

Time Entry Quality Standard

A one-page firm standard for legal time entries: structure, approved verbs, banned vague words, tenths, codes and same-day entry, with good and bad examples

MIRA · miranow.ai · Updated October 2026

0.1 h

Smallest billing unit: 6 minutes

Same day

Deadline for entering time

1 task

Per entry, with its own time

3 parts

Action, object, purpose

1 Entry structure

1 Action

A past-tense verb from the approved list: Drafted, Reviewed, Conferred.

2 Object

The specific document, issue or person: motion to compel, lease renewal terms.

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3 Purpose

Why the work was done: for client comments, in preparation for deposition.

4 Data fields

Client-matter number, date, time in tenths, and codes where the client requires them.

2 Approved verbs by activity

A103

Drafting

Drafted, revised, prepared, finalized, edited

A104

Review

Reviewed, analyzed, compared, evaluated, summarized

A102

Research

Researched, investigated, confirmed authority on

A101

Planning

Outlined, planned, prepared strategy for

A106

Client contact

Conferred with, corresponded with, advised client on

A107

Other counsel

Negotiated with, corresponded with opposing counsel on

A109

Appearances

Attended, appeared at, argued, defended deposition of

A105

Internal

Conferred with team regarding, assigned, supervised

3 Banned vague words and what to write instead

Do

- ✓ Drafted response to second set of interrogatories
- ✓ Reviewed opposing counsel's markup of supply agreement
- ✓ Conferred by telephone with client regarding mediation preparation
- ✓ Researched limitation period for breach of warranty claim
- ✓ Corresponded with opposing counsel regarding deposition dates

Avoid

- ✗ Work on file / attention to matter
- ✗ Review documents / review file
- ✗ Telephone call / conference
- ✗ Research / legal research
- ✗ Emails / follow up / various / misc.

4 Minutes to tenths (round-up convention)

Minutes worked	Record as	Minutes worked	Record as
1 to 6	0.1	31 to 36	0.6
7 to 12	0.2	37 to 42	0.7
13 to 18	0.3	43 to 48	0.8
19 to 24	0.4	49 to 54	0.9
25 to 30	0.5	55 to 60	1.0

Some firms and clients require rounding to the nearest tenth instead. Follow the engagement letter and client guidelines.

5 Good and bad entries

Bad entry	Why it fails	Standard entry
Reviewed documents. 2.0	No object, no purpose	Reviewed purchase agreement indemnity terms for client comments. 2.0
Call with client. 0.3	No subject	Conferred by phone with client regarding lease renewal options. 0.3
Research. 1.5	No issue named	Researched enforceability of liquidated damages clause. 1.5
Drafted motion, call w/ OC, emails. 3.5	Block billed	Split into three entries, each with its own time
Attention to file. 0.2	Says nothing	Reviewed court order setting scheduling conference. 0.2
Organized binders. 1.0	Clerical task billed	Record as non-billable per firm policy
Discussed weak points of our case. 0.5	Reveals strategy	Conferred with team regarding trial preparation. 0.5
Emails. 0.4	No parties or purpose	Corresponded with opposing counsel regarding deposition dates. 0.4

6 Firm rules for every entry

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Enter time the same day the work is done | ☐ Follow the client's outside counsel guidelines for the matter |
| ☐ Record time in tenths using the firm's rounding rule | ☐ Record only time actually spent |
| ☐ One task per entry, each with its own time | ☐ Never bill the same time to two clients |
| ☐ Start with an approved past-tense verb | ☐ Mark clerical and administrative work non-billable |
| ☐ Name the document, issue or person and the purpose | ☐ Keep privileged advice and strategy out of narratives |
| ☐ Include the client-matter number on every entry | ☐ Avoid abbreviations the client will not recognize |
| ☐ Add UTBMS task and activity codes where the client requires them | ☐ Review and release drafts before the weekly cutoff |

7 How MIRA supports the standard

MIRA turns captured activity into draft entries that lawyers review in Microsoft Teams, with AI-assisted descriptions and code suggestions. Every entry stays a draft until a lawyer or authorized reviewer edits, approves and releases it. MIRA+ includes OCG compliance features.

Sources and references: ABA Model Rule 1.5 (Fees); ABA Model Rule 1.6 (Confidentiality of Information); ABA Formal Opinion 93-379 (billing for time actually spent; no double billing); UTBMS activity codes A101 to A110 (ABA and LEDES Oversight Committee); Arithmetic: 0.1 hour = 6 minutes.

General information, not legal advice. Check your jurisdiction's rules and your client billing guidelines.

MIRA

www.miranow.ai/solutions/legal-time-entry-software-for-lawyers