IOLTATRUST HELP DOCUMENT

Your Total Trust accounting program is designed to protect you from mishandling client funds. As a trustee of client funds, it is your duty to maintain accurate and easily obtainable records. A trust account differs from regular bank accounts. Client funds must never be co-mingled with your funds, and each client's funds must always be accounted for.

Accounting principles also differ with trust accounts as the account balance must be reconciled with your firm's bank account balance and each client's individual account at least once every two months.

Your IOLTA Trust Accounting Software is divided into four main sections.

Main/Search Client

New Client

Withdraw/Check/EFT

Deposit

Master Ledger

I. Main/Search Client

This is the main page where you can look up existing clients and their balances in the "Client Ledger", add or change a client's address or other information in "Client Demographics" and also access the other four sections from the toolbar on the top of the main page. You can also make a client "inactive " by clicking on that button.

There are two types of accounts here. The "Client Account" is for all of your client's activity, and the "Firm Fund Account" for Real Estate Entities, and non-profits, and "Lawyer Fund Account" for attorneys. The client account is for each individual client and client matter. The fund account will contain monies held in the Trust Account for administrative purposes. These will typically be small amounts used to pay for check fees, etc.

II. New Client

Here you will add in new client 's information. You can even monitor several different matters with the same client by adding a descriptor after the client's name such as: Joe Dollar (Auto 1-11-11), or Bill Bankrupt (Chapter 7). You can also separate client matters by assigning a different case number to a different client matter.

III.

Withdraw? Check/EFT

In this section you will account for all funds going out of your account. This includes checks and electronic fund transfers. Just go to the toolbar and click on Withdraw/Check/EFT. Select the type of withdraw you want… either EFT (Electronic Fund Transfer) or (Check) at the bottom of the page. You will then be prompted to the next screen you will pick the client and date. You will also enter the check number here along with any details you want to note.

IV. Deposit

Here you account for all of your deposits. You will deposit funds in either a "Client Account" or a " Lawyer Fund Account Deposit" You will only be depositing two things in this account:

Lawyer Fund Account Deposit

1. Small amounts of money for account expenses such as check fees.
2. Interest. One time a month you will account for interest deposited by your bank into the trust account. If your trust account is an IOLTA account (Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts), the interest will also be withdrawn and paid to the IOLTA Committee.

V. Master Ledger

The master ledger is similar to a bank statement. It shows your transactions in chronological order and tally's your running balance automatically. Make a mistake…no problem…just go back and enter a missing transaction or correct a wrong entry. Your account will automatically correct the running balance. You can print your master ledger in its entirety or pick one or more months, and print just the months you want.

Reconciliation:

It's not as hard as it seems. Reconciliation ensures you have properly done all of your accounting, and have safeguarded your clients' money.

At the end of the month (or other designated period of months) your account administrator will compare the ending monthly balances between your trust accounting software, (as reflected in your master ledger), your firm's trust account bank statement, and your clients' combined account balances.

 If your accounting was done properly, the ending balance of your trust account master ledger balance will equal the adjusted balance of your trust account bank statement, and your clients' combined balances. (To calculate the adjusted trust account balance you take your monthly ending balance on your bank statement and subtract any outstanding checks and add any uncredited deposits).

See sample Reconciliation Sheet Below.

Reconstructing Records:

Need to reconstruct lost or destroyed records, our accounting software lets you start your experience in the past!   Make a mistake, delete just one entry, a month, or a whole year.