

Aviation and Space Law



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What is Aviation and Space Law?

Those lawyers who practice in aviation law deal with issues relating to the manufacture, ownership, maintenance, and use of aircraft, aviation accident litigation, coverage afforded by aviation insurance policies, and other aircraft related matters. Aviation law is a highly specialized field, requiring comprehensive knowledge of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, specific laws regarding flight, and aviation generally.

Most aspects of aviation law fall under the oversight of the FAA. However, air traffic regulation polices, laws, and administrative agencies have been created by both federal and state government, with certain restrictions preventing states from regulating routes, services, or the rates of all air carriers authorized to provide interstate air transportation by the Federal Aviation Act. States may alter existing remedies and enact state laws consistent with federal mandate. Additionally, federal law does not preempt state products liability law, and in defective product cases, aviation manufacturers may be held strictly liable.

Space law is a burgeoning field relating to legal issues arising from the growing commercialization of space. General international law, international agreements, treaties, conventions, and United Nations General Assembly resolutions, as well as rules and regulations of international organizations comprise the body of space law.

Where Do Aviation Lawyers Work?

Government

U.S. Department of Transportation—[Federal Aviation Administration](#)

Air Force JAG Corps—[General Information](#)

Department of Justice—[Aviation, Space, & Admiralty Litigation Section](#)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration—[The Office of General Counsel for NASA](#)

Shelby County Airport Authority—[Current Jobs](#)

Specialized Firms

Firms may specialize in aviation law for transactional purposes or in aviation torts.

Corporations

In-house counsel for airline companies

FedEx

SpaceX

What Classes Should I Take?

Admiralty Law

Arbitration

Federal Courts

Civil Procedure

Products Liability

Contracts

International Law

Sales

Secured transactions

Employment law

Torts

Resume Boosters for Aviation and Space Law

Obtain your pilot's license

Clerk with a federal judge

Intern or extern with a federal agency

Work with a law firm engaged in federal torts litigation

Extern with the Shelby County Airport Authority

Extern with FedEx

Spend a summer with Air Force JAG Corps

Aviation and Space Law Resources



Professional Associations

American Bar Association

All University of Memphis law students have free membership to the [American Bar Association](#). Their website provides routinely updated information and interest-specific career advice. Join different sections to find out what they offer. Check out the [Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section](#) and the [Aviation and Space Law Committee](#).

Lawyer Pilots Bar Association

Membership in the [Lawyer Pilots Bar Association](#) largely consists of attorneys and pilots (or former pilots). Eligibility for membership varies from licensed attorneys to individuals who simply have an interest in aviation law or aviation safety. The organization publishes a journal on FAA enforcement actions, accident litigation, and advising aircraft owners and airman on a quarterly basis.

Become a Pilot

Read the Federal Aviation Administration's information about the first steps to becoming an aircraft pilot [here](#).

Aviation Law Links

["Why become an aviation attorney?"](#)

This article was co-authored by Katzman, Lampert, and McClune Aviation Lawyers. September 28, 2016.

More [Aviation Practice-related Articles](#)

Space Law Links

[The Outer Space Treaty](#)

[Astronaut Rescue](#)

[Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects](#)

[Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space](#)