

# Vocabulary

## Core Vocabulary

### Parties to a court case

**defendant:** a person accused of causing the harm

**intervenor:** a person whom the court allows to join an ongoing court case because decisions in the case may affect that person's rights or property

**plaintiff:** a person who claims to have suffered harm caused by actions of another person

### Elements of a court case

**complaint:** a document that starts a civil case and that is filed by a person who claims to have suffered harm by the actions of another person

**decision:** a conclusion reached by a judge or jury after an evaluation of evidence

**remedy:** court actions to fix the wrongful harm to the plaintiffs; judicial relief

**standing:** ability of a person to bring a case before a court to obtain judicial remedy or relief

**trial:** the judicial process of examining and evaluating facts and legal issues between parties in a case

### Public Trust Doctrine

**beneficiaries:** under the public trust doctrine, present and future generations

**common law:** law that developed over time from customs and court decisions; judge-made law

**fiduciary duty:** the highest legal standard of care to another; a legal duty to act in a way that benefits someone else

**public property:** property owned or held in trust by the government for the people

**public trust doctrine:** a body of common law that requires government to take care of certain natural and cultural resources for the survival and benefit of present and future generations

**reserved power:** a political power that is not listed or prohibited by a constitution, but is kept by a constitution for the people or state governments

**trustees:** under the public trust doctrine, government

**trust relationship:** a legal plan in which a person(s) has a fiduciary duty to take care of property for the benefit of another person(s)

**usufruct:** the right to use another's property for a time without damaging or diminishing it



# Vocabulary

## Court system

**court, appeals:** a court that hears appeals on matters of law (not fact) from a trial court

**court, trial:** a court where evidence and testimony are first introduced and examined, and where findings of fact and law are made; a district court

**court, supreme:** the highest court in a state or country

**judge:** a public official whose duty during a court trial is to decide rules of law and, if there is no jury, findings of fact as well

**jury:** a group of people who are empowered to decide the truth of disputed facts and to make findings of fact, based on the evidence, during a court trial

## Support Vocabulary

**administrative remedy:** relief provided by an agency, board, or commission

**affirm:** uphold

**appeal:** when a case is brought before a higher court to review a lower court's decision

**court order:** an official court command requiring a person to do or not do something

**deny:** refuse to acknowledge something

**dismiss:** a ruling by a judge to throw out all or part of a plaintiff's case

**executive order:** a presidential command that interprets or puts into effect a federal law, constitutional requirement, or treaty

**infringe:** violate

**lawsuit:** a court case filed by one "party" or person against another and to be decided in a legal proceeding

**petition:** a written application from a person to a government, public official, or court to ask for relief

**precedent:** a legal ruling that sets a new standard for future cases

**remand:** send back

**rule-making:** a process used by the executive branch to create or change rules or to put rules into effect

