

Law Firm Self-Report User Guide

Trust Safety

March 10, 2021

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Background

Rule 119.30(3) requires law firms to provide a completed Law Firm Self-Report to the Law Society of Alberta on an annual basis. The report is proof of compliance with Part 5 of the Rules. Law firms provide details regarding their practice, trust accounting and other related activities during the preceding year in this report. Usually, one Self-Report will be completed for the practice and this will satisfy the filing requirements of all the lawyers (associates and partners) of the practice. The Responsible Lawyer is accountable for all filing requirements of the law firm, as per Rule 119.3(1).

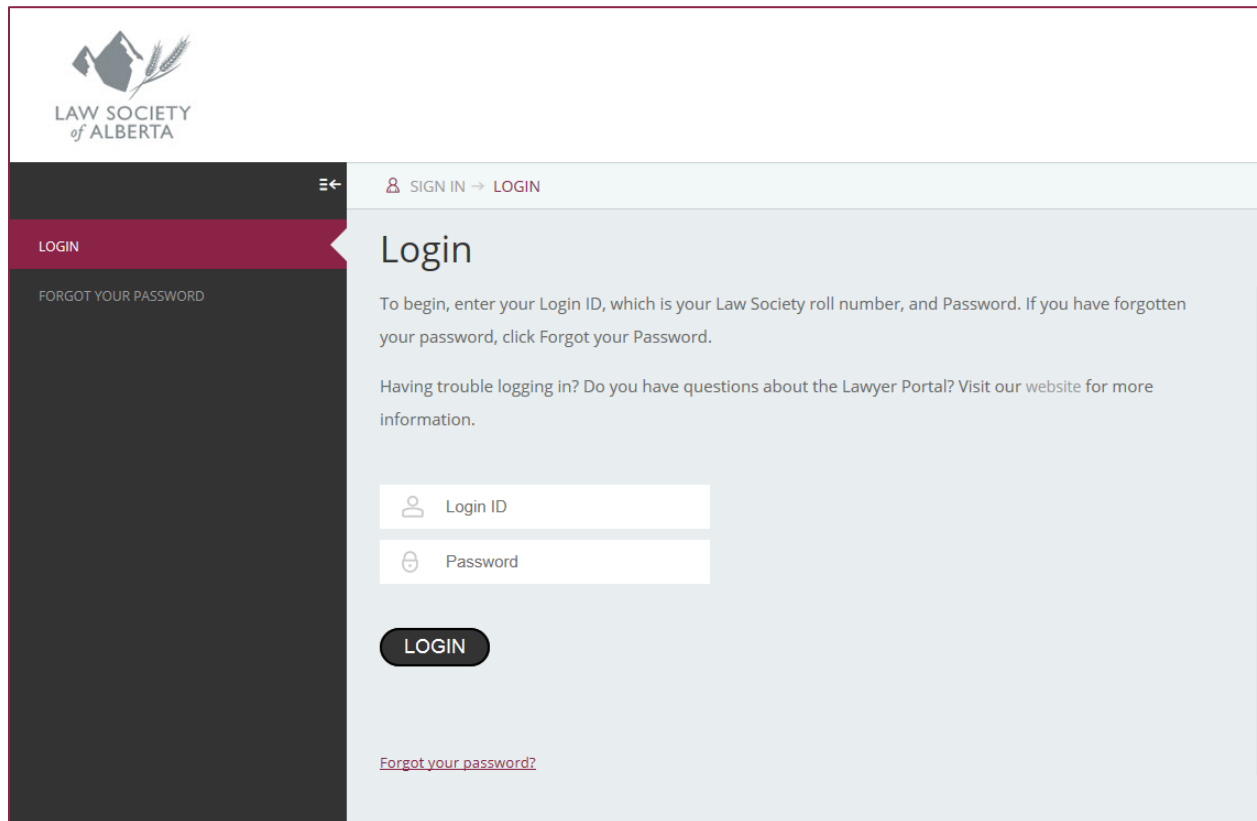
The Law Firm Self-Report provides an opportunity to ask meaningful questions to the law firm about their practice as well as their practices for bookkeeping (general and trust accounts) to assess the safety and security of trust funds. Questions asked on the Self-Report are also useful to other arms of the Law Society for regulatory purposes.

