FREE CHEAT SHEET

Legal Time Entry Examples by Practice Area

Example entries for eight practice areas with durations in tenths, ten vague-to-clear rewrites and the UTBMS activity codes

MIRA · miranow.ai · Updated October 2026

0.1 hr
Six minutes, the usual unit for each entry

3 parts
Action + subject + purpose in every narrative

8
Practice areas covered in the example tables

10
Vague entries rewritten as clear entries

1 Build any entry in four moves

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3 Issue
State the provisions, claims, deadlines or questions covered.

4 Purpose
Say what the work was for: client advice, a filing, a negotiation.

2 Examples: litigation, corporate and M&A, real estate, family

Area	Task	Time	Description
Litigation	Complaint review	0.8	Reviewed complaint and identified claims, deadlines and removal options.
Litigation	Answer	2.5	Drafted answer and affirmative defenses to breach of contract complaint.
Litigation	Deposition prep	1.6	Prepared outline for deposition of plaintiff's project manager.
Litigation	Motion	3.2	Drafted argument for motion to compel overdue interrogatory answers.
Corporate / M&A	Due diligence	2.1	Reviewed target customer contracts for change-of-control terms.
Corporate / M&A	Purchase agreement	1.9	Revised indemnification and escrow terms in stock purchase agreement.
Corporate / M&A	Disclosure schedules	1.2	Compared disclosure schedules with reps; listed gaps for client.
Corporate / M&A	Board approval	0.6	Drafted board consent approving merger agreement and signatories.
Real estate	Title	0.9	Reviewed title commitment and listed exceptions for client discussion.
Real estate	Lease	1.4	Revised lease assignment, sublet and repair clauses per client comments.
Real estate	Survey	0.5	Reviewed survey for encroachments against title exceptions.
Real estate	Closing	1.1	Checked settlement statement prorations against purchase agreement.
Family	Financial disclosure	1.3	Prepared financial affidavit from client's income and expense records.
Family	Parenting plan	1.7	Drafted proposed parenting plan covering holidays and exchanges.

Area	Task	Time	Description
Family	Child support	0.7	Calculated guideline child support from both parties' income data.
Family	Mediation	3.0	Attended mediation on property division and spousal support.

Durations in tenths of an hour are illustrative. Record actual time and replace details with the facts of the matter.

3 Examples: employment, IP, estate planning, criminal

Area	Task	Time	Description
Employment	Agency charge	2.4	Drafted position statement responding to EEOC discrimination charge.
Employment	Handbook	1.5	Revised handbook leave and remote-work policies for state law changes.
Employment	Separation	0.8	Drafted separation agreement and release for departing employee.
Employment	Wage and hour	1.2	Analyzed overtime exemption status of client's inside sales roles.
IP	Clearance	1.0	Reviewed trademark search report and assessed conflicts for new mark.
IP	Office action	2.2	Drafted response to USPTO likelihood-of-confusion refusal.
IP	License	1.6	Revised software license grant, field of use and royalty terms.
IP	Enforcement	0.9	Drafted cease-and-desist letter on infringing use of client's mark.
Estate planning	Intake	1.0	Met client to review family details, assets and distribution goals.
Estate planning	Will and trust	2.8	Drafted will and revocable trust reflecting client's distribution plan.
Estate planning	Trust funding	0.6	Prepared deed transferring residence to client's revocable trust.
Estate planning	Execution	1.2	Supervised signing of will and trust with witnesses and notary.
Criminal	Discovery	2.0	Reviewed police report and body-camera video for suppression issues.
Criminal	Arraignment	1.5	Appeared at arraignment; entered not guilty plea; argued release terms.
Criminal	Motion	3.0	Drafted motion to suppress evidence from warrantless vehicle search.
Criminal	Client meeting	1.2	Met client at county jail to review discovery and case status.

Criminal defense work is often flat fee or court-appointed; time records still support the file and appointed-counsel vouchers.

4 Ten vague entries rewritten

Vague	Clear	What was added
Attention to file	Reviewed case file to prepare client status report on pending motion.	Task, subject, purpose
Research	Researched limitations period for fraud claim under state law.	Legal issue
Phone call	Called client to discuss settlement offer terms and response deadline.	Who and topics
Review documents	Reviewed lease amendments for rent escalation and renewal changes.	Document and issues
Emails	Exchanged emails with opposing counsel on deposition dates and exhibits.	Recipient and topics
Trial prep	Prepared direct examination outline for client's operations manager.	Work product
Draft agreement	Drafted purchase price and escrow sections of asset purchase agreement.	Sections drafted
Conference with team	Conferred with associate on research plan for summary judgment motion.	Purpose
Follow up	Contacted court clerk on status of proposed scheduling order.	Action and subject
Worked on matter	Revised motion to dismiss brief on standing and causation arguments.	Specific task

5 UTBMS activity codes

A101
Plan and prepare for

A102
Research

A103
Draft/revise

A104
Review/analyze

A105
Communicate (in firm)

A106
Communicate (with client)

A107
Communicate (other outside counsel)

A108
Communicate (other external)

A109
Appear for/attend

A110
Manage data/files

A111
Other

6 Narrative rules

Do

- ✓ Start with a past-tense action verb
- ✓ Name the document, issue or meeting
- ✓ Separate distinct tasks when block billing is not allowed
- ✓ Match the narrative to the task and activity code
- ✓ Use roles, not sensitive personal details
- ✓ Write the entry the same day

Avoid

- ✕ Use one-word entries such as 'Research' or 'Emails'
- ✕ Paste a calendar title as the narrative
- ✕ Reveal strategy, settlement limits or privileged advice
- ✕ Reuse the same narrative for different days
- ✕ Bill clerical tasks as legal work
- ✕ Describe work that did not happen

7 Before you submit

- ☐ Correct client and matter selected
- ☐ Duration reflects actual time and the agreed increment
- ☐ Narrative names action, subject and purpose
- ☐ Codes match the work when the client requires them
- ☐ Billable status is correct
- ☐ No unnecessary privileged or personal detail
- ☐ No duplicate of an entry already recorded
- ☐ Client billing guidelines followed

8 Drafted entries with MIRA

MIRA captures work from Outlook, Teams, documents and research, then drafts a clear time entry for each piece of work. Lawyers review, edit and release every entry before it reaches billing.

Sources and references: UTBMS Activity Code Set (A101 to A111); ABA Model Rule 1.5 (Fees); ABA Model Rule 1.6 (Confidentiality of Information).
General information, not legal advice. Check your jurisdiction's rules and your client billing guidelines.

MIRA
www.miranow.ai/resources/legal-time-entry-examples