

# Professional & Legal Firm Office Design Trends

Fall 2020

***Your firm is unique and has a unique firm culture and your real estate needs should reflect, support, and encourage your culture to flourish.***

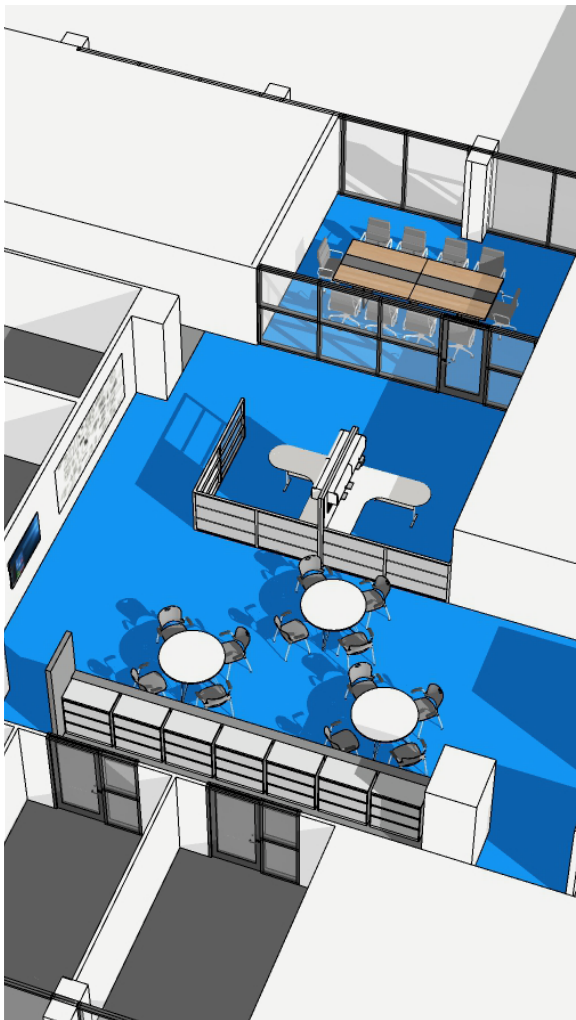
We at KKT understand that some professional services and legal firms are currently re-assessing their physical office needs. Not only is this important stemming from the ongoing pandemic response but also this is usually a 12-month to 18-month process to identify, develop and construct new spaces for any office in downtown Tulsa. Our recent, in-depth workplace analysis and current design services for local and regionally based law firms has given us the data and research needed to provide you with the most informed options providing precedents for you to visualize and analyze comparisons to how your firm operates. Your firm is unique and has a unique firm culture and your real estate needs should reflect, support, and encourage your culture to flourish.

## The main goals for most law firm office relocations include:

- Attracting and retaining multi-generational talent while trying to minimize real estate costs.
- Planning for the future business needs with additional capacity for adaptability.
- Flexibility and technology integration.
- Creating healthy and safe indoor environments that promote collaboration and productivity.

## Topics to consider while undergoing a discussion on real estate should include:

1. Should private offices be standardized sizes?
2. Should public and private areas be separated?
3. Should you offer shared offices or hoteling offices for visiting, remote or mobile partners?
4. Do you still need a physical law library?
5. What are your future ratios for support personnel?
6. How is technology integrated now and does your facilities provide space for future adaptability?
7. Does your furniture support your functional needs?



Open Office Conceptual Sketch, KKT Architects, Inc.

## 1. Should private offices be standardized sizes?

There are many advantages to creating a one-size office for the Associates and Partners that eliminates the variation as well as transition needs due to promotion,

### TREND

150 -  
216 SF

Standard  
Offices

departmental growth, etc.

This strategy is sometimes acknowledged as flattening the hierarchy but provides a lot of flexibility and adaptability for

a long-term lease. Standardizing furniture solutions, with some moveable pieces, can allow for easier maintenance and yet the flexibility provides some individualization. Secondary to this question is how much transparency should your offices offer? Should you be able to have transparency to see who is available to connect and discuss a situation? Would this transparency allow daylighting to the interior office space? Should the offices remain primarily on the perimeter?



