**TOPICAL VOCABULARY**

**1. Cases:** lawsuit, civil cases, criminal cases, framed-up cases.

**2. Offences:** felony, misdemeanour, murder, manslaughter, homicide, rape, assault, arson, robbery, burglary, theft/larceny, kidnapping, embezzlement bribery, forgery, fraud, swindling, perjury, slander, blackmail, abuse of power, disorderly conduct, speeding, petty offence, house-breaking, shoplifting, mugging, contempt of court, subpoena.

**3.** **Participants of the legal procedure:** 1) parties to a lawsuit: claimant/plaintiff**(**in a civil case); defendant, offender (first/repeat); attorney for the plaintiff (in a civil case); prosecutor (criminal); attorney for defence; 2) jury, Grand jury, to serve on a jury, to swear the jury, to convene; 3) witness – a credible witness; 4) a probation officer; 5) bailiff.

**4.** **Legal procedure:** to file a complaint / a countercomplaint, to answer / challenge the complaint; to notify the defendant of the lawsuit; to issue smb a summons; to issue a warrant of arrest (a search warrant); to indict smb for felony; to bring lawsuit; to take legal actions; to bring the case to court; to bring criminal prosecution; to make an opening statement; the prosecution; the defence; to examine a witness – direct examination, cross-examination; to present evidence – (direct, circumstantial, relevant, material, incompetent, irrelevant, admissible, inadmissible, corroborative, irrefutable, presumptive, documentary); to register (to rule out, to sustain) an objection; circumstances (aggravating, circumstantial, extenuating); to detain a person, detention; to go before the court.

**5. Penalties or sentences:** bail, to release smb on bail; to bring in (to return, to give) a verdict of guilty / not guilty; a jail sentence; send smb to the penitentiary/jail; to impose a sentence on smb; to serve a sentence; a penitentiary term = a term of imprisonment (life, from 25 years to a few months imprisonment); hard labour, manual labour; probation, to be on probation, to place an offender on probation, to grant probation / parole; to release smb on parole, to be eligible for parole.

**6.** **A court room:** the judge's bench, the jury box; the dock, the witness’ stand/box; the public gallery.

**Trial by the jury**

A civil case begins when a person goes to court and files a complaint that another person has committed an of­fence. This is followed by issuing either an arrest warrant or a summons. A criminal case is started when an indictment is returned by a grand jury before anything else happens in the case. Indictments most often are felony accusations against persons, who have been arrested and referred to the grand jury. After an accused is indicted, he is brought into court and is told the nature of the charge against him and asked to plead. He can plead guilty, which is the admission that he committed crime and can be sentenced without a trial. He can plead not guilty and be tried.

As a general rule the parties to civil suits and defendants in criminal cases are entitled to trial by jury of 12 jurors. But a jury is not provided unless it is demanded in writing in advance of the trial; in this case a civil or a criminal case is tried by the judge alone, greater criminal cases are tried by a three-judge panel.

In trial by the jury the attorneys for each party make their opening statements. The prosecution presents its evidence based on the criminal investigation of the case. The attorney for the defence pleads the case of the accused, examines his witnesses and cross-examines the witnesses for the prosecution. Both, the prosecution and the defence, try to convince the jury.

When all the evidence is in, the attorneys make their closing arguments to the jury with the prosecutor going first. Both attorneys try to show the evidence in the most favourable light for their sides. But if one of them uses improper material in his final argument the opponent may object, the objection may be ruled out by the judge who will instruct the jury to disregard what was said or may be sustained. After this the judge proceeds to instruct the jury on its duty and the jury retires to the jury room to consider the verdict. In civil cases at least three-fourths of the jurors must agree on the verdict. In a criminal case there must not be any reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the accused, the verdict must be unanimous.

The next stage is for the judge to decide, in case of a verdict of guilty, what sentence to impose on the convict.