# Onboarding checklist for outsourcing bookkeeping (CPA firms)

Use this when you hand write-up bookkeeping, payroll tax or sales tax prep to an outside partner. It covers what to decide, what to send and what to review. This is general guidance, not legal advice. Have your own counsel review your engagement letters and any client consent language.

| Firm | Partner | Start date | Firm owner of this project |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

## 1. Decide the scope

☐ Which services leave the firm: bookkeeping, payroll tax prep, sales tax prep, catch-up work

☐ Which tasks stay with the firm: client advice, tax positions, final review and sign-off

☐ The first batch: up to 3 standard clients, one month of work each

☐ Whether the first batch is a closed month (easy to check) or the current month (live)

☐ The turnaround you expect, counted from the day data is complete

## 2. Protect the clients

☐ Confidentiality agreement signed, covering everyone who will touch client data

☐ Client notice or consent steps decided where your professional rules or the law require them

☐ If tax return information leaves the US, the consent rules are checked with your counsel

☐ A written information security plan covers the partner (access, devices, incident notice)

☐ Everyone with access uses multi-factor authentication

## 3. Set up access

☐ A named user for each person, with the lowest role that does the job

☐ No shared passwords; access removed in writing when the work ends

☐ The partner works inside your clients' software (QuickBooks, Xero, payroll system)

☐ A list of who has access to which client

## 4. Send the first-batch data

☐ Chart of accounts and any firm standards for naming and categories

☐ Prior-period reports (profit and loss, balance sheet, trial balance)

☐ Bank and card statements, and online banking access or feeds

☐ Payroll registers and tax account details, if payroll tax is in scope

☐ Sales tax accounts, states and filing frequency, if sales tax is in scope

☐ The client's open questions and known problems, in one short note

## 5. Agree how you will talk

☐ One contact on each side, with a back-up

☐ A single place for questions (a shared tracker or one email address)

☐ How and when you will answer open questions

☐ A weekly check-in during the first batch

## 6. Review and decide

☐ Accuracy: reconciliations agree, suspense is zero, payroll and sales tax tie out

☐ Turnaround: delivered when promised, counted from complete data

☐ Your review time: how many minutes it cost per client

☐ Questions asked: did the partner ask the right ones, or guess

☐ Decision: expand, adjust or stop, with a date to decide

## Red flags in the first batch

1. Reconciliations that do not agree to statements.
2. Large amounts left in suspense or uncategorized.
3. No questions asked on unusual items.
4. Missed dates with no warning.
5. Requests for shared passwords.

RazaPro offers a free pilot on up to 3 standard clients, delivered in 5 to 7 working days once we have complete data. razapro.com/for-accounting-firms/