

Private Practice Start-Up Guide for Therapists

A practical, easy-to-follow 4-step guide for planning your own private practice.

Get Started

Cover all the basics of starting a private practice. These steps can be worked on before you ever leave your current place of employment.

- Define Your Vision**
It's time to start your own private practice when most of your referrals are coming from your own clients. This tells you that your clients are getting value from working with you. Start defining your vision for your ideal clientele.
- Basic Marketing Plan**
Target your referral sources to create a steady stream of incoming clients.
- Find Office Space**
Define your values around the space you will be using to see your preferred clientele.
- Make Your Business Official**
Contact someone in your area who can help you file your business name for legal and tax purposes so you can make your dream a reality.



Money

As a savvy businessperson, you will want the most efficient use of your time in terms of the money you make.

- Payment**
Price your services in a way that is most in line with your training, the cost of therapy in your area, and your belief in yourself.
- Fee-for-Service or Insurance Paneling**
Set a rate and decide to have a fee-for-service practice or be paneled by insurance companies, or a combination of both. Create a Superbill if needed.
- Accounting**
Decide on an accounting system that is most efficient, and least time-consuming for you.
- Liability Insurance**
Determine and secure your own coverage. You can't start practicing without it.

Set Up Systems

Owning your own private practice involves clear and relevant record keeping with forms and policies that are easily accessible to clients.

- Record Keeping** Whether you use paper files or an electronic health record, you will need to keep a thorough medical record for each of your clients.
- Forms & Policies** There are several simple and practical way to obtain the forms and policies you need for private practice.
- Communication Practices** Decide how you will communicate with your clients and set up systems to keep clients' privacy a top priority.

Sustainability Plan

Now that you've succeeded in establishing the nuts and bolts of a practice, you will want to make sure it is sustainable.

- Tracking & Thanking Referrals** Develop a solid plan to thank referral sources and communication practices around every referral you receive. This will be paramount to growing and sustaining your practice.
- Clinical Consultation** To grow as a therapist, ongoing clinical consultation is the best way to stay relevant, discuss cases, strategize, and problem solve.
- Self-Care** Define steps for a healthy practice and life!



The biggest obstacle I had in setting up a private practice was fear.

After joining a group practice and essentially becoming an employee, I knew within two years that I wanted to leave and set up my own practice. Yet it took me three more years to overcome my fear about making it on my own, especially since I opted to go off insurance panels and start a solely fee-for-service practice.

Setting up my own practice, I have learned practical steps to help other therapists get started and delve into the unknown with more confidence.

DoctorLavonne.com

Want more? Download the full workbook online or schedule personal, one-on-one consultation time with Dr. Lavonne.