



# RELOCATION GUIDE

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[www.boulos.com](http://www.boulos.com)

# INTRODUCTION

Relocating your business is a complicated process that requires planning, organization and diligence. At The Boulos Company we strive to make those transitions for our clients as smooth as possible. We have created this guide to help you with your move.

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## PLAN AHEAD

Create a time line that will allow for all the necessary stages of your move. This will need to be discussed with the rest of your moving team or with the managers and supervisors to ensure that it is feasible. For a small office, you'll need at least three months to prepare and for a medium to large office, at least six to eight months. The key is to start as early as possible.

The next step is to collect all information on the new space. Try to acquire blue prints or floor layouts so you can identify key components such as electrical outlets, storage space, etc. and most importantly, to determine the new office layout. It is also a good idea to have a general layout plan for your current space so you can compare the two; if there are areas in the current office that are not working, identify them so those issues can be resolved in your new space.

Also, make a list of potential problems with the new space, such as a smaller reception area or less storage area or perhaps a larger open space that may require more cubicles or temporary walls. It may be necessary to hire carpenters or painters if walls need to be constructed or painted. For major renovations, keep in mind what is required for building permits and how much time those permits may take to acquire. This may have been addressed when the new space was acquired, but just make sure that no additional construction or cosmetic changes need to be completed prior to the move.

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## BUSINESS IDENTITY

Your business identity is key to keeping your customers informed about who and where you are. Put up signs in your current location, if you have one, about your upcoming move. Update all of your stationery, business cards and signage before you move to reduce confusion once the move takes place. Make sure your new signage is easily seen from the street of your new location.

Here is a checklist of items for you to consider concerning your identity system and moving.

- Update your web site - the easiest and quickest to do.
- Update letterhead, envelopes and business cards.
- Order new checks, window envelopes and forms.
- Get permits for new building signage and install.
- Update any advertising that may already be out in the market.
- Update publication templates.
- Update PowerPoint templates.
- Have new marketing materials ready when you open.
- Update or create new mailing labels.
- Update social media sites and post about your move.

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# PEOPLE

An office relocation can bring out a multitude of changes for any organization. These changes need to be managed in a sensitive and empathetic way in order to encourage positive behavior and increased productivity within your workforce. When it comes to an office move, there is an entire labyrinth of tasks to think about; including staff consultation, employment law, changes to employment contracts - as well as the need for a comprehensive internal communication strategy that informs, updates and manages the relocation correctly for staff.

**ANNOUNCE THE OFFICE MOVE** Transparency is key to the welfare of your staff during an office move.

**SHARE THE FLOOR PLAN** If your employees know ahead of time what to expect from the new space there will be a shorter adjustment period.

**EMPLOYMENT LAW** Changing your employees' workplace location may involve reviewing employment contracts.

**BE CLEAR ABOUT REASONS FOR MOVING** Staff can easily become disengaged and uncertain about their future with the company if they don't know the reasons behind the move. Employees are much more likely to be supportive if they feel part of the process.

**HOLD EMPLOYEE FORUMS** Provides a great platform for staff to air their concerns, ask questions and support one another. This can be done in person or online through your intranet.

**GET BUY-IN** It's important that your staff feel enthused about their new office space. Informing your staff about what the new space has to offer and sharing photos and the design process will help them feel part of the plan and part of the bigger picture.

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# LOGISTICS

Whether you choose to manage the logistics of the move yourself or you hire a professional moving company, there are several things that should be done to facilitate a smooth move.

## IN YOUR EXISTING SPACE

- Clean out and discard all items that you don't need.
- Donate old and outdated office equipment and furniture.
- Recycle as much as possible, and shred old files.
- Use a numbering and/or color coding system for all packed boxes so the movers will know where they need to go in the new space.
- Label all office furniture, fixtures, and equipment with proper color coded labels and numbers.
- Be clear with your employees about what they are allowed to take into the new space and what you may no longer have room for such as plants and personal items.
- If relocating, check the terms of your existing lease to see what condition the premises needs to be left in.

