Closing the Month for Accrual Accounting

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About Closing the Month for Accrual Accounting

To close a month is to finalize entries for that month. Journal entries are posted to the general ledger, and account balances are frozen to prevent further changes to the financial statements for that period. Although a month can be reopened, closed month prevents data from being backdated. A month does not need to be closed immediately. PCLaw[™] allows 12 months to be opened at one time before the user is prompted to close a month.

Warning: Due to variances in regional governing body requirements, all procedures and reports should be discussed with your accountant.

Some topics in this document demonstrate how to reconcile your g/l accounts manually, by producing and comparing individual reports in PCLaw[™]. A more recommended method of achieving this same result is by using the G/L Reconciliation report. An explanation of this report and how to reconcile the journals, general ledger and client ledger is contained in the PDF Document Library on the LexisNexis Support Center at http://support.lexisnexis.com/ltps/

Producing General Ledgers

G/L > G/L Statements

Most PCLaw[™] journals reconcile to the general ledger. The general ledger is preferable for comparison purposes for it displays opening balances, entry details, and closing balances.

Statements	
Statements Common Other Statement Selection General Ledger Template GL V Trial Balance Template TBAL V Income Statement Template INCOME V	G/L Account Selection ● Range Start First Current Asset End Last Expense ○ Selected
✓ Balance Sheet Template BALSHEET ▼	Select
Previous Report Period [12/1/2009] to [12/31/2009] Type Non-detailed	Lurrent Heport Period 12/1/2009 Detailed Report Use Previous Use Default
Run Reports on Image: Second	
	Load Last OK Cancel Help

The Common tab of the G/L Statements selection window

- 1. Check General Ledger.
- 2. Check Print.
- 3. Accept the **Current Report Period**. The period defaults to the start and end of the first open month.
- 4. Click **OK** to print the general ledger.

Tip: To print a general ledger displaying transaction detail, select Detailed Report in the Current Report Period area.

Reconciling Unbilled Disbursements

Reports > Client > Client Summary > Common tab

Unbilled disbursements are obtained from the Client Summary. Print a Client Summary for the month then use the following formula to balance unbilled disbursements to Client Disb Recov (1210).

(unbilled disbursements - retainers) = 1210

1. Select in the End Date box, the date of the last day for the month being reconciled.

Tip: Consult with your accountant whether a full, Matter Balances Only, or Totals Only report is required.

- 2. Check Print.
- 3. Click **OK** to print the Client Summary.
- 4. From the Client Summary, compare the Unbd Disb less the Retainer values to the Client Disb Recov (1210) Closing Balance.



Reconciling the Client Summary to Client Disb Recov (1210)

Reconciling Fees

In Accrual systems, fees are realized at the time of billing. Therefore, fees displayed on the Billing (Fees) Journal equal the change between the opening and closing balance of the respective fee account (4000.1 etc.) for each lawyer, assuming there are no write-downs.

Write-downs added during the month affects the lawyer's fees if write-downs are allocated to fee accounts instead of a bad debt account. Write-downs posted in the month to invoices with a bill date prior to the Billing (Fees) Journal start date do not appear on the report.

Producing the Billing Fees Journal

Reports > Journal > Billing Fees > Common Tab

Create a Billing Fees Journal for the month to be closed.

- 1. Leave the Matter, Lawyer, and Resp Lawyer boxes blank.
- 2. Select the date in the Start Date box, the first day of the month being reconciled.
- 3. Select the date in the End Date box, the last day of the month being reconciled.

Tip: Consult with your accountant whether a full, Totals Only, or Firm Totals Only report is required.

- 4. Check Print.
- 5. Click the Other tab.
- 6. Uncheck Include Write-Ups and Write-Downs.
- 7. Click **OK** to print the journal.

Producing a Write Up/Down Journal

Reports > Journal > Write Up/Down > Common Tab

Create a Write Up/Down Journal for the month to be closed.

1. Leave the Matter, Lawyer, and Resp Lawyer boxes blank.

- 2. Select in the **Start Date** box, the first day of the month being reconciled.
- 3. Select in the **End Date** box, the last day of the month being reconciled.

Tip: Consult with your accountant whether a full, or Totals Only report is required.

