Creating Cost Recovery Layouts

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About Creating Cost Recovery Layouts

In order for PCLaw to be able to read correctly the information in an Import Data file, a layout must be defined. A layout describes the structure of the Import Data file. Once the structure is defined, PCLaw can read the Import Data file and determine where items such as date, matter nickname and number of photocopies are located.

This document describes the procedures for creating cost recovery layouts. The Cost Recovery module includes standard layouts for commonly used recovery systems. You can use one of these layouts or create your own.

Creating New Layouts

Pull-down menu:	File > Cost Recovery > Layout

Layouts can be created, copied, saved and deleted. In addition to describing the structure of the import data file, layouts contain default values, formulas and rules for selecting records. To determine the structure of the import data file, consult the manufacturer of the disbursement recovery system.
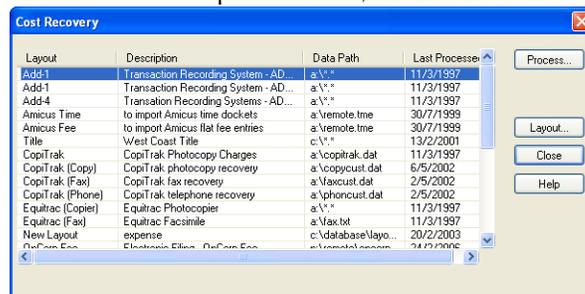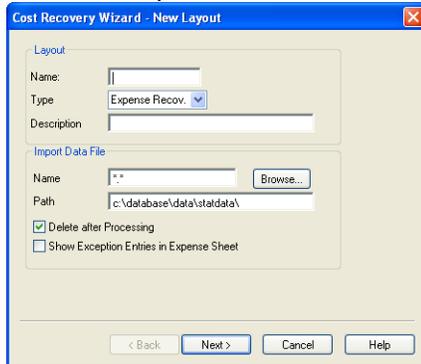

The primary cost recovery window displaying standard layouts

1. Click **Layout** to proceed to the Cost Recovery Layout window
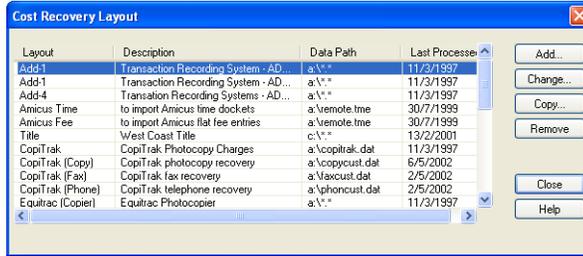
2. Click **Add** to proceed to the Cost Recovery Wizard - New Layout window:

3. Type in the **Layout - Name** box, the title of the new layout.

4. Select from the **Type** drop down list, the type of transaction that will be imported.

   Note: The layout type determines the available fields for use since entry types in PCLaw (time, fee, expense recovery) requires unique fields. For example, lawyer nickname is not available for expense recovery layouts and g/l account is not available for fee entries because they are not applicable.

5. Type in the **Description** box, the description of the intended layout. this box is optional.

6. Type in the **Import Data File - Name** box, the name of the import data file.

7. Type in the **Path** box, the path to the directory containing the import data file, or click the **Browse** button to locate the directory.

8. Select **Delete after Processing** to have the layout automatically delete the import data file after processing.

9. Click **Next** to proceed to the Cost Recovery Wizard - Define Data Record Fields window to define the properties of the record.

Defining Records

An Import Data file contains multiple records. Each record contains data for one PCLaw transaction.
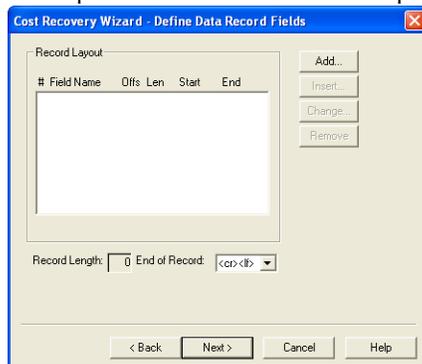

Exhibit 1. The Define Data Record Fields window follows the New Layout window in the Cost Recovery Wizard

1. Select in the **End of Record** box, the method for determining a record end.

   Records are separated from each other by either:
   - a line feed character <lf>
   - a carriage return character <cr>
   - both <cr> <lf>.

2. Click **Add** to proceed to the Add Data Field window.

Adding Fields

Records contain fields representing data values such as date, matter number or phone number.