This guide provides instructions on how to complete and e-file a Self-Report online via the [Lawyer Portal](#).

Logging In

You can log in securely to the [Lawyer Portal](#) from any computer with Internet connectivity.

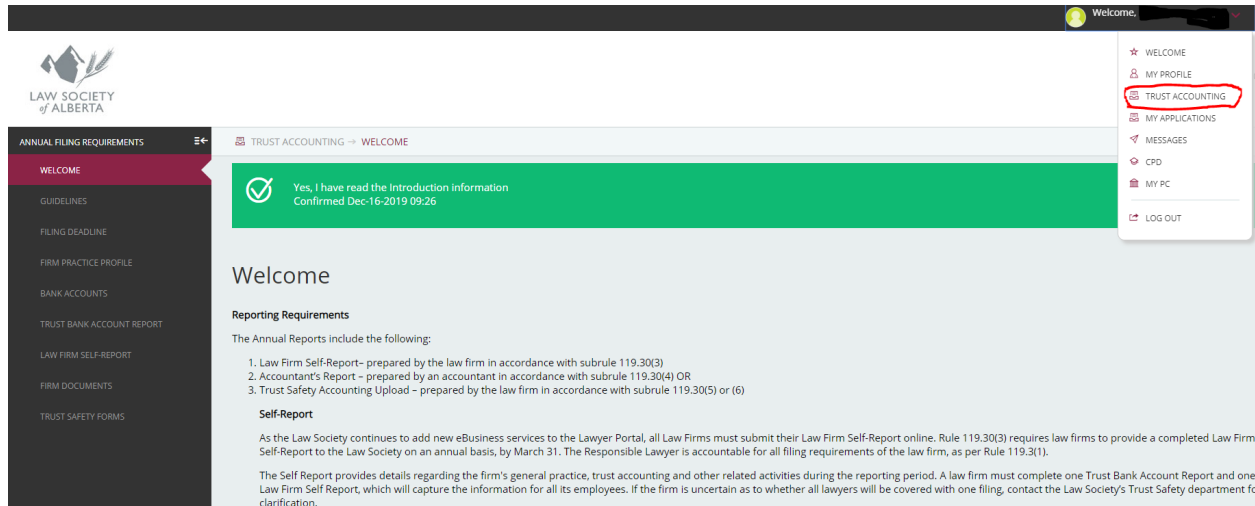
1. Open your Web browser
2. In the Address or Location field of your browser, type:
<https://lsa.memberpro.net/main/body.cfm?menu=login>
3. The login window +should appear
4. To begin, enter your Login ID, which is your Law Society Member ID, and password
5. Click Login. The portal page should appear.



The screenshot shows the login page of the Law Society of Alberta Lawyer Portal. The page features the Law Society of Alberta logo in the top left corner. A dark sidebar on the left contains a menu with 'LOGIN' and 'FORGOT YOUR PASSWORD' options. The main content area has a header with 'SIGN IN → LOGIN' and a large 'Login' heading. Below the heading, there is a paragraph of instructions: 'To begin, enter your Login ID, which is your Law Society roll number, and Password. If you have forgotten your password, click Forgot your Password.' This is followed by another paragraph: 'Having trouble logging in? Do you have questions about the Lawyer Portal? Visit our website for more information.' There are two input fields: 'Login ID' with a person icon and 'Password' with a lock icon. A dark 'LOGIN' button is positioned below the fields. At the bottom, there is a link for 'Forgot your password?'.

Navigation

1. On the Welcome page, click on the drop-down menu in the Member Account Menu and select “Trust Accounting”.



2. The Trust Accounting Menu item in the Member Account Menu is available to:
 - The current Responsible Lawyer;
 - Former Responsible Lawyers for the firm, employed at the firm as recently as three months ago; and,
 - Firm administrators.
3. The Annual Filing Requirements section is located on the left-hand side of the page.
4. On first entry to the Annual Filing Requirements section, the Welcome page is shown. No other Trust Safety pages can be viewed until the lawyer/firm administrator has confirmed that they have read this information.
5. **Trust Safety Filing Requirements** consists of four main sections. The sections that need to be completed will depend on whether the law firm operates a trust bank account.

