



Criminal Defense Law

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What Do Criminal Defense Lawyers Do?

- They help **protect the rights of defendants**, and they help them build defenses that **reduce the negative consequences of being arrested/charged with a crime**
- They help their clients navigate through the criminal justice system, prepare and see their legal defense, and **ensure their rights are protected** throughout the process
- They also interact with police, prosecutors, and judges on a regular basis
- Within the criminal defense practice, **an attorney might choose to sub-specialize on specific types of crimes**. For example, some defense lawyers might only handle cases involving drug charges, violent crimes, federal charges, or sex crime charges. By specializing in very specific areas, the attorney usually has the time to build strong knowledge and experience defending against these types of charges.

- Median annual salary is \$122,960, or \$61.48 per hour.
- The highest-earning 10% of lawyers make more than \$208,000 annually, or \$104 per hour.
- The lowest-earning 10% of lawyers earn less than \$59,670, or \$29.84 per hour.



Common Tasks of a Criminal Defense Lawyer

Communicate

Interview the client and witnesses

Motions

Draft, file, and argue motions on behalf of the client

Legal Research

Perform legal research to set up a defense and a case theory

Discuss & Negotiate

Potential plea bargains

Gather Evidence

Gather evidence in support of their case & analyze the evidence against their client

Guide

Can help guide the defendant; they are the trusted advisor for their client



Defenses Strategies to Criminal Charges

01 Plea Deal

Client admits to a crime and agree they may be sentenced; usually pursued when the prosecution has a strong case

02 Insanity

Used infrequently; means that the defendant was unable to distinguish right from wrong when the crime was committed, or had an irresistible impulse

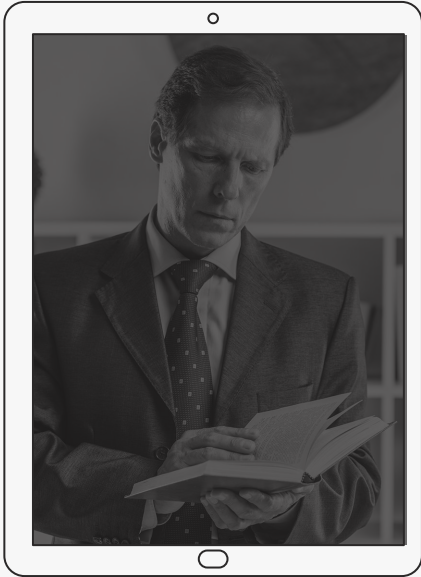
03 Self Defense

Defendant used violence in a justified way to respond to violent actions or the threat of violent actions coming from the victim

04 Innocence

Raised when the client did not commit the crime the prosecution is charging against them

Public vs Private Defense



Public Defender

- Only those who cannot afford to hire an attorney are entitled to use a public defender. In order to apply to use one, you are required to fill out a financial affidavit documenting your financial situation... if you qualify, the judge will appoint you a PD

Private Counsel

- If you have the ability to hire a private defense attorney, you get to pick exactly who you want to work with, and they have more of a personal stake in the outcome of your case than PD

Criminal Defense Law Firms in Utah

- Brass & Cordova (SLC) (places an emphasis on criminal defense, including homicide and manslaughter, sex crimes, drug offenses, white collar crimes)
- Dod & Kuendig (Park City)
- Pearson Butler