



AIRSTREAMING LIVE

Jennifer Smythe with Gary Dubrovsky

At least two or three times per week, I hear the words, “Come on, Mama! Let’s go see Dada in the trailer!” Alas, our best-kept secret from our toddler son has been revealed. Mama and Dada maintain a home office in the Airstream trailer on the side of the house—and not just any home office: It’s a fully equipped, Wi-Fi hot-spot law office connected to electricity, water, heating, and air conditioning. It even has a bathroom. It is, quite literally, a traveling Starbucks.



Jennifer Smythe and son working at the foldout table next to the couch ▼



When our son was born, we used the parked Airstream exclusively as a childless retreat for peaceful sleeping. Since that time, we have turned it into a fully functioning home office insulated from the sights, sounds, and distractions of parenthood. These days, it serves as the epicenter of trial strategy and preparation, client phone meetings, potential client phone consultations, document drafting, and firm billing—in short, any work at home that requires a level of focus our toddler will not allow.

Measuring thirty-one feet long and eight feet wide, our Airstream boasts various workspace options. My husband Gary prefers the dining table/nook, while I prefer the foldout table and couch. Our individual preferences don't matter much as we are never working in it at the same time. After all, one of us needs to be watching our son. Unlike our Union Square office in San Francisco, the Airstream is tucked away from noisy traffic, never-ending construction, tourists, derailed electric buses, and the new Apple store. When a calm work environment is needed, the Airstream steps up and saves the day.



▲ Gary Dubrovsky working at the table in the dining nook

We have gotten many reactions to our home office arrangement by attorneys and others alike. Some think it is brilliant and enviable, while others find it claustrophobic and distracting. “How can I focus while I am camping?” a friend asked. Regardless of the feedback, for us, it is essential. As partners and owners of a small and bustling San Francisco law firm and parents to a toddler, we are working around the clock, either professionally or personally. Having a trailer at home to

escape to and get substantive case and firm work accomplished has been a godsend.

The question we get most often is whether our technology and equipment are already set up in the trailer or whether we bring what we need each time we work in it. The short answer is that everything is set up how we need it, perhaps minus our laptops, which float between the house and trailer. Our technology systems come with us wherever we are, be it in San Francisco or the Airstream. We can “remote in” to our exchange server/network with ease, regardless of location. Our email is also on the exchange, so we can use any computer to access the correspondence and digital files we need.

The ability to work from a laptop and access all the digital information we require remotely keeps the Airstream decluttered and available for one of its best uses: travel. After all, a traveling law office beats a stationary law office any day. And travel we do, at least three to four times per year to places such as Bodega Bay, San Luis Obispo, the wine country, and to various auto

racetracks, to name a few. And, yes, we even manage to get legal work done at these locations while the little guy is sleeping. We have actually been encouraged numerous times to Airbnb it. But, if we rent it out to strangers who are paying and possibly staying longer than a weekend, we would give up our home office escape, which is paramount at the moment to maximize productivity. We know nothing is forever, though, and someday we won't need the peace and quiet away from our toddler son. Until that day arrives, however, we will be busy in the trailer, Airstreaming live.

Jennifer Smythe and Gary Dubrovsky are partners in Dubrovsky Law. Smythe specializes in immigration law focusing on U.S. employment and family-based immigration, including temporary nonimmigrant visas, permanent residents, and U.S. citizenship/naturalization. Dubrovsky is a family law attorney who focuses on complex property and child custody litigation.

Editor's Note

Do you have a unique home/office arrangement? Send details to editor@sfbar.org.

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