Law Firm Situation	Firm Practice	Bank Account	Trust Bank Account	Law Firm Self-Report		
	Profile	Information	Reporting	Section A	Section B	Section C
Law firm operates only a general bank account (does not receive, disburse or handle trust money)	✓	✓	N/A	✓	✓	N/A
Law firm operates a trust bank account	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ Indicates section of the Law Firm Self-Report that must be completed

6. A lawyer may be eligible to access self-reports, bank account reports and firm practice profiles for more than one firm. In this case, they can choose which firm they are working on from the list at the top of each of these pages:

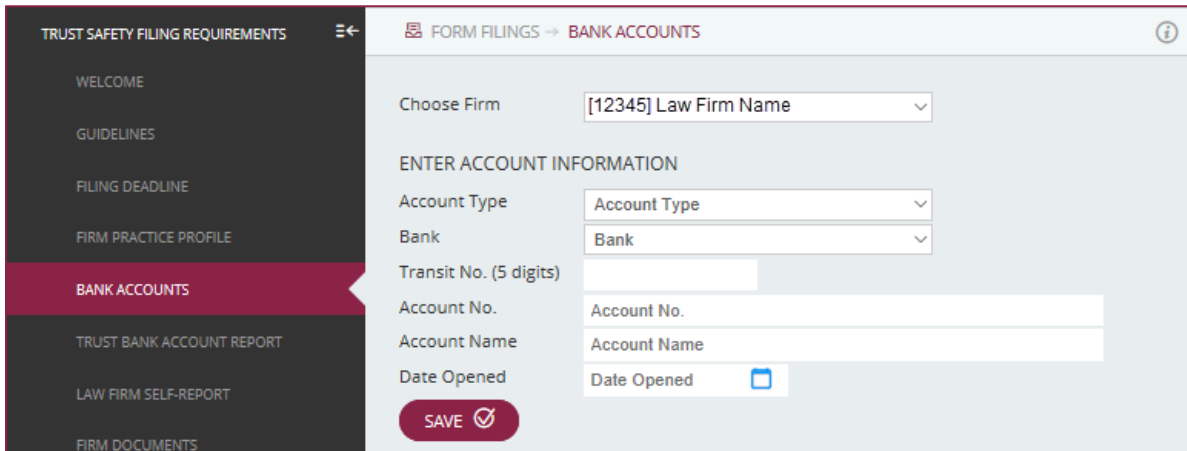
Choose Firm [12345] Law Firm Name

Once a firm has been chosen, the system will stay on that firm until the lawyer logs off.

Creating Bank Accounts

Before the Bank Account Report can be created, the bank accounts themselves must be setup, using the “Bank Accounts” menu item:

1. Enter the account information for your account, and click “Save”



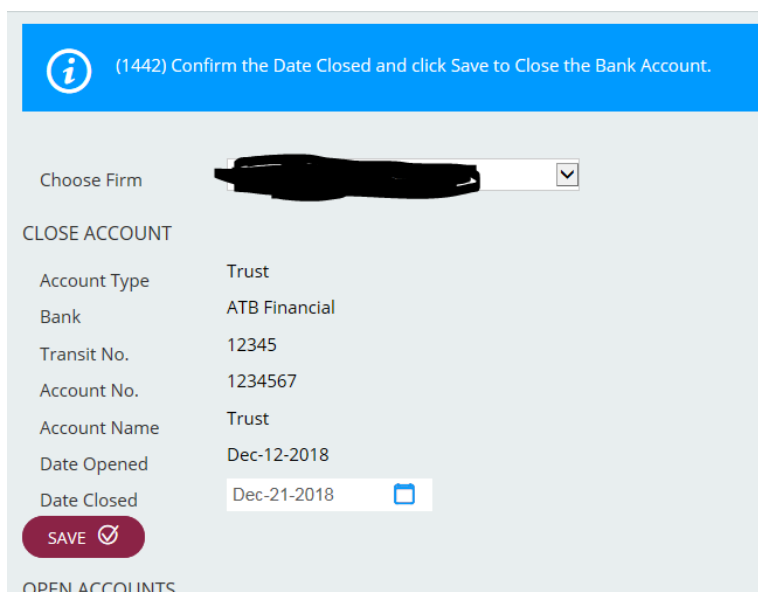
2. After saving, this displays the bank account in the list:

