
Professional Certificate in Entertainment Law

Film and Television Law

Film and Television Law Glossary

1. Agent

- Related Terms: Talent Agent, Literary Agent
- An individual or entity authorized to represent an artist, such as an actor, writer, or director, in securing work opportunities and negotiating contracts on their behalf.

2. Assignment

- Related Terms: Transfer, Delegation
- The transfer of rights or obligations under a contract from one party to another. In the context of entertainment law, this often refers to the transfer of intellectual property rights.

3. Chain of Title

- Related Terms: Title Report, Title Search
- A legal term referring to the history of ownership of a piece of intellectual property, such as a film or television show. A clear chain of title is essential for securing distribution deals.

4. Copyright

- Related Terms: Intellectual Property, Fair Use
- A form of intellectual property that grants the creator of an original work exclusive rights to its use and distribution. In film and television, copyright protects scripts, screenplays, and other creative works.

5. Defamation

- Related Terms: Libel, Slander
- The act of making false statements about an individual that harm their reputation. Defamation can be a significant legal issue in the entertainment industry, particularly for public figures.

6. Development Deal

- Related Terms: Option Agreement, Production Commitment
- An agreement between a production company or studio and a writer, director, or other creative talent to develop a project for film or television. Development deals often involve payment for the creation of a script or pitch.

7. Exclusivity

- Related Terms: Non-Exclusive, First Look Deal
- A contractual provision that grants one party the exclusive right to represent, distribute, or exploit a

particular piece of intellectual property. Exclusivity can be limited by territory or time.

8. Fair Use

- Related Terms: Copyright Infringement, Transformative Use
- A legal doctrine that allows limited use of copyrighted material without permission from the rights holder for purposes such as criticism, commentary, news reporting, or education.

9. Guild

- Related Terms: Union, Trade Association
- An organization that represents the interests of workers in a particular industry, such as actors, writers, or directors. Guilds negotiate collective bargaining agreements on behalf of their members.

10. Indemnification

- Related Terms: Hold Harmless Clause, Liability Insurance
- A contractual provision in which one party agrees to compensate another party for losses or damages arising from a particular event, such as a lawsuit. Indemnification is common in film and television contracts.

11. Joint Venture

- Related Terms: Partnership, Collaboration
- A business arrangement in which two or more parties agree to work together on a specific project or goal. Joint ventures are common in the film and television industry for co-productions.

12. License

- Related Terms: Distribution License, Music License
- A legal permission granted by the rights holder to another party to use or exploit a piece of intellectual property, such as a film, television show, or song. Licenses often involve payment of royalties.

13. Merchandising

- Related Terms: Licensing, Brand Extension
- The practice of using a popular film or television property to create and sell related products, such as toys, clothing, or accessories. Merchandising can be a significant revenue stream for entertainment companies.

14. Option Agreement

- Related Terms: First Look Deal, Renewal Option
- A contract in which one party pays another party for the exclusive right to purchase or produce a particular piece of intellectual property, such as a script or book, within a specified time frame.

15. Personal Service Contract

- Related Terms: Talent Agreement, Employment Contract
- A contract between an individual performer, such as an actor or director, and a production company or studio. Personal service contracts often include provisions related to exclusivity and compensation.

16. Publicity Rights

- Related Terms: Right of Publicity, Personality Rights
- The legal right of an individual to control the commercial use of their name, image, or likeness. Publicity rights are particularly important in the film and television industry for marketing and merchandising.

17. Residuals

- Related Terms: Royalties, Profit Participation
- Payments made to actors, writers, directors, and other creative talent for the reuse or rebroadcast of their work. Residuals are a key source of income for entertainment industry professionals.

18. Screenplay

- Related Terms: Script, Treatment
- The written text of a film or television show, including dialogue, stage directions, and scene descriptions. Screenplays are the blueprint for a production and are protected by copyright.

19. Sequel

- Related Terms: Franchise, Spin-Off
- A film or television show that continues the story or characters of a previous work. Sequels are common in the entertainment industry as a way to capitalize on the success of a popular property.

20. Spec Script

- Related Terms: Original Screenplay, Writing Sample
- A screenplay written by a writer on speculation, meaning it is not commissioned or paid for by a production company or studio. Spec scripts are often used as writing samples to showcase a writer's talent.

21. Subsidiary Rights

- Related Terms: Ancillary Rights, Derivative Works
- Rights to exploit a film or television property in additional formats or markets, such as books, video games, or merchandise. Subsidiary rights can be a valuable source of revenue for rights holders.

22. Talent Release

- Related Terms: Appearance Release, Likeness Release
- A legal document in which an individual grants permission for their name, image, or likeness to be used in a film, television show, or other media production. Talent releases are essential for avoiding legal issues related to publicity rights.

23. Trademark

- Related Terms: Branding, Trademark Infringement
- A word, phrase, symbol, or design that distinguishes a product or service from others in the marketplace. Trademarks are important in the entertainment industry for branding and marketing purposes.

24. Treatment

- Related Terms: Outline, Pitch

- A written document that outlines the key elements of a film or television show, such as the plot, characters, and themes. Treatments are often used to pitch projects to studios or production companies.

25. Union

- Related Terms: Guild, Labor Organization

- An organization that represents the interests of workers in a particular industry, such as actors, writers, or directors. Unions negotiate collective bargaining agreements and work to protect the rights of their members.

26. Work for Hire

- Related Terms: Freelance, Independent Contractor

- A legal arrangement in which a creator agrees to produce a work for a client or employer in exchange for payment. The client or employer typically owns the rights to the work created under a work for hire agreement.