User ID(field)
    Date (field)
        Time (field)
            Number Of Copies (field)
                Matter Nickname (field)

1234,0221,0914,12,940011 (record)
1235,0221,1057,145,020063 (record)
1234,0222,1245,2,020063 (record)

Fields are separated by delimiters. The delimiters indicate to PCLaw where each field begins and ends. The most common field delimiters are quotation marks or commas, although PCLaw can recognize many others.
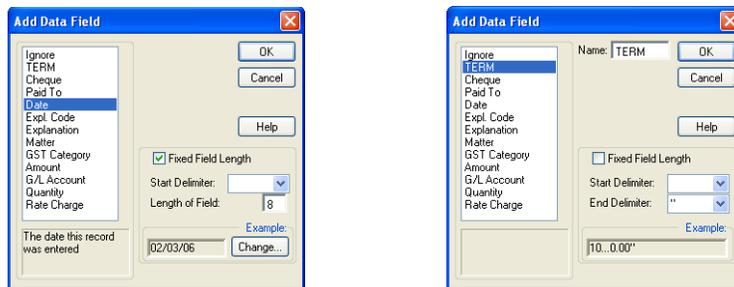

Exhibit 2. The Add Data Field window displaying fixed and variable length configurations

1. Select the field to add to the record.

   All fields available to be imported are listed. The selection is unique for each of expense recovery, time, or fee layouts.

   If there is a field in the import data file that is not transferable to a PCLaw component, such as a user ID, the layout can be told to ignore the field.

   A field can be customized as <Term> and given a unique name. Though a term cannot be imported into PCLaw, it can be utilized later on as part of a formula (see Defining Formulas on page 6).

2. Type in the **Start Delimiter** box, the character that indicates the start of the field. A field can begin with quotations, a blank space if a comma is separating the fields, a carriage return if it is the first field in the record.

3. *If the field is not of fixed length*: Select from the **End Delimiter** drop down list, the character to indicate the end of the field.

4. *If the field is of fixed length*: Check **Fixed Field Length**. End of Delimiter is replaced by Length of Field.

5. *If the field is of fixed length*: Type in the **Length of Field** box, the character size.

6. Click **OK** to display the record in the Cost Recovery Wizard -Define Data Record Fields window:
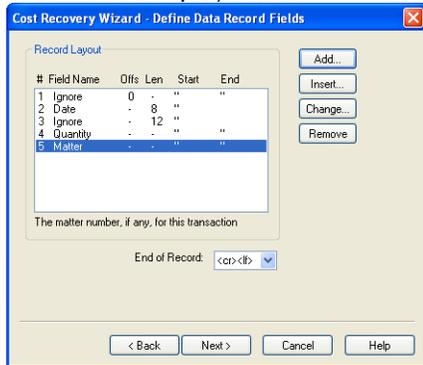

7. Modify an existing layout as follows:

   - Click the **Insert** button to add a new field above the highlighted field.
   - Click the **Change** button to make adjustments to the highlighted field.
   - Click the **Remove** button to delete the highlighted field.

8. Click **OK** to save the new layout.

Using Formatted Fields

Some fields such as Date, Hours, Amount and Rate can be formatted to match the syntax in the Import Data file. For brevity, we will show how to adjust the Date field only.

1. On the **Add Data Field** window, click **Date**.

2. Click **Change** to proceed to the Date Format window:
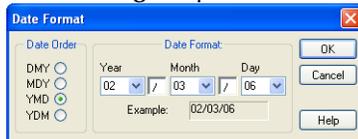
3. Select the **Date Order**. The date order can be:

   - Day / Month / Year
   - Month / Day / Year
   - Year / Month / Day
   - Year / Day / Month

4. Select from the **Year** drop down list, the year format. The year format can contain 4 digits, 2 digits, or be left blank if the date field from the import data file omits the year.

5. Type the divider box between **Year** and **Month**. The divider can be a slash or space or another suitable character.

6. Select from the **Month** drop down list, the month format. The month format can be 2 digits, 1 digit, the alphabetical abbreviation, or the full spelling of the word.

7. Type the divider box between **Month** and **Day**.

8. Select from the **Day** drop down list, the day format. The day format can be 2 digits or 1 digit.

9. Click **OK**. *If a blank space was selected for the year or the month*; PCLaw displays the Default Year/ Month window:

10. *If a blank space was selected for the year*: Select from the **Default Year** drop down list, a specific year or **Closest** to have PCLaw default to the closest year.

   Note: Closest should give the closest year to the MMDD that has come across. Example it is Jan 3 2009, and the date that comes across is 1230, closest would detect that the closest 1230 to Jan 3rd is 2008/12/30.

11. *If a blank space is selected for the month*: Select from the **Default Month** drop down list, a specific month.

