

**SUSTAINABLE FUTURE SECTION
OF THE OREGON STATE BAR
Model Law Office Sustainability Policy
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Notes:

1. This policy may be adopted and used by an office as written without credit to the Sustainable Future Section. Although the model policy has been drafted for widespread use by law offices generally, it will also satisfy the office-policy requirements of the SFS Partners in Sustainability Program.

2. An asterisk (*) and italics in paragraphs below identify the only minimum requirements to satisfy the office policy criteria in the SFS Partners in Sustainability Program and have no other significance. See footnote below about Partners Program.

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Our firm seeks to establish sustainable office practices consistent with its overall commitment to provide excellent legal services to clients. The best-known definition of sustainability is contained in a 1987 report *Our Common Future* commissioned by the UN World Commission of Environment and Development:

Sustainable development is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We recognize that all human activity, including the operation of a law office, has an impact on the environment and the natural world. Within the office we make daily choices in performing work that can either reduce or increase that impact. As an office we seek to reduce the impact. We acknowledge and support the OSB Bylaw 26 integrating sustainability into the Oregon State Bar.

**This policy has been adopted by the [management team] [law office] to implement that intent.*

**Sustainability Coordinator. One person shall be designated as the Sustainability Coordinator for the firm. The time allocated for work as the Coordinator shall be determined by the [Firm Administrator] [Managing Partner]. The Coordinator shall be responsible for educating firm personnel on sustainability, making recommendations to firm management to implement the policy, and maintaining awareness of this policy among firm personnel generally.*

**Education. The Coordinator shall establish an education program to include the following elements. First, all existing personnel shall be introduced to this policy and its goals in a short training. All incoming personnel and contract assistance working with the firm for more than 40 hours in a year shall receive an introduction to the policy and goals in new personnel orientation. Second, the Coordinator shall plan at least two educational sessions each year, open to all office personnel, on matters related to sustainability. Such time will be paid or included as part of the work day or period.*

Sustainability Team. *A Sustainability Team, organized by the Coordinator, shall meet periodically to evaluate current practices, determine priorities in carrying out this policy, and consider ways to educate and motivate lawyers and staff to adopt more sustainable practices. Anyone with ideas for improving the firm's performance is encouraged to contact a member of the Sustainability Team.*

***Purchasing.** *Sustainability shall be considered in the purchase of supplies, equipment, and services. Examples of sustainability criteria are recyclability, biodegradability, recycled content, waste minimization, hazardous-chemical free, energy conservation, resource conservation, locally manufactured, and organic.*

***Waste Reduction and Recycling.** *Subject to security and other requirements, policies shall be established that minimize the use of paper in printing, copying, internal and external communications, and data storage. Systems will be established to minimize disposables and packaging, reuse equipment and supplies where feasible, and maximize recycling of all items that can be recycled in this region.*

***Energy.** *Policies shall be established to encourage energy conservation and efficiency in heating/cooling, lighting, and equipment, and to require renewable energy purchasing where feasible. For matters not within the control of the office, a designated person in the office shall communicate regarding such matters with the building manager annually to seek best practices.*

Travel. *The Sustainability Team shall consider means for reducing business travel in single passenger motor vehicle travel, including teleconferencing options, carpooling, utilizing mass transit, and implementing strategies for reducing the impact of travel, including fuel efficiency, flexible car options, and carbon offsets.*

Commuting. *The firm management shall establish commuter incentives to encourage use of mass transit, carpooling, biking, running, and walking.*

Carbon Credits/Green Power. *The office shall choose renewable energy options to power internal operations or purchase carbon credits to offset all or a portion of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with our internal operations and alternatives to fossil fuels.*

Tenant Improvements. *When tenant improvements are made, where possible the firm shall specify materials that are the least hazardous and most natural and give preference to those that are high in recycled content, recyclable or biodegradable, certified sustainable, and durable.*

Implementation and Measuring Success. *In implementing this policy, where practicable baselines shall be established for practices that can be measured--such as paper used, [recycled content of supplies], [disposables purchased], percentage of office waste that is recycled, and electricity used--and progress shall be reported to the firm at least annually.*

***Reports.** *The Sustainability Coordinator will make periodic reports, not less than once a year, to the firm management regarding the progress the firm is making toward sustainability.*