

What is family law?

- ◆ A family law practice encompasses a wide variety of legal matters that relate to relationships among family members.
- ◆ Typical issues in family law include the following subjects: pre-marital agreements, adoption, child support, child custody, establishment of paternity, divorce, spousal support, property division, post-divorce modifications and enforcement, termination of parental rights, child dependency and neglect, domestic violence, guardianships, and conservatorships.
- ◆ Sometimes family law practitioners also handle juvenile delinquency proceedings. Though most delinquency proceedings do not result in a conviction, they are much like criminal proceedings.
- ◆ Sometimes family law practitioners must also be familiar with international law. International child abduction, often by a parent or grandparent, can occur when family members reside overseas. International family law counsel coordinates all aspects of these cases, which often require immediate action in multiple jurisdictions.

What are the daily activities of a family law or juvenile law attorney?

- ◆ Family law attorneys spend much of their days performing three (3) tasks:
 - Litigating cases in adversary proceedings
 - Negotiating to help parties reach a settlement; and
 - Counseling clients about available options as well as the processes and procedures in the litigation.
- ◆ Drafting: Creating legal documents and advisory letters
- ◆ Documenting: Engaging in formal and informal discovery
- ◆ Counseling: Listening to clients and helping them prepare for mediation or trial
- ◆ Litigating: Conducting all aspects of trial and appellate practice

Where do family and juvenile lawyers work?

- ◆ **Large and small firms:** Sometimes law firms specialize in family law. Alternatively, a large firm may have a division that handles all their family law matters.
- ◆ **Solo practitioners:** Lawyers may be appointed in many types of family law proceedings including terminations of parental rights, child support contempt cases, and guardianships. Some people are able to make a living by solely working on these cases.
- ◆ **Government agencies:** Lawyers who specialize in family law may work at the state's Department of Children's Services, Child Support Services, prosecutors and public defenders' offices.
- ◆ **Public Interest Organizations:** Some family law attorneys work in legal aid and legal services programs. Locally, this includes organizations like the Community Legal Center (the CLC), Memphis Area Legal Services (MALS), and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA).

How do people start in family law?

- ◆ Clerk with a private firm that does family law
- ◆ Clerk with a civil court judge
- ◆ Perform pro bono work with public interest agencies that handle family law cases
- ◆ Work in the child and family litigation clinic
- ◆ Volunteer for the family law or juvenile law track with Alternative Spring Break

Classes

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| ◆ Family law | ◆ Appellate advocacy | ◆ Family law seminar |
| ◆ Divorce law practicum | ◆ ADR Mediation | ◆ MALS externship |
| ◆ Trial ad | ◆ Civil Rights/ Education | ◆ Advanced brief writing |

Family and Juvenile Law Resources



University of Memphis
Law School
Career Services Office

Check out the American Bar Association

- ◆ The website for the Section of Labor and Employment Law for the American Bar Association can be found at:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/family_law.html
- ◆ The Section of Family Law has nearly 10,000 lawyer, associate and law student members worldwide. Our members are dedicated to serving the field of family law in areas such as adoption, divorce, custody, military law, alternative families, and elder law.

Law Blogs (Blawgs)

- ◆ <https://www.familylawmatters-blog.com/>
- ◆ http://lawprofessors.typepad.com/family_law/
- ◆ <https://dadsdivorce.com/>
- ◆ <http://caverslaw.com/blog/>
- ◆ <http://www.divorcelawyerschicago.org>

Committees in the ABA Family Law Section

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| ◆ Adoption | ◆ Bankruptcy | ◆ Law Student |
| ◆ Alimony & Spousal Support | ◆ Child Support | ◆ Marital Property |
| ◆ Alternative Dispute Resolution | ◆ Custody | ◆ Member Benefit Development |
| ◆ Alternative Families | ◆ Diversity | ◆ Military Law |
| ◆ Assisted Reproductive Technologies | ◆ Domestic Violence | ◆ Taxation |
| | ◆ Ethics | ◆ Trial Practice & Techniques |
| | ◆ Governmental Relations | ◆ Vulnerable Adults & Special Needs Families |
| | ◆ International Law | ◆ Young Lawyers |
| | ◆ Law Practice Management | |

University of Memphis Law Library Resources

- ◆ Hasday, Jill Elaine—*Family Law Reimagined* (eBook)
- ◆ Swennen, Frederik—*Contractualisation of Family Law* (eBook)
- ◆ Scherpe, Jens M.—*European Family Law: Family Law in a European Perspective* (eBook)
- ◆ Stretch Rachael—*Q & A Family Law* (eBook)
- ◆ Peskind, Steven N.—*Family Law Trial Evidence Handbook: Rules and Procedures for Effective Advocacy*
Call No.: KF505 .P47 2013 (Available on the 3rd floor of the law library)
- ◆ Oliphant, Robert E.—*Family Law*
Call No.: KF505.Z9 O43 2013 (Available in Open Reserve on the 1st floor of the law library)