



ARRIVE ALIVE CALIFORNIA INC.
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Legal terms

Court - Government entity authorized to resolve legal disputes. Judges sometimes use "court" to refer to themselves in the third person, as in "the court has read the briefs."

Judge - An official of the Judicial branch with authority to decide lawsuits brought before courts. Used generically, the term judge may also refer to all judicial officers, including Supreme Court justices.

Counsel - Legal advice; a term also used to refer to the lawyers in a case

Defendant - In a civil case, the person or organization against whom the plaintiff brings suit; in a criminal case, the person accused of the crime.

Discovery - Procedures used to obtain disclosure of evidence before trial.

Evidence - Information presented in testimony or in documents that is used to persuade the fact finder (judge or jury) to decide the case in favor of one side or the other.

Misdemeanor - A lesser crime punishable by a fine and/or county jail time for up to one year.

Felony - A serious crime, usually punishable by at least one year in prison

Community Service - A special condition the court imposes that requires an individual to work without pay.

Judgment - The official decision of a court finally resolving the dispute between the parties to the lawsuit.

Motion - A request by a litigant to a judge for a decision on an issue relating to the case.

Plea - In a criminal case, the defendant's statement pleading "guilty" or "not guilty" in answer to the charges.

Probation - Sentencing option in the federal courts. With probation, instead of sending an individual to prison, the court releases the person to the community and orders him or her to complete a period of supervision and to abide by certain conditions.

Sentence - The punishment ordered by a court for a defendant.

Source: uscourts.gov, dictionarylaw.com

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