

What is entertainment and sports law?

- ◆ Entertainment and sports law is civil law of a specific character that relates to the fields of entertainment and athletics. The practice involves contracts, labor law, corporate finance, intellectual property, and antitrust.
- ◆ Lawyers practicing in the field of entertainment and sports law specialize in knowing and understanding their clients' industry and are able to advocate for their clients' interests.
- ◆ In the major professional sports leagues of the National Football League ("NFL"), Major League Baseball ("MLB"), National Basketball Association ("NBA"), and National Hockey League ("NHL"), players' associations act much like unions, regulating fees and salaries for sports professionals, coaches, and agents.
- ◆ For the lawyer specializing in entertainment law, intellectual property law takes center stage. Copyright law concerns the rights of creators of artistic works in the music, entertainment, publishing, and fine arts industries.

Where do entertainment and sports lawyers work?

- ◆ Private law firms: Some large firms have departments specializing in entertainment and sports law, especially in large cities where record labels house their headquarters or in cities with professional sports teams.. Attorneys in firms also represent individual performers, free agents, athletic teams, filmmakers, and producers.
- ◆ Boutique firms: Some boutique firms specialize in sports or entertainment law where every lawyer in the firm has the same kind of clients from the same industry.
- ◆ In-house counsel: Film companies, music companies, and a number of athletic teams have in-house lawyers.

What classes can I take to help me prepare for a practice in entertainment and sports law?

- ◆ Sports law
- ◆ Business organizations
- ◆ Copyright
- ◆ Intellectual property
- ◆ Cyber law
- ◆ Patent law

Where do sports and entertainment lawyers do?

- ◆ Negotiating: Sports and entertainment lawyers negotiate contracts with sponsorships, television syndicators, and other representatives that interact with the sports and entertainment industry. A lawyer working for a band might help to negotiate contracts with particular venues at a particular rate.
- ◆ Transactional work: Entertainment lawyers frequently contract for one-time events that may never reoccur. Thus, entertainment and sports lawyers must be able to draft contracts that advance and protect their clients' interests under a variety of circumstances.
- ◆ Communicating: Lawyers in the sports and entertainment industry work with not only their clients but also those who work with their clients or represent them in non-legal capacities. The sports and entertainment world attracts big personalities, and a sports and entertainment lawyer should be able to work demanding or difficult people.

How do I get into sports and entertainment law?

- ◆ Some sports and entertainment lawyers begin specializing in their field after first working in the commercial and corporate law practice.
- ◆ Networking is critically important in the sports and entertainment field of law. Who you know, rather than what you know, may be a determining factor for individuals seeking to enter this field of the law.
- ◆ Some sports lawyers may work as agents for professional league players or coaches. Though a legal background is not a requirement to become a sports agent, a background in law substantially assists sports agents in understanding agency contracts. Those relationships are governed by the Uniform Athlete Agent Act ("UAAA").

What skills are most important for sports and entertainment lawyers?

- ◆ Communication skills
- ◆ Strong negotiator
- ◆ Flexible and creative
- ◆ Interest in the field

Entertainment and Sports Law Resources



University of Memphis
Law School
Career Services Office

Check Out the American Bar Association

- ◆ The website for the Forum on the Entertainment & Sports Industries can be found here:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/entertainment_sports.html
- ◆ The Forum on the Entertainment & Sports Industries has two periodicals:
 - *The Entertainment and Sports Lawyer* is the Forum's online newsletter covering the business of the sports and entertainment industries
 - The semi-annual *Journal of International Media & Entertainment Law* "provides a forum for exploring the complex and unsettled legal principles that apply to the international distribution of media and entertainment. The legal issues surrounding the creation and distribution of news and entertainment products on a worldwide basis necessarily implicate the laws, customs, and practices of multiple jurisdictions. The Journal examines the impact of the Internet and other technologies, the often-conflicting laws affecting media and entertainment issues, and the legal ramifications of widely divergent cultural views of privacy, defamation, intellectual property, and government regulation."

Online Resources

- ◆ *Media Law Prof Blog*: Maintained by Christine A. Corcos from Louisiana State University
http://lawprofessors.typepad.com/media_law_prof_blog/
- ◆ *Hollywood, Esq.*: A blog that covers amusing and sensationalist lawsuits arising from movie, television, and other entertainment productions
<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/blogs/thr-esq>
- ◆ *Law Law Land*: This blog is published by Greenberg Glusker, a full-service Los Angeles law firm with special expertise in entertainment transactions and litigation. The firm's clients include Hollywood studios, independent producers, A-list talent, and up-and-coming actors, writers, and directors.
<http://www.lawlawlandblog.com/about>
- ◆ *Sports Law Blog*: A publication of the ABA maintained by law professors
http://www.abajournal.com/blawg/sports_law_blog
- ◆ *College Sports Law Blog*: A blog maintained by the private firm Barlow Garsek & Simon, LLP, which is located in Texas
<http://www.bgsfirm.com/college-sports-law-blog/>
- ◆ *Broadcast Law Blog*: David Oxenford has represented broadcasters for over 30 years on a wide array of matters from the negotiation and structuring of station purchase and sale agreements to regulatory matters.
<http://www.broadcastlawblog.com/>

University of Memphis Law Library Resources

- ◆ *Leading Cases in Sports Law*—Jack Anderson
eBook (Call No. K3702 .L43 2013eb eBook)
- ◆ *Sports Law in a Nutshell*—Walter T. Champion
Call No. KF3989 .C48 2017 (Available on the 1st floor of the law library in Open Reserve)
- ◆ *Music Law for the General Practitioner*—Thomas R. Leavens
Call No. KF4291 .L43 2013 (Available on the 3rd floor of the law library)
- ◆ *Entertainment Law for the General Practitioner*—X.M. Frascogna, Jr.
Call No. KF4290 F73 2011 (Available on the 3rd floor of the law library)