

Latin Legal Terms

"In perpetuity" – meaning something lasts forever, covering past, present, and future.

Ab Initio - From the beginning, but it doesn't necessarily extend into the future.

Actus Reus - A guilty act; the physical act of committing a crime.

Ad Hoc - For this purpose; a solution designed for a specific issue.

Amicus Curiae - Friend of the court; someone not a party to the case who offers information or expertise.

Bona Fide - In good faith; genuine.

De Facto - In fact; practices that exist in reality, even if not legally recognized.

De Jure - By law; legally recognized.

Ex Post Facto - After the fact; laws applied retroactively.

Ex tunc vs. Ex nunc – "Ex tunc" applies retroactively (from then), while "Ex nunc" applies from now onward (future effect).

Habeas Corpus - You shall have the body; a writ requiring a person to be brought before a court.

In Loco Parentis - In place of a parent.

In Rem - Against a thing; legal proceedings directed toward property rather than a person.

Inter Alia - Among other things; used to indicate that a list is not exhaustive.

Ipsa Facto - By the fact itself.

Mens Rea - Guilty mind; the intention to commit a crime.

Nemo dat quod non habet (No one can give what they do not have)

Nolo Contendere - I do not wish to contend; a plea where the defendant neither admits nor disputes a charge.

Nunc Pro Tunc - Now for then; a legal action applied retroactively to correct an earlier error or oversight.

Pacta Sunt Servanda - Agreements must be kept; a foundational principle in contract law emphasizing the binding nature of agreements.

Pro Per - Short for "in propria persona"; representing oneself in a legal matter without an attorney.

Pro Se - On one's own behalf; a term for individuals representing themselves in court without an attorney.

Pro Bono - For the public good; legal work done without charge.

Quid Pro Quo - Something for something; a mutual exchange.

Res Ipsa Loquitur - The thing speaks for itself; used in tort law to infer negligence.

Semper (Latin for "always") – covers all time.

Situs - Location or site; used in property law to indicate the physical location of property.

Stare Decisis - To stand by things decided; the doctrine of precedent.

Sub Judice - Under judicial consideration.

Ultra Vires - Beyond the powers; acts performed beyond legal authority.

Viva Voce - By word of mouth; oral testimony.