

## What is insurance law?

- ◆ The practice of insurance law focuses on the various legal issues related to insurance policies. Insurance policies are purchased contracts that provide for protection from pecuniary liability that may result as a legal consequence from mistakes, misjudgments, physical accidents, and disasters. Medical insurance policies are designed to protect someone when they incur large medical bills.
- ◆ Corporations frequently seek insurance counseling to determine how much insurance to purchase for a business and its employees. Some insurance policies are designed as benefit meant to retain talented employment.
- ◆ Insurance attorneys can work as the defense counsel for professionals and lay people alike. Some insurance attorneys represent doctors and specialize in medical malpractice defense.
- ◆ Insurance lawyers may also defend claims for personal injury, Some attorneys who defend these claims work as in-house counsel and litigate for large insurance companies.
- ◆ Insurance attorneys advise their clients about insurance coverage, dealing with disputes between policyholders and insurance companies over whether a contract provides for recovery after a particular incident or accident.
- ◆ Even though an insurance policy is a private contract, the business of insurance is a highly regulated industry. Insurance regulatory law seeks to protect the public as consumers and policyholders. Both federal and state laws regulate insurance practices.

## Where do insurance attorneys work?

- ◆ **Insurance companies:** Insurance companies employ in-house counsel to litigate their disputes, as well as to draft insurance policies and other documents.
- ◆ **Private law firms:** Many law firms handle litigation for individuals seeking recovery under their policies and also offer counseling regarding policies and coverage issues.
- ◆ **State agencies:** Insurance lawyers working for state agencies engage with the regulatory environment surrounding insurance and insurance companies. These regulations:
  - Provide for licensing requirements for insurance companies and other individuals and entities operating within the industry.
  - Monitor and preserve the financial solvency of insurance companies
  - Regulate and standardize policies and products
  - Control market conduct and prevent unfair trade practices

## What other areas of the law are related to insurance?

Lawyers working with insurance law may also practice law in the areas of corporate transactions and litigation, health care law, and personal injury law.

## What skills and qualities make an insurance attorney successful?

- ◆ The ability to build good relationships
- ◆ Interpersonal skills and the ability to negotiate
- ◆ Strategic thinking
- ◆ Exceptionally good judgement and the ability to exercise discretion
- ◆ Knowledge and understanding of medicine and medical issues
- ◆ Understanding one's limitations

## What law school classes will help me prepare for practice in insurance law?

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|-------------------|--------------|--|
| ◆ Insurance law   | ◆ Contracts  | ◆ Health law classes                           |
| ◆ Evidence        | ◆ Moot court | ◆ ADR- mediation, arbitration, and negotiation |
| ◆ Civil procedure | ◆ Torts      |  |
| ◆ Trial advocacy  | ◆ Remedies   |  |

## Library Resources

- ◆ Dobbyn, John F., *Insurance Law in a Nutshell* (4th ed. 2003) [On first floor of the library—Call No. KF1164.3 .D6 2003]
- ◆ Henderson, Roger C., *Insurance Law: Cases and Materials* (2nd ed. 1996) [On third floor of the library—Call No. KF1163 .H46 1996]

## Join the American Bar Association's Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section

- ◆ Joining a professional organization as a law student is a great way to network:  
[http://www.americanbar.org/groups/tort\\_trial\\_insurance\\_practice.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/tort_trial_insurance_practice.html)
- ◆ The ABA regularly updates a database on articles concerning insurance law, which can be found here:  
<http://www.abajournal.com/topic/insurance+law/>
- ◆ This section of the ABA even has a site specifically for law students:  
<http://abaforlawstudents.com/start-your-legal-career/practice-specialty-groups/tort-trial-insurance-law/>

## Online Resources

- ◆ *Lee R. Russ, Thomas F. Segalla & Steven Pitt, Couch on Insurance* (available on Westlaw)
- ◆ *Appleman on Insurance* (available on Lexis)

## Insurance Law Blogs

- ◆ *Ask Tim*  
<http://insurancegeek.typepad.com/>
- ◆ *Coverage Counsel*  
<http://nycoveragecounsel.blogspot.com/>
- ◆ *Disability Insurance Lawyer Blog*  
<http://www.disabilityinsurancelawyerblog.com>