

Glossary

adjudicate | issue decisions, judgments, and orders that are legally binding on others regarding related to legal issues and disputes*

appellant | the party who appeals a lower court's judgment or order to a higher court to overturn or modify a decision made by the lower court (some courts refer to this party as the petitioner)*

breach of contract | when a party to a contract fails to perform their promised obligations*

complaint | the initial pleading filed that starts a lawsuit*

injunction | a type of court order requiring someone to do or cease doing a specific action.*

moot | when an issue or case has been resolved in some way, and a court's judgment favorable to any side would no longer have an effect*

nonresident defendant | in the context of personal jurisdiction—a defendant who/that does not have permanent residence in the state where a plaintiff filed a complaint

personal jurisdiction | the power of a court to subject a defendant to a legally binding judgment, decision, or order*

petition | a formal application in writing made to a court or other official body requesting some judicial action*

petitioner | the party who presents a petition to the court; in the context of an appeal, the petitioner is usually the party who lost in the lower court (also referred to as the appellant)*

respondent | the party against whom a petition is filed (i.e., the party opposing the petitioner/appellant), especially one for the purposes of appeal*

ripe | a particular case is ripe—i.e., ripe for adjudication—when (a) the facts surrounding the dispute make it ready for a judicial decision and (b) waiting for further facts to develop would not change the nature of the legal issues and would not pose a hardship on the parties*

rule of law | the principle under which everyone is bound by laws that are (1) established by the government, (2) equally enforced, (3) adjudicated independently, and (4) consistent with one's rights and the principles underlying those rights (see law)

standing | the legal capacity of a plaintiff bring a lawsuit that a court can adjudicate (a sufficient connection to and from a law or defendant's actions)*

subject matter jurisdiction | the power of a court to adjudicate a particular type of matter and provide the remedy demanded.*

tort | an act or omission that gives rise to injury or harm and amounts to a civil wrong for which a court may impose liability*