- 4. Select Include Provisional Write-offs.
- 5. Click **OK** to print the journal.

Comparing Billed Fees and Write Downs to the General Ledger

Compare billed fees as shown on the Billing (Fees) Journal less write downs as shown on the G/L Account Summary of the Write Up/Down Journal to each lawyers' fee account.



Reconciling the Billing Fees Journal to the lawyer's fee accounts

Reconciling Accounts Receivable

The Client Ledger and Billing (Fees) Journal both balance with Accounts Receivable (1200). In addition, the Client Ledger and Client Summary must balance to each other. The Billing (Fees) Journal must balance with the Receivables by Client report.

The relationship is as follows:



A model for reconciling Accounts Receivable (1200)

Since the Client Summary calculates a balance for the history of the matter, the Billing (Fees) Journal needs to be run from the default start date (1/1/1982).

Producing Client Ledgers

Reports > Client > Client Ledger

Create a Client Ledger for the month to be closed.

- 1. Leave the Matter, Client, and Resp Lawyer boxes blank.
- 2. Type the **Start Date** for the first day for the month being reconciled.
- 3. Type the End Date for the last day for the month being reconciled.

Note: Consult with your accountant whether a full, Totals Only, or Firm Totals Only report is required.

4. Click **OK** to produce the Client Ledger.

Producing Receivable by Client Reports

Reports > Accounts Receivables > Receivables by Client

Create a Receivable by Client report for the month to be closed

- 1. Leave the Matter, Client, and Resp Lawyer boxes blank.
- 2. Type the **End Date** for the last day for the month being reconciled.
- 3. Check Show Balances as of End Date.
- 4. Click OK.

Tip: If the Client Summary does not match the Client Ledger, run Tools > Verify Date Integrity > Reset Matter Balances. The procedure can be run for individual matters or clients, or leave the Matter and Client boxes blank to run for all matters.



Reconciling Accounts Receivable (1200)

Reconciling the General Bank

Reports > Journal > General Bank

The General Bank Journal for each individual bank account reconciles to the respective general ledger for each account.

Through the Bank Reconciliation module (Bank Rec), the General Bank Journal also reconciles to the bank statement sent from the actual banking institute(s). The Bank Journal Reconciliation section of the Bank Reconciliation report, found in Bank Rec, balances the bank statement to the bank journal. The Actual Bank Journal Balance line on the Bank Reconciliation report is retrieved from the General Bank Journal for that account as of the end date of the Bank Reconciliation period.

Bank Rec does not reconcile to the general ledger. However, since the bank journal balances to its associated general ledger account, there is an implied relationship.

Bank Rec Gen Acct # General Bank Journal Bank Account #

General Ledger Gen Bank Account #

Relationship between the Bank Reconciliation and General Ledger

The opening and closing balances of the bank statement may not correspond with the calendar month. Statement intervals may be weekly, bi-weekly or monthly.

- 1. Type in the Acct box, the nickname of the first general bank account.
- 2. Leave the Che/Rec# and G/L Account boxes blank.
- 3. Type the **Start Date** for the first day for the month being reconciled.
- 4. Type the **End Date** for the last day for the month being reconciled.
- 5. Click **OK** to produce the bank journal.
- 6. Repeat this procedure for each general bank account.

Ge Ge	neral Bank Journal - Acct neral Bank Journal - Acct	# 1 Bank Account - Cen Bank # 2 Dank Account Dank Account 2 - Gen Sani	*** Gen k Acct *** Ge k Acct	neral Ba 1 neral Ea 2	nk Journal Open E 17775. ank Journal Cpon 12300	l - Bank)al () CO l - Bank Bal J.UU	Account Summa 3033.00 Account Summar Sheque Tot 6320.00	rv *** Ropt Fot 6555.00 ry *** Rept Tot /SUU.LU	Delance (21292.00 Belance (1345J.00
						_			
Genera	l General Bank Jou	ir- Acct # 1		21,292	2.00		1000	21,292.00	
Bank	naf	Acct # 2		13,450	0.00		1001	13,450.00	
		Acct # 3				=	1002		
		Acct # 4				=	1003	17	
		Acct # 5				=	1004	7	
		Acct # 99				=	1098 /		
Acct. No. Date	Account Name Sice Ref Entry # Paid Tu	Description		Debit	Credit	Balance	, / /		
1000 Jan 31)	Gen Bank Acct 1 GB	Total Rec∋ipts	6	,555.00		17,775.09		lledaan	
Jar 317	GB Clusi	i otal Diskursements ny balance -Gen Bank Acct 1			3 038.00	21,292.00) Genera	General Bank	Acct 1
1001	Gen Bank Acct 2					12,300.00	7 1001 -	General Bank	Acct 2
Jar 317	GB	Total Receipts	7	,500.00					
Jan 317	GR	Thtal Disbursements			6 350 00	_/	L		
1	Closi	ng balance -Gen Bank Acct 2				(13,450.00):		

