintain the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all data”, they specify.

Tax partner

This law firm says to have already developed a set of measures that now is putting into place in order to fully continue their business operations, despite the extraordinary situation. Their staff members will serve clients also from their respective home offices. “We have laid the foundation for this with our thoroughly tested, state-of-the-art IT infrastructure. We will not meet or consult in person but strictly by telephone or other electronic means”, they state in a note.

Niederer Kraft Frey

They have activated its business contingency plan: “we have asked all our employees to work from home, unless there are urgent reasons not to do so. Our IT infrastructure is set up to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our email and documents system in order to securely work both in the office and remotely”. To do this “all calls to our partners and associates are rerouted to their mobile and/or home office numbers”.

Baker McKenzie

An initiative which involve all offices and EMEA part included is a “coronavirus resource center”. This tool, thought for clients, make available materials that help all type of clients understand, prepare and respond quickly to the significant challenges this extraordinary situation poses.