OPEN ACCOUNTS

Open Accounts Only Show All

Type	Bank	Transit No.	Account No.	Account Name	Date Opened	Date Closed	Actions
Trust	ATB	11111	1111111	T1	Sep-01-2017		✖ Close
SIBA	BMO	12345	1234567	SIBA 1	Sep-05-2016		✖ Close 🗑 Delete
General	RBC	33333	3333333	General 1	Mar-06-2017		✖ Close 🗑 Delete

3. Any bank accounts that have not been reported on can be removed by clicking on the Delete icon under the actions list.
4. Clicking on the “Close” icon will prompt you to enter the date that the trust account was closed.
5. A closed account can be re-opened by clicking on the “Open” button under the actions tab.

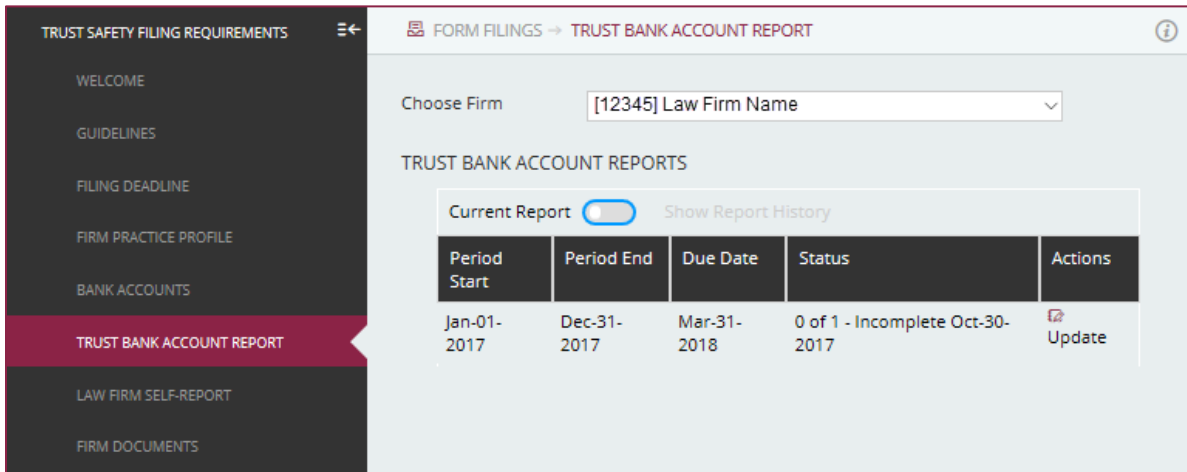


Trust Bank Account Reporting

The trust bank account report is required for any trust accounts that were open during the reporting period.

Filing a Trust Bank Account Report

1. The Trust Bank Account Report page lists the available reports. Click on “Update” to view and/or update it.



TRUST SAFETY FILING REQUIREMENTS

WELCOME

GUIDELINES

FILING DEADLINE

FIRM PRACTICE PROFILE

BANK ACCOUNTS

TRUST BANK ACCOUNT REPORT

LAW FIRM SELF-REPORT

FIRM DOCUMENTS

FORM FILINGS → TRUST BANK ACCOUNT REPORT

Choose Firm [12345] Law Firm Name

TRUST BANK ACCOUNT REPORTS

Current Report Show Report History

Period Start	Period End	Due Date	Status	Actions
Jan-01-2017	Dec-31-2017	Mar-31-2018	0 of 1 - Incomplete Oct-30-2017	Update

2. Switch between “Current Report” and “Show Report History” to change the display to show previous reports:

Current Report Show Report History

Current Report Show Report History

3. A summary of the amounts keyed is updated on saving information for each bank account.

REPORTING SUMMARY	
Pooled Trust Reconciled Balance	842.56
Pooled Separate Interest Bearing Account (SIBA) Reconciled Balance	0.00
Total Client Trust Listing (CTL)	800.00
Total SIBA CTL	0.00

- Each trust bank account that was open at any time during the reporting period is listed, and must have the information keyed.

All values are mandatory. A \$0 response is valid.