Reconciling the general bank accounts

Reconciling the Trust Bank

The Trust Bank presents a more involved reconciliation procedure, both on the journal side and for the general ledger. There are two key reports:

- The Trust Bank Journal reports transactions posted to its respective trust bank accounts
- The Client Trust Listing reports trust activity on a matter by matter basis. The Firm Summary on the Client Trust Listing summarizes the trust balance by bank account. These figures must always match with the Trust Bank Journal for each account.

As is the case with the general bank, each trust bank journal has a corresponding general ledger account. The journal and g/l accounts balance to each other. Also, since trust monies held are both an asset and a liability, the sum of all trust g/l accounts must equal the balance of the Trust Funds Owed account.

Through Bank Rec, the Trust Bank Journal also reconciles to the bank statement sent from the actual banking institute(s). The Bank Journal Reconciliation segment of the Bank Reconciliation report, found in the Bank Rec, works with balancing the bank statement to the journal. The Actual Bank Journal Balance line on the Bank Reconciliation is retrieved from the Trust Bank Journal for that account as of the end date of the Bank Rec period.

Bank Rec does not reconcile to the general ledger. However, since the bank journal is required to balance to its associated general ledger account, there is an implied relationship.



Producing Trust Bank Journals

Reports > Journal > Trust Bank

Create Trust Bank Journals for each bank account for the month to be closed

- 1. Type in the Acct box, the nickname of the first general bank account.
- 2. Leave the Che/Rec# and G/L Account boxes blank.
- 3. Type the **Start Date** for the first day for the month being reconciled.
- 4. Type the **End Date** box for the last day for the month being reconciled.
- 5. Click **OK** to produce the bank journal.
- 6. Repeat this procedure for each trust bank account.

Producing Client Trust Listings

Reports > Journal > Trust Listing

Create a Client Trust Listing for the month to be closed

- 1. Leave the Matter, Client, and Resp Lawyer boxes blank.
- 2. Type the **End Date** for the last day for the month being reconciled.
- 3. Leave the Acct box blank to attain a complete Firm Totals by Accounts summary.
- 4. Click **OK** to produce the Client Trust Listing.

Tip: Although only the Firm Totals by Account is displayed for the Client Trust Listing, it is recommended to print a full Client Trust Ledger each month and print a separate report for each account.



Reconciling the trust bank accounts

Reconciling Accounts Payable

Reports > Accounts Payable > Payable Listing

Accounts Payable that are outstanding at month end can be reconciled by comparing the Outstanding column of the Payable Listing report to General Liabilities (2000).

- 1. Leave the Vendor and Invoice boxes blank.
- 2. Leave the Invoice Start Date at the default 1/1/82
- 3. Type the **Invoice End Date** for the last day of the month to be reconciled.
- 4. Leave the **Due Date Start Date** and **Due Date End Date** boxes at the defaults of 1/1/82 and 12/31/2199 respectively.
- 5. Select Unpaid in the Include Invoices area.
- 6. Select **Both** in the **Include Vendors** section.
- 7. Select in the **Payments Up To** box, the date for the last day of the month to be reconciled.
- 8. Click OK.

Note: Consult with your accountant to determine if a Detailed, or Firm Totals Only report is required.

