



HS Intro to Public Services: Civil Trial Attorney

Tuesday, April 28, 2020



HS Intro to Public Services

Lesson for Tuesday, April 28: Pre-Law Pathway - Civil Trial Attorneys

Learning Target:

Students will understand what a Civil Trial Attorney does, what it takes to become one, and identify the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the field.



Opening Exercise

Before getting into the lesson, answer the following questions on a sheet of paper:

1. Approximately how long does it take for a person to become a lawyer?
2. What test do law school graduates have to pass before becoming a lawyer?
3. How do Civil Lawyers differ from Criminal Trial Lawyers?

Activity #1

What is Civil Trial Law?

1. Civil trial law may include civil litigation (*legal action*), personal injury litigation, and any other type of litigation that is not criminal in nature, such as property disputes, construction or insurance claims and a wide array of other civil controversies.
2. Usually money damages are at stake in civil litigation.

Look at the [Comparison Chart: Civil and Criminal Law](#) and answer the questions in the box on the right.

1. Which type of law deals with monetary compensation?
2. Who files civil cases?
3. Who determines guilt/innocence in a criminal case?
4. Who has to pay court costs in a civil trial?
5. True/False: Juries are rarely used in civil cases?



Activity #1 - ANSWERS

1. Which type of law deals with monetary compensation? - **CIVIL**
2. Who files civil cases? - **PRIVATE PARTIES, NOT THE GOVERNMENT**
3. Who determines guilt/innocence in a criminal case? - **JURY**
4. Who has to pay court costs in a civil trial? - **PRIVATE PARTIES**
5. True/False: Juries are rarely used in civil cases? - **TRUE**

Activity #2

Watch this interview with Kory Stubblefield, Civil Trial Attorney in Springfield, MO. As the video is playing, answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. How many years did it take Mr. Stubblefield to get through Law School at the University of Missouri?
2. What test did he have to take to become a lawyer after he graduated law school?
3. In Missouri, how many days does it take to complete that test?
4. According to Mr. Stubblefield, approximately how many cases are settled out of court so that it doesn't go to trial?
5. How has COVID-19 affected legal proceedings for Mr. Stubblefield and the courts he works with?





Activity #2 - ANSWERS

1. How many years did it take Mr. Stubblefield to get through Law School at the University of Missouri?
 - a. 3 years
2. What test did he have to take to become a lawyer after he graduated law school?
 - a. Bar Exam
3. In Missouri, how many days does it take to complete that test?
 - a. 2 days
4. According to Mr. Stubblefield, approximately how many cases are settled out of court so that it doesn't go to trial?
 - a. 98-99%
5. How has COVID-19 affected legal proceedings for Mr. Stubblefield and the courts he works with?
 - a. He isn't able to meet face-to-face with clients and judges, but is still working on things over the phone, video conferences (like Zoom), and if a matter was serious, could still see a judge because technically, the courts are still open, but they are very limited in what cases are being dealt with in person.



Additional Resources/Information

For more information about Civil Law and Civil Attorneys, check out the following resources:

- [What does a Civil Attorney do?](#)
- [Civil Attorney: Job Description, Duties and Requirements](#)
 - *Also includes information about job outlook and salaries*
- VIDEO: [Civil Litigation](#)

COVID-19 Impact on law students & the legal professions

- [How COVID-19 Impacts Law Firms](#)
- [Virus Poses Extra Obstacles for Attorneys With Tax Court Cases](#)
- [Ending Virus Shutdowns Too Soon Poses Legal Risk for Businesses](#)
- [California Weighs Emergency Lawyer Licensing Due to Virus](#)
- [Law students face work, certification challenges during COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [Law School Clinics Across the Country Offer Coronavirus Help](#)