

FIELDS OF LAW

Animal Law

Animal law is the study and practice of law relating to animals. As an animal rights lawyer, you apply the legal system to speak for animals and their human associates and allies. You might be contesting animal exploiters, defending animal rights activists, and campaigning for the legal status and rights of animals. Animal rights attorneys often work for:

- Animal rights organizations
- Law firms

Civil Rights

Civil rights law strikes at the balance of governmental power and individual liberties. Although this is a small and competitive field, many lawyers whose main practices are in other fields serve as civil rights lawyers by taking cases on a pro bono (without a charge or a fee) basis. Full-time civil rights attorneys often work for:

- Nonprofit organizations
- Public interest law firms
- Large law firms with diverse practices

Corporate Law

Corporate law focuses on helping clients conduct their business affairs in a manner that is efficient and consistent with the law. The responsibilities of a corporate lawyer range from preparing a business' initial articles of incorporation to handling a corporate reorganization under the provisions of federal bankruptcy law. Corporate law practice areas include:

- Contracts
- Intellectual property
- Legislative compliance
- Liability matters

Criminal Law

Criminal law focuses on the fundamental issues of the law and personal liberties. Lawyers in this field defend many of the basic rights considered crucial to the preservation of a free and just society. There are two main types of criminal law lawyers:

- Criminal defense lawyers, who represent clients accused of crimes
- Prosecutors and district attorneys, who represent the interests of the state in prosecuting those accused of crimes

Education Law

Education law focuses generally on counseling school districts or other educational agencies. Some education lawyers may represent parents with children with special-education needs or student expulsions against a school district. Education law practice areas include:

- Student residency
- Governance issues
- Personnel issues
- Tuition fraud
- Student discipline
- Special education law
- The development of educational policies

Employment and Labor Law

Employment and labor law focuses on addressing the legal rights of workers and their employers. Attorneys in this field might represent an individual employee, a group of employees, job applicants, a union, union employees, government workers, a business, a government agency, or interest groups. Employment and labor law practice areas include:

- Wage disputes
- Unlawful terminations
- Child labor
- The right to unionize
- Workplace safety
- Sexual harassment
- Race, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability discrimination

Environmental and Natural Resources Law

Environmental and natural resources law focuses on the legal and regulatory issues relating to natural resources. Environmental and natural resources lawyers may work directly for governmental agencies, public interest groups, or organizations concerned about protecting the environment. Environmental and natural resources law practice areas include:

- Air and water quality
- Hazardous waste practice
- Natural gas transportation
- Oil and gas exploration and development
- Electric power licensing
- Energy trade regulations
- Mining
- Public land use

Family and Juvenile Law

Family and juvenile law focuses on the relationships between individuals within the context of family. Many lawyers in this field are members of small firms or practice law on their own. Family and juvenile law practice areas include:

- Adoptions
- Child support
- Domestic abuse
- Divorce
- Prenuptial agreements

Health Law

Health law focuses on regulations that impact the health care industry and its patients. Health law lawyers can represent hospitals, physician groups, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), individual doctors, universities, and many others. Health law practice areas include:

- Medicare policy and compliance
- Public health policy
- Biomedicine and telemedicine
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Risk management
- Bioethics and clinical ethics

Immigration Law

Immigration law focuses on the legal issues and policies relating to immigrants who come to the United States on a temporary or permanent basis. An immigration lawyer may work for the government, a law firm, a community-based organization, or in-house for a company employing immigrants. Immigration law practice areas include:

- Asylum/refugee law
- Business immigration law
- Criminal and deportation defense

Intellectual Property Law

Intellectual property law focuses on the protection of discoveries, creations, and identifying marks for inventors, authors, and businesses. Intellectual property lawyers usually specialize in a specific practice area, which include:

- Patent law
- Copyright law
- International trade negotiations

International Law

International law focuses on the legal implications of increased travel across borders for business, tourism, and permanent residence. Fluency in other languages or familiarity with other cultures can be an advantage for law school graduates who want to practice in the international arena. There are two main types of international law:

- Public international law, which works with national governments, international institutions, or public interest groups
- Private international law, which provides extensive opportunities with law firms, corporations, banks, or telecommunications firms

Municipal Law

Municipal law is the law specific to a particular city or county (known legally as a "municipality"), and the government bodies within those cities or counties. This can cover a wide range of issues, including police power, zoning, education policies, and property taxes. Most attorneys who handle municipal law cases are hired by the municipalities themselves. Related practice areas include:

- Land use law
- Real estate—property taxes, zoning
- Small business law

Real Estate Law

Real estate law focuses on issues relating to land. Some real estate lawyers focus on litigation issues while others focus on contractual issues around land and property. Real estate law practice areas include:

- Land and building ownership
- Rights to possess and use land or buildings
- Sale and purchase of real property
- Landlord-tenant issues
- Development of real property
- Compliance with local, state, or national regulations

Securities Law

Securities law focuses on the formation, organization, and financing of corporations. This is a complex area of law that almost always requires the services of a specialist. Securities law practice areas include:

- Stocks
- Mergers
- Acquisitions
- Corporate takeovers

Sports and Entertainment Law

Sports law focuses on the legal aspects of both amateur and professional sports. At the amateur level, sports lawyers work with athletes, donors, colleges, and universities. At the professional level, sports lawyers serve as agents to individual players or represent team owners. Sports law practice areas include:

- Contract and antitrust issues
- Title IX compliance

Entertainment law focuses on assisting clients with employment law issues and contract negotiations and disputes. Entertainment law practice areas include:

- Employment law
- Intellectual property law
- Compensation/royalties disputes

Tax Law

Tax law focuses on the regulations set in place by the federal Internal Revenue Code. Tax law constantly changes and lawyers in this field are challenged to stay current with each new development. Tax law practice areas include:

- Income taxes
- Capital gains taxes
- Tax evasion