Payab Firm 1)le Listing Totals	Vendor Entered Due Entry# Explanati Firm Fotal	Leferenc ou Ls:	e Anount :	Paid+Disz	100	<= 30	->= 6Г 	<= 90	> <n </n 	Nutetanding
[A/P	Payable List	ing			10,00	00.00	=	2000		10,000.00
Accl. Nu. Date	Account Nari Srco Ref	ie Entry# Paid To	Description		Debit	Credit	Balance				
2000 Jan 31/	General Liab AP 1	lifties Closing ba	i otal A/P alance -General Liabili	ties		10,000.00	U.UU (14,004.00)		General L Liabilities	edger Ge (2000)	eneral

Reconciling accounts payable

Reconciling GST

Reports > Journal > Goods adn Services Tax

For firms that charge GST, the General Reconciliation Balance in the Firm Summary of the GST report should reconcile with GST Payable (2400).

- 1. Type the **Start Date** for the first day for the month being reconciled.
- 2. Type the **End Date** for the last day for the month being reconciled.
- 3. Click **OK** to produce the GST Journal.

Tip: To comply with Canada Customs and Revenue Agency regulations, use this report during month end procedures. You are required to produce a printed copy of GST billed, paid, and any GST adjustments. The values in the summary correspond to the box numbers on the GST remittance form.

USI Heading	(Bcx#;	Veriod Totals	Running Balance			
Total Taxable Supplies	(101):	11757.00	18967.CO			
Total Purchases	(102).	r nn	0.00	Goods and	Services Tax Jou	ımal
GST Collectable	(103) -	745 29	899 59	Summary		
GSF Adjustments	(104).	C.00	0.CO	Summary		
Total GST and GST Adjustments	(105):	745.29	899.59			
Input Tax Credit	(105):	C.00	0.00			
ITC Adjustments	(107):	C.00	0.CO			
Total ITC and Adjustments	(103):	C.00	0.00			
Net Tax	(109):	745.29	899.59			
Paid by Instalments	(110):	111.00	111.00			
Debates	(111):	C.00	0.CO			
Total Uther Urecits	(112):	111.00	111.00			
Balance	(113):	634.29	788.59			
Defund Claimed	(114):					
Payment Enclosed	(115):	634.29	788.59			
General Reconciliation Balance	e (895.99					
,		~	<u> </u>			
GST (GST Journal			899.99	= 2400	899.99
		Acct. No. Accour	nt Name	B iti	Debrt	Credit Halance
		Date SFCC I	KCI ENUY# 1'ald 10	Description	DODIC	
General Ledger		2400 GST Pa	wable			(154.70)
CST Pavable (2400)		Jan31/ BJ		Total GST Fees		584.29
CST rayable (2400)				Tatal COT Disks		401.00
		Janon BJ		TOLALUST DISDS		

Reconciling GST

Reconciling Sales Tax

Reports > Journal > Sales Tax

The Sales Tax Journal reconciles to Sales Tax Payable (2450) for the current period summary only. You may want to reconcile it for each month, or only at the end of each remittance period.

Only the Period Totals are reconcilable on the Sales Tax Journal. Since the Sales Tax Journal does not include remittances cheques, where Sales Tax Payable (2450) does, these two components cannot reconcile except under the following conditions:

- The remittance cheque for the previous period has been already created and posted to the Sales Tax Payable account.
- There is no unpaid balance carried over from the previous period.
- The Sales Tax Journal is run for the entire current remittance period instead and not for a single month.

The key to reconciling the Sales Tax Journal summary to Sales Tax Payable (2450) is that the journal summary begins with a null opening balance. The Sales Tax Journal does not have a Running Balance column as found on the GST Journal. Therefore, if Sales tax remittances are not up to date, the two items cannot reconcile.

- 1. Type the **Start Date** for the first day for the month being reconciled.
- 2. Type the **End Date** for the last day for the month being reconciled.

Tip: If you enter the first day of the month to be reconciled for the Sales Tax Journal, then the opening balance of the Sales Tax Payable account (2450) must be deducted from the closing balance in order to reconcile the g/l with the Sales tax Journal.

- 3. Select **Both** in the **Report** area.
- 4. Click OK.



Reconciling Sales Tax

Performing End of Month

It is not mandatory to perform month end immediately after the completion of the calendar month. PCLaw[™] allows up to 12 months to be open at any time before prompting the user to close a month. However, closing a month in a timely fashion serves a number of purposes.