ACCOUNT 1 OF 4 TO REPORT BALANCES

1 2 3 4

Bank Name	BNS
Transit No.	12345
Account No.	1234567
Account Name	Trust - 1
Account Type	Trust
Date Opened	Dec-03-2017
Date Closed	Dec-01-2017 <input type="text"/>

REPORTED ACCOUNT BALANCES

Total Bank Deposits for the year	110.50
Total Bank Withdrawals for the year	100.50
Dec 31 Bank Statement Balance	100.00
Outstanding Cheques as of Dec 31	0.00
Outstanding Deposits as of Dec 31	0.00
Net Adjustments	0.00
Reconciled Balance as of Dec 31	100.00
Total Client Trust Listing (CTL) as of Dec 31	90.00

OUT OF BALANCE EXPLANATION

xxxx

If your recorded bank balance did not balance to your total client trust listing, you are required to provide an Out of Balance explanation.

- Before moving to the next account, **click on Save**, or the information keyed will be lost.
- Moving from one account to another is performed by clicking on the account number. The account currently being shown is in bold.

Account 2 of 3

You have 3 Bank Accounts Click to Report Balances **1** 2 3

- A bank account can be closed on this page, by choosing the date that it closed from the calendar.

ACCOUNT 1 OF 5 TO REPORT BALANCES

1 2 3 4 5

Bank Name

Transit No.

Account No.

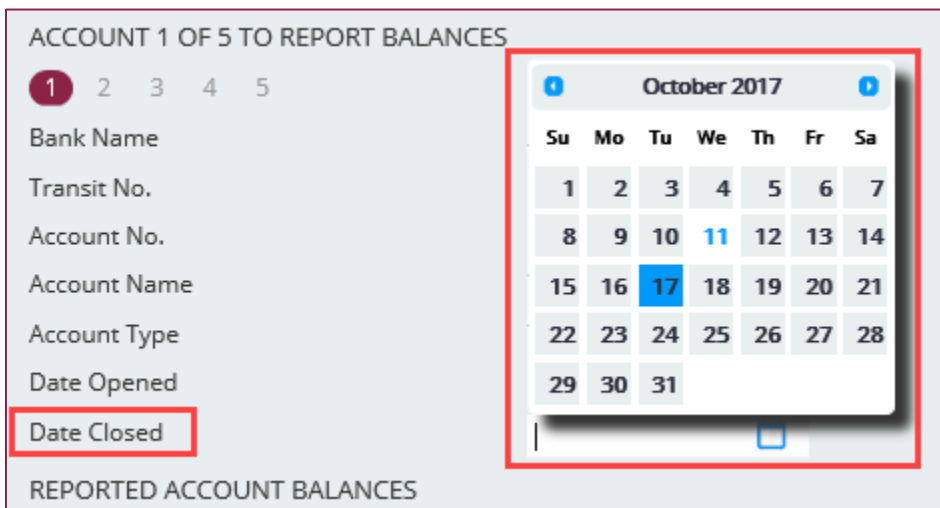
Account Name

Account Type

Date Opened

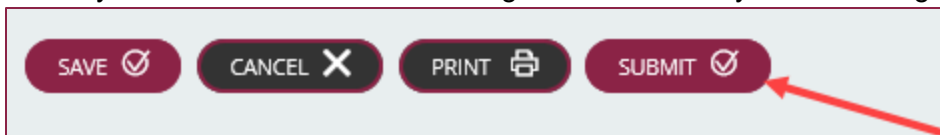
Date Closed

REPORTED ACCOUNT BALANCES



- Once all accounts have been completed, the submit button is available. This will prevent the lawyer/firm administrator from being able to make any further changes to the report.