12. Click **OK** to return to the Add Data Record window. The **Length of Field** box fills automatically.

13. Click **OK** to return to the Cost Recovery Wizard – Define Data Layout Fields window.

14. Click the **Next** button to proceed to the Layout Selection Rules window.

Defining Record Selection Rules

In addition to specifying the structure of an import data file, a layout can contain record selection rules that are used to filter out unnecessary or invalid records. These conditions are based on the values of one or more fields. You can define multiple conditions that must be met in order for a record to be excluded or included in PCLaw.
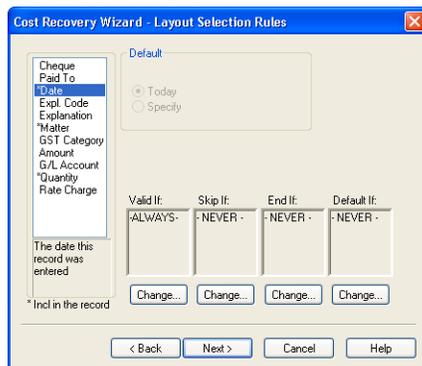

Exhibit 3. The Layout Selection Rules window follows the Define Data Layout Fields window

There are four types of record selection rules:

Valid If	Specify the conditions that make a record valid. If the conditions are met, the record is imported. If the conditions are not met, the record is ignored.	For example, a specified item must be included such as a matter nickname.
Skip If	Specify the conditions that cause a record to be ignored. If the conditions are met, the record is skipped. If the conditions are not met, the record is imported.	For example, a record can be ignored if the amount is less than $1, when specified in the Layout Selection Rules.
End If	Specify the conditions that cause the import process to be aborted. If the conditions are met, the import is stopped at that record. If the conditions are not met, the import continues.	For example, the Import Data file may have special records marked with "999" to indicate the end of the records to be imported has been reached. To stop the import process at these records, specify that if the first 3 characters of the record equal 999. The import should stop.
Default If	While not used to filter out records during the import process, the **Default If** option is used to specify that if a certain condition exists, a particular field should be given a specified default value.	For example, specify that if the date is before 1/1/82, the date field should be set as today's date.

Defining Conditions

To set a condition for a field:

1. On the **Cost Recovery Window - Layout Selection Rules** window, select the field for the condition.

2. Click the **Change** button under the **Valid If** box to proceed to the This Record is Valid If window:
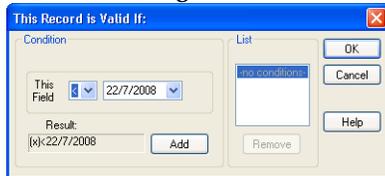
3. Select from the **This Field** drop down list, the required operand.

4. Type the base value in the adjacent box.

5. Click **Add** to move the condition to **List** box.
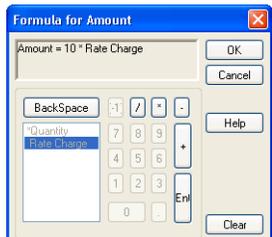
6. Click **OK**.

Defining Default Values

In addition to defining record selection rules that determine if records are valid or invalid, default values for fields which are not included in the import data file, but are required in PCLaw can be set up.

For example, importing a file from a photocopier, the default value of the explanation code can be set as 60 for photocopies.

Defining Formulas

The value of a field can be defined to be the result of a formula. For example, most photocopy recovery files contain the number of copies but not the dollar value of those copies. The law firm in the given example wants to charge 10 cents per copy.

1. On the **Cost Recovery Window - Layout Selection Rules** window, click the field for which the formula is to apply.

2. Click the **Formula** button to display the Formula for (field) window:

3. Click the required value using the number pad.

4. Click the mathematical operand to be performed on this amount.

5. Double click the required field to display the equation in the top pane.

6. Click **OK** to return to the Layout Selection Rules window.

7. Click **Next** to proceed to the Layout Selection Rules window.

Testing the Layout

Once the proper file name and location of the import data file are specified, and a file layout has been defined, it is time to test and then process the file.

Exhibit 4. The Testing window that follows the Layout Selection Rules window

1. Click **Test** to proceed to the results of the first field of the first record:

The **In** box displays the data in the syntax pulled from the Import Data file.

The **Out** box displays the value imported into PCLaw.

The **Valid If**, **Skip If**, **End If**, **Default If** boxes display the conditions set for the record.

2. Click **Skip** to move to the next field in the record.

3. Click **Cancel** to exit from the Step mode.

4. Click **Run** to forego the remainder of Step mode and test the layout in Syntax Only mode. PCLaw displays a summary at the end of the test:

The summary indicates terms that are read by the Cost Recovery module, the fields that are written to PCLaw if the file was processed, and whether the data originates from the import data file or is a default or calculated setting in PCLaw.