- Errors are promptly identified and corrected.
- The reconciliation process becomes more manageable. Waiting until year-end to reconcile the bank accounts and journals may present an overwhelming task.
- You are prevented from making entries in periods that have already been reconciled.
- Entries that have exceeded their allowable retention periods can be purged. This, in turn, helps to limit the amount of disk space used by PCLaw[™].

Preparing for End of Month

When performing End of Month, refer to the following guidelines for the sequence of events.

- 1. Perform the bank reconciliation for each account.
- 2. Print the following PCLaw[™] reports for the month.
 - General Bank Journal (for each general bank account)
 - Trust Bank Journal (for each trust bank account)
 - Billing (Fees) Journal
 - Write Up/Down Journal
 - Client Costs Journal
 - Client Trust Listing
 - Client Summary (detailed)
 - General Journal
 - Receivables by Client.

For firms using Accounts Payable, the following reports should also be printed:

- Purchases Journal
- Payment Listing
- Payable Listing.

For firms collecting GST and sales tax, also print the following report:

- Goods and Services Tax Journal
- Sales Tax Journal

For Ontario and Newfoundland firms, include:

Transaction Levy report

Tip: Use the report Group EOM that is provided with PCLaw[™] to print these reports each month. Goods and Services Tax Journal and Sales Tax Journal are not included in the EOM report group, so if required they will need to be added.

- 3. Print the following financial statements:
 - General Ledger
 - Trial Balance
 - Income Statement
 - Balance Sheet.

Processing End of Month

G/L > End of Month

Users can remain in PCLaw[™] while End of Month is being performed, providing Purge Old Entries is not selected.

End of Month	
Close Month of December 2009	OK Cancel
	Help

The End of Month window

- 1. Confirm in the Close Month of box, the correct month is displayed.
- 2. Check **Purge Old Entries** to remove non-matter related entries that exceed their allowable retention period of two years.

Note: Client Ledger entries are not purged when Purge Old Entries are selected. Client Ledger entries are kept until that matter is archived or purged.

3. Click **OK** to proceed to a confirmation prompt:

PCLaw	
2	This option requires you to be the only person running PCLaw. Do you want to continue?
	Yes No

This prompt displays only if Purge Old Entries is checked.

4. Click **Yes** to proceed to a backup confirmation prompt.



This prompt displays only if Perform Data Copy > Ask before Purging Old Entries is checked on the Other tab of System Settings and if Purge Old Entries is checked when performing end of month.

- 5. Select one of the following:
 - Click **Yes** to create a backup copy. Follow the backup prompts. When the backup is complete, proceed to the end of month confirmation prompt.
 - Click **No** to forego the backup copy and proceed to the end of month confirmation prompt.
- 6. Click **Yes** to close the month.

PCLaw	
2	Close the month ending 12/31/2009
C	Yes No

7. Close and reopen PCLaw[™] for the changes to take effect.

Appendix 1: Month End Reconciliation Form

For month ending _

				Journal			G/L
A/R	Client Summary	A/R	=				
	Client Ledger	A/R	=				
	Billing (Fees)	Total O/S	=				
			=		=	1200	
Disb	Client Summary	Unbd Disb					
	Client Summary	Retainers	-				
			II		=	1210	
Fees	Billing (Fees)	Lawyer 1				Closing	
	Write Up/Down	Lawyer 1	-			Opening	
			=		=	4000.1	
	Billing (Fees)	Lawyer 2				Closing	
	Write Up/Down	Lawyer 2	-			Opening	
			=		=	4000.2	
General	General Bank Jour- nal	Acct # 1			=	1000	
Bank		Acct # 2			=	1001	
		Acct # 3			=	1002	
		Acct # 4			=	1003	
		Acct # 5			=	1004	
		Acct # 99			=	1098	
Trust	Trust Bank	Acct # 1			=	1100	
Bank	Journal	Acct # 2			=	1101	
		Acct # 3			=	1102	
		Acct # 4			=	1103	
		Acct # 5			=	1104	
	Client Trust List	All	=		=	2100	
A/P	Payable Listing				=	2000	
GST	GST Journal				=	2400	
PST	Sales Tax Journal				=	2450	