SAVE ✓ CANCEL ✕ PRINT 🖨️ SUBMIT ✓



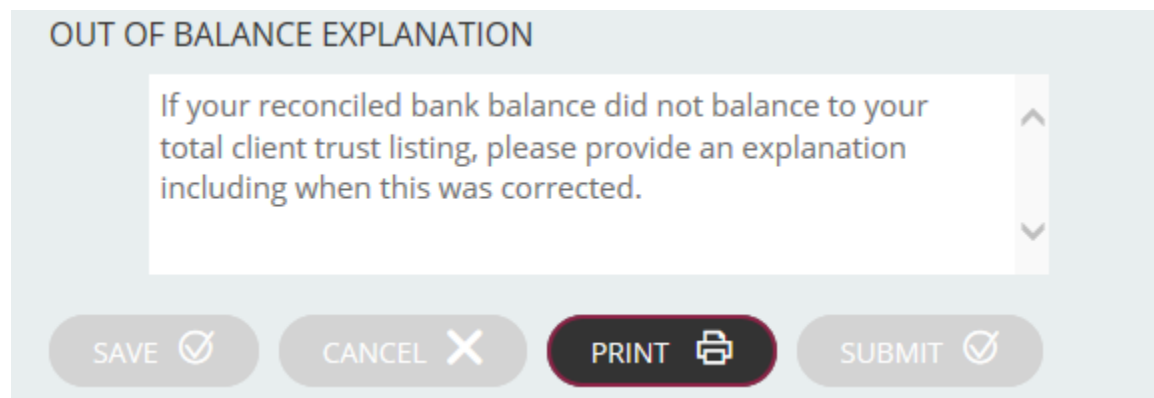
Printing the Trust Bank Account Report

The Trust Bank Account Report can be printed by clicking on the “Print” button at the bottom of the report:

OUT OF BALANCE EXPLANATION

If your reconciled bank balance did not balance to your total client trust listing, please provide an explanation including when this was corrected.

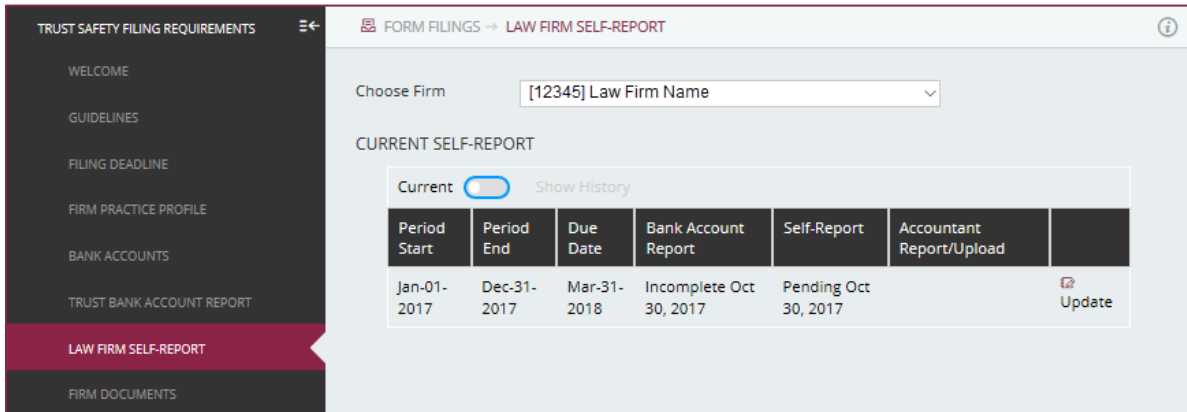
SAVE ✓ CANCEL ✕ PRINT 🖨️ SUBMIT ✓



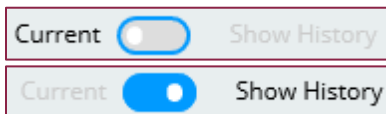
Law Firm Self-Report

Starting the Self-Report

1. The Law Firm Self-Report page lists the available reports, together with the status of the three components. Click on “Update” to view and/or update it.



2. Switch between “Current” and “Show History” to change the display to show previous reports.



3. The first page of the report shows the overall report information.



[12345] Law Firm Name	
REPORTING PERIOD	
Reported By	Authorized Contact
Period Start	Jan-01-2017
Period End	Dec-31-2017
Due Date	Mar-31-2018
Reporting Reason	Annual Filing
Bank Account Report	Incomplete Oct 17, 2017
Self Report	Pending Oct 17, 2017
Accountant Report/Upload	Pending Sep 19, 2017

Types of Self-Report Questions

A number of different question types will be asked throughout the Law Firm Self-Report, including the following:

Radio buttons

Some questions are radio button questions (i.e., only one option can be chosen). For example, Section A, question 1a.

1. a) The law firm uses the following accounting software for the trust and general bank accounts:

- PCLaw
- Esilaw
- Clio
- Cosmolex
- Other, please specify

Multi-select buttons

Some questions are multiple choice checkboxes (i.e., several options can be chosen). For example, Section B, question 3a.