## IN YOUR NEW SPACE

- Enlarge copies of floor plans and hang in easily visible locations to use as guides for furniture arrangement.
- Install relocation direction signs and arrows in the new office.
- Arrange for exclusive use of any elevators, service elevators, loading docks, or emergency doors that may be used during the scheduled office moving times.
- Make sure that ample parking is available.
- Notify surrounding businesses if entrances, driveways, or parking may be obstructed during the move.

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# TECHNOLOGY

IT and Telecommunications – this incorporates the management of your entire communications infrastructure when you change your office location. Your new office may require new network cabling, additional phone and ISDN lines or even a dedicated server room. If you do not have the expertise within your staff you will need to hire professionals to make sure all your systems are re-connected and ready-to-go on that first morning in your new office. Printers are sensitive devices just like computers. Remove printer cartridges, tape down covers and scanner lids, and be sure to follow any specific instructions for moving FAX machines, copiers, and printers since improper moving may damage a device and void the warranty.

- Do you have enough phone/data ports?
- Able to retain the same phone number?
- Will the phone system be working the first day?
- Do you have a phone for each desk?
- Set up a call-forward system effective the day of your move if your company is changing phone numbers.
- Back up all of your data off-site so that if something happens to one of the computers during the move nothing is lost.
- Are you providing your staff with laptops so that they can continue to work during the transition?
- Program key card access and/or provide keys for employees.
- Know how the phone system and computer facilities will operate at the new location.
- Provide card access for parking lots and/or parking garage facilities if applicable.

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# EQUIPMENT

If you rent a truck - opt for the insurance coverage. Although many private insurance policies might cover rental car damage very few cover damages if you get into an accident in a rental truck (which are classified as "equipment.") If you use a moving company, be sure to ask about insurance coverage options to protect your belongings. You should also ask to see the moving company's proof of worker's comp insurance. If you inadvertently hire "day labor" or the truck company does not carry insurance, you could be at least partially liable for moving related injuries to workers.

- Desks empty?
- Supply cabinets cleared?
- File cabinets cleared?
- File drawers locked?
- Wall items taken down?
- Breakable items properly packed?
- Computers and other machines disconnected?
- "Do Not Move" tags placed?
- Liquids drained from equipment?
- Desk pads and chair pads labeled?
- Have a set of spare keys available.
- Make sure the electricity, phones, and Internet work.
- Make sure the bathrooms work.

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# VENDORS

Notify all of the vendors that you use on a regular basis to be sure that your service is not interrupted. Example list of vendors that should be notified:

- Newspaper carriers
- Dry cleaning service
- Office supply companies
- Couriers
- Delivery services
- Cleaning services
- Food vendors
- Postal service
- Banks
- Insurance companies
- Printers
- Plant care services
- Coffee vendors
- Water vendors
- Waste management

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# CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Change of address is one of the most important pieces of information that needs to be shared in as many different ways as possible.

- Alert your customers with change-of-address cards.
- Make sure that all your important mail such as bank statements, checks and personal letters get forwarded to your new address promptly.
- File your Change of Address at USPS.com.
- Stamp outgoing correspondence with “Note New Address.”
- Update address with professional affiliations.
- Banks will require notification early; you’ll need to change the address on company checks.
- Insurance companies must be notified early. They’ll need to assess the new space and provide you with a new estimate if applicable.
- If you bill clients, be sure to tell them clearly to update their own contact information for you so payment is sent to your new address.
- Search for your business online by name - you may find your business is listed in referral directories that will show old contact information that will need to be updated, too.
- Make a list of everyone you do business with and everywhere you advertise so you do not forget to update something critical.
- Notify Government Licensing Agencies as may be applicable.

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Here is a list of local resources for the donation of used office supplies and equipment.

## Affordable Office Solutions

550 Lisbon St.

Lewiston, Maine

207.576.4533

1.866.464.CUBE

## Habitat for Humanity Restore

659 Warren Avenue

Portland, ME 04103

207.221.0047

restore@habitatme.org

To donate office supplies, furniture, equipment and computers

to be used by schools and non-profits.

## Ruth's Reusable Resources

39 Blueberry Road

Portland, ME 04102

207.699.5565

www.ruths.org

Information about electronics recycling in Maine:

<http://www.maine.gov/dep/waste/ewaste/>

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