Swiftwater & Company

CONTRACT LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST · OCTOBER 2026

Statement of Work Outline Checklist

Sections, owners, approvals, and attachments

An outline of what a statement of work for professional services covers, who usually owns each section, which approvals to collect before signature, and what to attach and record afterward.



BEFORE YOU START

How to use this checklist

Use the outline to plan a statement of work and route it, not as the statement of work itself. The wording of each section is decided by the people who own it and reviewed by your counsel. For sample statements of work, see the external templates linked from the guide.

READ BEFORE USING

This checklist is an operational aid for tracking and routing contracts. It is provided for general information only. It is not legal advice and contains no contract language; your counsel decides what your agreements say.

Field names vary by CLM platform. Map each item to the field, document type, or workflow step your system uses, and drop what does not apply.

Approval thresholds and who must sign differ by organization. Use your own delegation of authority.

Sections and who owns them

Section	What it covers	Usually owned by
Header and references	Parties, SOW number, the parent MSA it falls under, and effective date	Contract owner
Background and objectives	Why the work is being done and the outcome the business expects	Business owner
Scope	What is in scope and what is out of scope	Business owner, with the vendor
Deliverables and acceptance	Each deliverable and how it will be judged complete	Business owner
Timeline and milestones	Start and end dates, milestones, and dependencies	Project lead
Roles and responsibilities	Who does what on each side, including key personnel	Project lead and vendor
Assumptions	Conditions the plan depends on, stated so they can be checked	Project lead
Pricing and payment schedule	Fee structure, rates, milestones tied to payment, and invoicing	Finance and procurement
Change control	How changes to scope, time, or cost are requested and approved	Contract owner
Reporting and governance	Status reporting cadence and escalation path	Project lead
Signatures	Authorized signatories for each party	Contract owner

© 2026 Swiftwater & Company · swiftwaterco.com

Approvals to collect before signature

- ☐ Business owner sign-off on scope, deliverables, and acceptance
- ☐ Budget approval and a purchase order from finance
- ☐ Procurement review of the vendor, rates, and commercial terms
- ☐ Legal review where the SOW departs from the MSA or exceeds your threshold
- ☐ Security and privacy review if the vendor will access data or systems
- ☐ Internal signatory confirmed against your delegation of authority

What to attach or link

- ☐ Reference to the parent MSA record
- ☐ Pricing schedule or rate card
- ☐ Project plan and milestone schedule
- ☐ Acceptance criteria, if kept in a separate document
- ☐ Related agreements on their own records, such as a data processing agreement
- ☐ Insurance certificate, if your process requires one
- ☐ The purchase order

After signature

- ☐ Record the SOW in the CLM and link it to the MSA
- ☐ Set reminders for milestones, the end date, and any notice dates
- ☐ Keep a change order log linked to the SOW
- ☐ Record acceptance sign-off for each deliverable
- ☐ Close out: final invoice reconciled, acceptance complete, record status updated

© 2026 Swiftwater & Company · swiftwaterco.com

ABOUT SWIFTWATER & COMPANY

Want contracts that run themselves?

Swiftwater's contract management practitioners map how contracts move through your organization, set up the repository fields, workflows, and reminders that keep agreements like these on track, and support the teams that use them after go-live. A discovery sprint is the usual starting point.

Our professionals have run contract operations in-house and work as named practitioners, from a free first conversation through delivery.

TALK TO US

Contract management services: swiftwaterco.com/solutions/contract-management/

Talk to a practitioner: swiftwaterco.com/contact/

The guide behind this checklist: How to draft a statement of work

This document is for general information and education and is not legal advice; consult your own counsel on any contract or compliance question. You may adapt this checklist for your own use. If you believe any material in this document should be corrected, contact us through the contact form.

Photo credits: cover photo from StockSnap.io (stocksnap.io/photo/business-people-JVU7DG266D), CC0 public domain dedication.

© 2026 Swiftwater & Company, LLC. All rights reserved.