3. Did the law firm maintain the following general records for the entire reporting period and to the date of certifying this Report? (Select all that were maintained during the reporting period)

a) General Journal – showing:

- Date of receipt or date of withdrawal
- Source of the general money received or the name of the payee to whom the general payment or withdrawal was made
- The form in which the money was received
- The client and file number, if applicable
- The receipt or cheque number
- The amount of the receipt, withdrawal or transfer
- A running balance of the total amount in the general account

Tables

Some questions require a table to be completed. For example, Section A, question 6.

If the loan is still outstanding, what is the current amount and interest rate?

Client Name	Loan Current Amount (\$)	Interest Rate (%)

Textboxes

Some questions require a text answer. This can be either keyed into the memo field, or provided as an attachment (see section below). For example, Section A, question 1.

If No, please provide an explanation why the necessary filings and/or remittances were not made. In addition, identify any amounts owing and/or number of filings in arrears.

Maximum 2000 characters, 2000 characters remaining

Mandatory questions

Some questions are always mandatory. These are indicated in red text and by a red asterisk beside the question. For example, Section A, question 1a.

1. At the end of the reporting period, did the law firm file and pay in full (current and any arrears)?

- * a) GST
- Yes
 - No
 - N/A

Once the mandatory question has been answered, text becomes black, and the asterisk is smaller and black.

1. At the end of the reporting period, did the law firm file and pay in full (current and any arrears)?

- * a) GST
- Yes
 - No
 - N/A

Contextual mandatory questions

Some questions become mandatory based on the response to a previous question. Initially these questions do not have the asterisk, but once the page is saved (either by clicking on Save or by changing page), the asterisk will appear. For example, Section A, question 1d.

- Initially there is no asterisk.

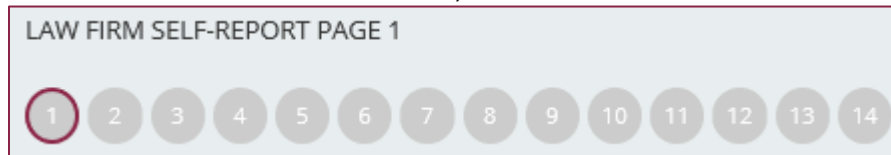
d) If No, please provide an explanation why the necessary filings and/or remittances were not made. In addition, identify any amounts owing and/or number of filings in arrears.

- Once the previous question is answered “No” and the page is saved, the asterisk is shown and the text is red.

* d) If No, please provide an explanation why the necessary filings and/or remittances were not made. In addition, identify any amounts owing and/or number of filings in arrears.

Changing pages

To change page, click on the page number at the top and bottom of each page (the current one is shown with a red circle around it).



Note: Responses to questions are saved when Save is clicked or the page is changed.



If the lawyer navigates to another page in the portal, then any responses on the current page since the last save will be lost.

If the session times out, then any responses on the current page since the last save will be lost. A two-minute warning for the timeout is displayed to the lawyer to warn them to save.

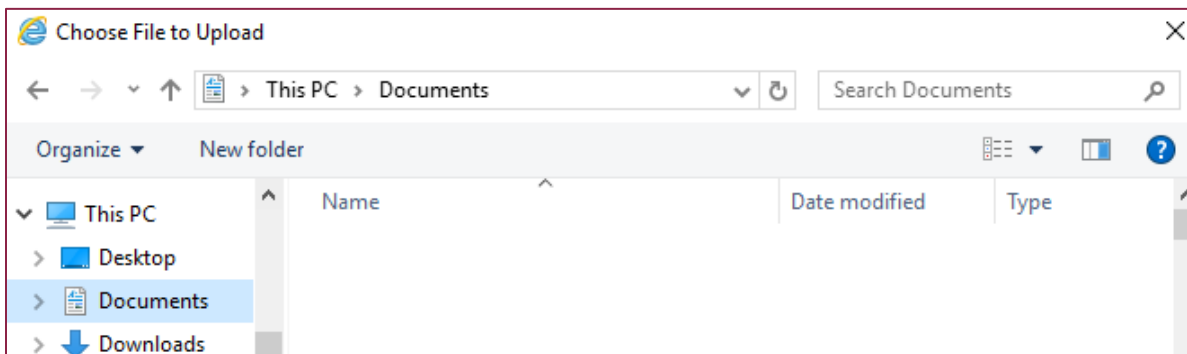
Attachments

Some questions in the Self-Report require an attachment.