In the exhibit, record # 3 did not meet the condition of a minimum quantity of 3, meaning it will not be imported into PCLaw. As a result, RECORD SKIPPED! is displayed at the bottom of the window.

5. Click **OK** to proceed to a Data Records Processed window:

If a record is rejected, PCLaw creates a log file. A record is rejected if there was invalid data in the field or if the layout definition is incorrect. Records that are rejected because of invalid data must be entered into PCLaw manually using the Time Sheet, Fee Sheet or Expense Recovery functions.

6. Click **View Log** to view the log file in a text editor.
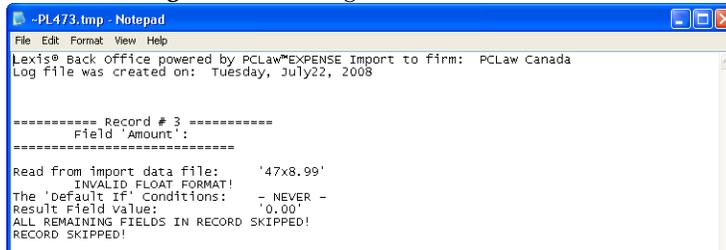
7. Click **Close** to close the Data Records Processed window and return to the Cost Recovery Wizard – Testing window.

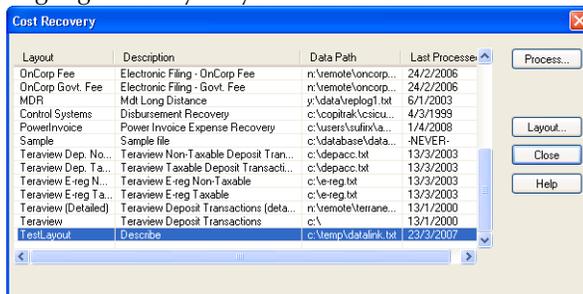8. Click **Finish** to return to the Cost Recovery window.

Processing Import Data files

Pull-down menu:	File > Cost Recovery

When an import data file is processed, the information is brought into PCLaw as interpreted by the cost recovery layout.

1. Highlight the layout you wish to use.

2. Click **Process** to proceed to the Select Data File window:
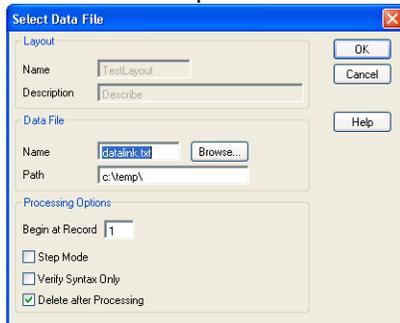
The name and description of the layout appear in the **Layout** section.

3. Type in the **Data File Name** and **Path** boxes, the file name and location to process an import data file other than the default, or click on the **Browse** button.

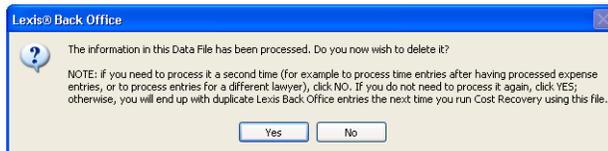4. Type in the **Begin at Record** box, the record number to specify which record in the import data file to start at.

5. Accept the default value of **1** to import all records.

6. Select **Step Mode** to test the layout in step mode.

7. Select **Verify Syntax Only** to process import data files without updating PCLaw files.

8. Select **Delete after Processing** to remove records after they are processed.

9. Click **OK** to process an import data file.

10. Select in the **Select Data File** window, the processing options you wish to use. When the import is complete, PCLaw displays a message summarizing the results of the import process.

Data Records Processed	
Records Processed:	3
Records Accepted:	2
Records Skipped:	0
Records Rejected:	1

    [View Log] [Close]

11. Click **View Log** to see rejected records.

12. Click **Close**. If Delete after Processing is checked in the Select Data File window, PCLaw prompts for the file to be deleted:

    Lexis® Back Office

    The information in this Data File has been processed. Do you now wish to delete it?

    NOTE: if you need to process it a second time (for example to process time entries after having processed expense entries, or to process entries for a different lawyer), click NO. If you do not need to process it again, click YES; otherwise, you will end up with duplicate Lexis Back Office entries the next time you run Cost Recovery using this file.

    [Yes] [No]

13. Click **Yes** to delete the import data file.

    Click **No** to retain the import data file in order to import other records.

    Note: Time and fee entries that were imported into PCLaw can be reviewed by printing a Time Listing report. The Client Expense journal lists expense recovery entries.