

**Criminal and Criminal Defense Law** involves the prosecution and defense of criminal defendants. Federal, state, and local law define certain acts as criminal, define some more minor acts as civil infractions, and prescribe punishments or other penalties. Both federal and state constitutions and other laws prescribe rights and obligations that criminal defendants may be entitled to as their cases move through the criminal justice system. Criminal law attorneys may work for the government, as prosecutors or public defenders, or as private criminal defense attorneys. They represent either the government or the accused throughout the many stages of the criminal process. Some of those stages include: a grand jury investigation, the defendant's arrest, the defendant's first appearance in court, requesting and setting bail, the filing of an indictment or information, the discovery process, plea or other resolution negotiations between the state and the defendant, scheduling and planning a trial, jury selection, the trial process, presentencing matters, sentencing, other post-conviction matters, and appealing a verdict.

Criminal cases involve less discovery than civil cases. However, criminal law attorneys must be very familiar with the rules of criminal discovery and evidence. Criminal cases are often won or lost based on issues with defendants' rights or evidentiary issues. Criminal law attorneys frequently negotiate with one another, informally or formally. They draft warrants and bring them before judges. They research and draft motions and memoranda of law, although they spend less time doing so than civil litigation attorneys. Criminal attorneys spend a considerable amount of time in court, especially government criminal law attorneys who are often assigned to the cases in a single courtroom.

For additional information on Criminal and Criminal Defense Law, see the Legal Information Institute's Wex encyclopedia "Criminal Law" page, the American Bar Association's Criminal Justice Section, and the Criminal Law Section of the Florida Bar.

<b>Job Type</b>	<b>Typical Duties</b>
<u>Federal Agencies</u> <a href="#">Department of Justice</a> <a href="#">Federal Jobs</a>	Prosecute or defend criminal cases at all stages. Try criminal cases. Handle criminal appeals.
<u>FL State Agencies</u> <a href="#">Florida State Jobs</a> <a href="#">Florida Office of the Attorney General</a> State Attorneys' Offices Public Defenders' Offices	Prosecute or defend criminal cases at all stages. Try criminal cases. Handle criminal appeals.
<u>Local Government</u> City Attorney's Office County Attorney's Office City Police	Prosecute or defend criminal cases at all stages. Try criminal cases. Handle criminal appeals.
<u>Private Law Firms</u>	Defend criminal cases at all stages. Try criminal cases. Handle criminal appeals.

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## Student Organizations

[Criminal Law Society](#)

## Professional Organizations

[National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers](#)

[American Bar Association Criminal Justice Section](#)

[Florida Bar Criminal Law Section](#)

[Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers](#)

[Association of Defense Trial Attorneys](#)

[Palm Beach Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers](#)

[Broward Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers](#)

[National Academy of Criminal Defense Attorneys](#)

[National Black Prosecutors Association](#)

[Florida Prosecuting Attorneys Association](#)

[International Association of Prosecutors](#)

[Association of Prosecuting Attorneys](#)

## Other Activities

Intern with the Office of the Attorney General, a state attorney's, prosecutor's, or public defender's office.

Intern with a criminal defense firm.

Participate in a judicial internship with a judge in the criminal division.

Do pro bono work with organizations listed in the Pro Bono Honor Program Handbook.

Become a CLI - Certified Legal Intern (see checklist at: [Florida Bar CLI Checklist](#))

Participate in [Criminal Justice Field Placement Clinic](#), working for the Public Defender's Office or the State Attorney's Office as a Certified Legal Intern (CLI).

Periodically check the [Simplicity Job Board](#) for opportunities in this area of law.

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