Vast.Bank Executive Offices, KKT Architects, Inc.

## 2. Should public and private areas be separated?

We have seen a variation in how firms respond to this question, specifically derived from their business culture/business identity. If clients are kept to a public reception/conferencing area then there are benefits to allowing the private work areas to be more collaborative, interactive and social with less formality with a variety of conference sizes and spaces (war rooms) for internally meetings. This also would allow more formality to exist in the upfront client spaces, such as the traditional board room and other meeting spaces. Or, these could be combined and one might offer a mobile working cafe as a shared amenity space for clients and professionals to interact in a less formal setting?

## 3. Should you offer shared offices or hoteling offices for visiting, remote or mobile partners?

In today's professional environment there is a lot of room to provide flexibility for part-time or full-time remote workers. As more staff work remote or part-time, there is some opportunity to consider hoteling office spaces or convertible offices spaces to accommodate those staff in the office, or re-allocate that space for other uses when not occupied. Protocols around cleaning procedures are important to include.

## 4. Do you still need a physical law library?

This can remain a nostalgic space for focused research work by staff or a librarian, or the traditional "library" could be re-interpreted as a collaborative, interactive social space that drives connectivity among departments and staff.

## 5. What are your future ratios for support personnel?

Are the ratios changing from your historical firm roots as to how many professionals each support personnel collaborates with? Is there a need for more shared spaces for accounting, IT, admin, marketing, research or other departments, and would there be a benefit in terms of productivity and shared knowledge if some of these teams were co-located?

**TREND**  
**4:1**  
Attorneys to  
Support Staff



Law Library Concept Sketch, KKT Architects, Inc.

## 6. How is technology integrated now and does your facilities provide space for future adaptability?

This includes the private office organization and set up for technology including your server and IT storage needs. With technology and equipment, it is often easier to incorporate an IT staff on hand to assist with routine and non-routine issues on site and that requires additional space. Also, how are your meeting spaces established – do you have capability for easy technology integration to be responsive for an impromptu meetings, virtual meetings, and other digital communication? Are you able to have an all-hands meeting currently?



Tri County Technology Center School of Business & Entrepreneurship, KKT Architects, Inc.

## 7. Does your furniture support your functional needs?

Are you storing as much paperwork in your office as you were required to in the past? Do you know what is in your file cabinets? There has been discussion for some time on whether or not to incorporate sit-to-stand desking to improve opportunities for health and wellness. As standing meetings are becoming more popular, conference and collaboration tables that are standing height are becoming more and more utilized for shorter, touch base meetings. Technology is improving how furniture allows us to connect and transform spaces, including conference rooms, cafes and ancillary areas.



Law Firm Conceptual Rendering, KKT Architects, Inc.



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## Conclusion

Employees want to be in a space to a space where they feel confident they can be productive, social, and safe. And safety includes more than just your physical surroundings, but also your emotional and mental safety; knowing that your company is taking the post COVID workplace seriously by addressing those concerns, will lead to a more successful workplace. If you would like personalized advice, a workspace review, or individualized recommendations, the KKT design team is knowledgeable and we would be happy to help you analyze your facilities. Please give us a call and we will discuss and assist you with the best recommendations in a timely and efficient manner.



*Sanguine Gas Exploration, KKT Architects, Inc.*



*Owner, Sarah Gould, AIA, A4LE (Center)  
with Leadership Team*

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## About KKT

KKT Architects is a full-service architecture, interior design and engineering firm based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Our team is composed of knowledgeable, open-minded individuals and we are always exploring new ideas and strategies with our clients. Our expertise in both healthcare and commercial office design make KKT a logical first choice to help you navigate the unprecedented challenges facing the business world today. As workplace experts, we have experience providing building design, space planning, interior design, remodeling and furniture selection services for corporations, building owners, tenants and leasing agents. Our professional design team is skilled at developing engaging and productive spaces that are accommodating to a wide range of workforce and work styles.