1. The attachment can be added in the Self-Report at the question as below:

 Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
 Browse...	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

2. Clicking on Browse opens a window to allow the user to choose a document from their drives.



3. When the document is chosen, it is shown on the Self-Report.

 Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
 Baker Ledger Card.pdf	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

- If the document covers more information than the answer to this question, details on how to find the relevant details can be provided.

Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
Baker Ledger Card.pdf	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

- On Save, the attachment name and reference are shown, and another attachment can be added in the same way.

Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
Baker Ledger Card1.pdf	Page 1
Browse...	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

- To delete the attachment, click on the document name.

Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
Baker Ledger Card1.pdf	Page 1
Browse...	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

- All the documents added can be seen from the “Firm Documents” sub-menu, with the name set to the Self-Report section where it was attached.

Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
Baker Ledger Card1.pdf	Page 1
Browse...	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

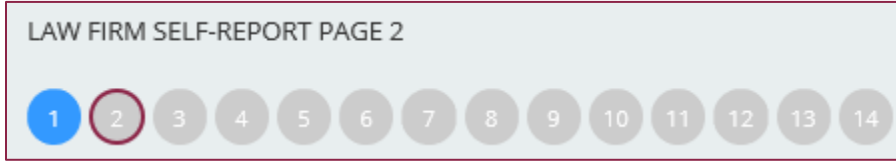
Name	Description	Usage	Filename	Remove
Self-Report 2017 Declaration C		1	Declaration.pdf	

Note: Lawyers cannot view the attachments once they are uploaded, as this is only available to Law Society staff.

Note: If another lawyer/firm administrator from the same firm logs in, they can see any firm documents that have been uploaded.

Submitting the Self-Report

1. Before the Self-Report can be submitted, all the mandatory questions must be answered. Complete pages are shown in a **blue** circle. In this example, only page 1 has been completed.



2. Before the Self-Report can be submitted, the Trust Bank Account Report must be submitted. The “Submit” button is not displayed until the report is valid.
3. Then, on the last page:
 - Check and attach the Financial Institution Authorization Form.

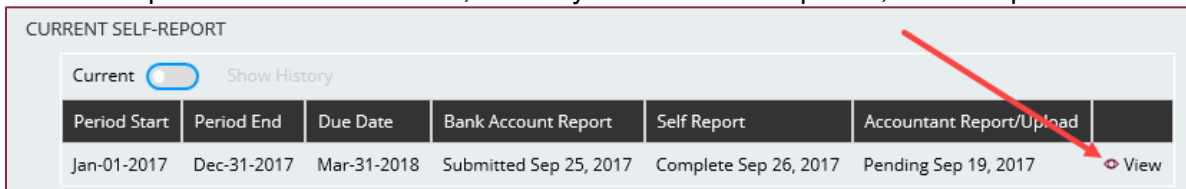
* **FINANCIAL INSTITUTION AUTHORIZATION**

I grant authorization for the Law Society of Alberta to obtain my law firm bank account information directly from my banking institution when they are conducting an examination, review, audit or investigation of my firm in accordance with Rule 119.33.

* Please download and print the Financial Institution Authorization Release form. The Responsible Lawyer must print their name, sign and date this document. Then attach the signed document. This form must be attached in order to Submit the Self-Report.

Document Attachment(s)	Page or Section Reference(s)
Browse...	Optionally enter the reference to the specific page or section

- Save.
4. At this point, the “Submit” button will appear, so the report can be submitted.
 5. After the report has been submitted, the lawyer can view and print it, but not update it.



Period Start	Period End	Due Date	Bank Account Report	Self Report	Accountant Report/Upload	
Jan-01-2017	Dec-31-2017	Mar-31-2018	Submitted Sep 25, 2017	Complete Sep 26, 2017	Pending Sep 19, 2017	View

Printing the Self-Report

The Self-Report can be printed by clicking on the “Print” button at the bottom of each page:

