

**Abated by Death** – Case disposed of by death.

**Abduction** – Taking away by violence or fraud and persuasion; kidnapping. Usually a female or wife, child or ward.

**Abet** – See Aiding and Abetting.

**Abscond** – To depart in a sudden and secret manner, especially to avoid capture and legal prosecution.

**Abstraction** – Taking away with intent to harm or deceive.

**Accessory** – Not the perpetrator of the crime, but in some way involved without being present in the commission of the crime.

**Accessory After the Fact** – One who helps a criminal to elude arrest.

**Accessory Before the Fact** – One who induces another to commit a crime.

**Acquittal** – A legal judgment that an accused is not guilty of the crime for which he or she has been charged and tried; finding of not guilty.

**Active Case** – Case is currently active.

**Adjudication** – The judicial decision that ends a criminal proceeding by a judgment or acquittal, conviction, or dismissal of the case.

**Adjudication Deferred – Non-conviction** – See Diversion Program

**Adjudication Withheld – Non-conviction** – The court will withhold a decision until a future date. Usually some sort of probation is added, and if the defendant complies with the conditions for a specified period of time, the case will be dismissed.

**Affidavit** – A voluntarily, written statement of fact, confirmed by oath.

**Affray** – Brawl or disturbance. Not premeditated.

**Aggravated** – (assault, battery, arson, etc.) Circumstances surrounding the commission of a crime or tort, which increase or add to its injurious consequences.

**Aiding and Abetting** – To assist and/or incite another to commit a crime.

**Alford Plea** – A pleading of guilty in a plea bargain in which the defendant maintains his or her innocence.

**Alias** – False name used in substitution of a legal name on official documents and for official purposes. Nicknames are not considered aliases. May be noted as AKA (Also Known As) on criminal records.

**Appeal** – A complaint to a superior court to review the decision of a lower court.

**Appellant** – One who makes a complaint to a superior court to review the decision of a lower court.

**Appellate Court** – A court having jurisdiction of appeal and review. Not a trial court.

**Appropriate** – To take something from another for one’s own use or benefit.

**Archive/Archives** – The place where records are stored after a certain specified period of time. The period of time a record is held at a court of record may differ between courts and states.

**ARD Program – Non-conviction** – Mostly found in the state of Pennsylvania, this stands for “Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition Program.” This program is given to the defendant in place of adjudication. If the defendant completes the program, the case is closed.

**Arraignment** – A call to the accused to come before the court to hear charges or enter a plea.

**Arrest** – The taking of an individual into custody by law enforcement personnel for the purpose of charging them with an illegal act.

**Arrest Record** – An official form completed by the police department when a person is arrested. Also, a cumulative record of all instances in which a person has been arrested.

**Arson** – The attempted or intentional destruction of property by fire or explosion.

**Assault** – Intentional or threatened infliction of injury to another. The classification of “aggravated” is assigned when the injury is considered serious or when injury is threatened or carried out with the use of a deadly or dangerous weapon. The classification of “simple” is assigned when the injury inflicted or threatened is not serious and a deadly weapon is not used. May be used with Battery.

**Bail** – An amount of money set by a judge at an initial appearance to ensure the return of the accused at subsequent proceedings.

**Battery** – Non-consensual, unlawful contact, such as touching, beating or wounding of another.

**Bench Trial** – Trial by judge, without jury.

**Bench Warrant** – A process delivered by the court directing a law enforcement agency to bring a specified individual before the court.

**Bind Over** – To put under bond to appear in court. The term is also used when a case is shifted from a lower court to a higher court.

**Blackmail** – An illegal demand for money or property under threat of harm or exposure of undesirable acts.

**Bond** – A certificate of obligation either unsecured or secured with collateral, to pay a specified amount of money within a specified period of time.

**Bond Forfeiture** – Bond forfeiture occurs when a case has been disposed and a fine is to be, or has been paid. If it is a first offense, it is listed on the record but not classified as a conviction; any other time it is classified as a conviction.

**Bookmaking** – An operation with the purpose of placing, registering, paying off or collecting debts for bets.

**Burglary** – The act of entering a premises, without the privilege to enter, with the purpose of committing a crime. States may classify as first, second, or third degree burglary.

**Capias** – The general name for several types of writs which require that a law enforcement officer to take a named defendant into custody.

**Capital Case/Crime** – Case or crime for which the death penalty may be imposed.

**Capital Punishment** – Punishment by death for capital crime.

**Carnal** – Sexual, sensual. Carnal knowledge is sexual intercourse.

**Cause of Action** – One or more related charges, combined and made against a defendant for wrongs committed.

**Charge** – In criminal law, a charge is an allegation that an individual has committed a specific offense.

**Circuit** – Judicial division of the United States or of an individual state.

**Circuit Courts** – Courts whose jurisdiction extends over several counties or districts.

**Citation** – An order issued by a law enforcement officer requiring appearance in court to answer a charge. Bail is not accepted in lieu of appearance.

**City Court** – Courts that try persons accused of violating municipal ordinances. City courts may have jurisdiction over minor civil or criminal cases, or both.

**Civil Disorder** – A violent public disturbance by three or more people, which causes danger, damage or injury to property or persons.

**Co-defendant** – One of a group of two or more people charged in the same crime.

**Coercion** – The use of physical force or threats to compel someone to commit an act against his or her will.

**Compounding Crime** – The receipt by an individual of consideration in exchange for an agreement not to prosecute or inform on someone who they know has committed a crime.

**Concurrent Sentences** – Two or more terms of imprisonment served simultaneously.

**Conditional Discharge – Non-conviction** – Upon successful completion of the court imposed conditions, the charge(s) will be dismissed or a judgment will not be entered.

**Conditional Release** – The release from a correctional facility before full sentence has been served which is conditioned on specific behavior. If conditions are not met, the individual may be returned to the facility.

**Consecutive Sentences** – Multiple sentences, served one after the other.

**Consent Decree – Conviction** – This is found in New Mexico. It is designed as a disposition for juvenile cases in which the defendant pleads guilty and is placed on the decree/probation for six months.

**Conspiracy** – The coming together of two or more people for the purpose of committing an unlawful act or to commit a lawful act by unlawful means.

**Contempt of Court** – An act committed which serves to obstruct the court in its administration or authority.

**Continuance** – A delay or postponement of a court hearing.

**Controlled Substance** – A drug whose availability is restricted by law.

**Conversion** – The unauthorized taking of another's property.

**Conviction** – Guilty verdict in a criminal trial.

**Count/Charge** – An offense named in a cause of action. A cause of action may contain multiple counts or charges, each relating to the others but identifying a separate offense.

**Court Supervision or Supervision** – Upon Successful completion of the supervision period, the charge will be dismissed, or judgment of conviction will not be entered.

**Court of Record** – The court where the permanent record of all proceedings is held.

**Credit Card Fraud** – Use or attempted use of a credit card to purchase goods or services with the intent to avoid payment of such.

**Crime Against Nature** – Deviate sexual intercourse.

**Criminal Nonsupport** – Failure to pay child support in violation of court order.

**Criminal Plea** – The defendant's response to a criminal charge (guilty, not guilty, or nolo contendere).

**Culpability** – Blame or degree of responsibility for a crime. This may be in degrees of purposeful, knowingly, recklessly or by negligence.

**Cumulative Sentence** – A sentence that takes effect after a prior sentence is completed for crimes tried under the same cause of action.

**Dangerous Weapon** – Something that is capable, though not designed to cause serious injury or death.

**De Novo** – Usually used as Trial De Novo. New trial or one that is held for a second time, as if there had been no previous trial or decision.

**Dead Docket** – The case never went to trial. The case can be reopened if new evidence is submitted.

**Deadly Weapon – also known as dangerous weapon.** Item which can inflict mortal or great bodily harm. Deadly weapon statutes usually contain "catch all" provisions which describe abilities used to designate other implements as deadly weapons.

**Defendant** – A person who has been formally charged with committing a specific crime. The party against whom relief or recovery is sought or the accused in a criminal case.

**Deferred Adjudication of Guilt – Non-conviction** – The final judgment is delayed for a period of time. Can be likened to probation before a final verdict. If "probation" is completed without incident, the charges are usually dropped and the case is dismissed. During the "probationary period" the disposition is not necessarily considered a conviction.

**Deferred Discharge – Non-conviction** – Dismissed and considered a non-conviction.

**Deferred Judgment – Non-conviction** – The final judgment is delayed for a period of time. Can be likened to probation before a final verdict. If “probation” is completed without incident, the charges are usually dropped and the case is dismissed. During the “probationary period” the disposition is not necessarily considered a conviction.

**Deferred Probation** – The judge doesn’t make a finding of guilt; he assigns probation. If probation is completed without incident, the charges are usually dropped.

**Deferred Prosecution – Non-conviction** – The final judgment is delayed for a period of time. Can be likened to probation before a final verdict. If “probation” is completed without incident, the charges are usually dropped and the case is dismissed. During the “probationary period” the disposition is not necessarily considered a conviction.

**Deferred Sentence** – Postponement of the pronouncement of the sentence.

**Defraud** – Knowingly misrepresenting facts to cheat or trick.

**Degree (First, Second, or Third, A, B or C)** – Classification assigned to a crime, depending on circumstances, for purposes of determining punishment. First degree is considered more serious than third; A is more serious than C. Degrees may be assigned to the actual crime (i.e. murder in the first or second degree) or the class of crimes (i.e. felony or misdemeanor).

**Directed Verdict** – A determination by a jury, made at the direction of the judge. A directed verdict happens in cases where there has been a lack of evidence, an overwhelming amount of evidence, or where the law is in favor of one of the parties.

**Discovery** – The pre-trial devices that can be used by one party to obtain facts and information about the case from the other party in order to assist the party’s preparation for trial.

**Dismissal** – Disposing of an action, lawsuit, motion, etc. without trial of the issues involved. May be voluntary or involuntary. When involuntary, there is usually lack of prosecution or failure to produce sufficient evidence.

**Dismissal With Prejudice** – Term meaning an adjudication on the merits, and final disposition, barring the right to bring or maintain an action on the same claim or cause.

**Dismissal Without Leave After Deferred** – Prosecution Charges dismissed after specified time (90 days to 1 year) provided certain conditions have been met, such as participating in specified program of anger control or drug counseling, or providing community service, etc.

**Dismissal Without Prejudice** – Term meaning dismissal without prejudice to the right of the complainant to sue again on the same cause of action.

**Disposed/Disposition** – The final settlement in the matter. Examples of disposed cases are those with a finding of guilt (conviction), innocence, or acquittal.

**District Court** – Court having jurisdiction over a territorial district.

**Diversion Program – Non-conviction** – To set aside. A court direction which calls a defendant, who has been found guilty, to attend a work or educational program as part of probation. May include some type of anger management, drug rehab, etc. If the condition of program is met, charge may be considered non-conviction.

**Diversity of Citizenship** – A crime or claim which extends between citizens of different states. This is one of the grounds that can be used to invoke the jurisdiction of the U.S. Federal District Court.

**Docket Record** – A court’s official record of proceedings and calendar of upcoming cases.

**Driving While Intoxicated** – Operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Complete intoxication is not required. Individual state statutes specify the blood alcohol content at which a person is presumed to be under the influence of intoxicating liquor.

**Dropped – Non-conviction** – Not enough evidence to convict the defendant.

**Due Process of Law** – Procedures followed by law enforcement and courts to insure the protection of an individual’s rights as assigned by the Constitution.

**Embezzlement** – The taking of another’s money or property by one entrusted with its possession, usually through employment.

**Evidence** - Any species of proof, or probative matter, legally presented at the trial of an issue, by the act of the parties and through the medium of witnesses, records, documents, exhibits, concrete objects, for the purpose of inducing belief in the minds of the court or jury as to their contention.

**Ex parte** – On one side only. When an act is one for one party only. For example, in an Ex parte proceeding, only one party to the case is heard.

**Expunge/Expunged** – When a record of an offense is expunged it will not appear on a released criminal history. The record may be destroyed or sealed after a certain period of time. Records may be expunged in juvenile cases, or upon satisfactory completion of a court-ordered probation and/or class(s).

**Expungement of Record** – Process by which record of criminal conviction is destroyed or sealed after expiration of time.

**Extortion** – Obtaining another’s property by actual or threatened force, fear or violence.

**Extradition** – The surrender of an individual accused or convicted of a crime by one state to another.

**Felonious** – Describing an offense that is done with malicious, villainous criminal intent. (i.e. felonious assault)

**Felony** – A serious offense carrying a penalty of incarceration from one year to life in a state prison, to the death penalty. A crime of a more serious nature than those designated as misdemeanors.

**Felony Conversion** – Also known as Fraudulent Conversion. Similar to embezzlement or theft. An example of felony conversion is if someone sold goods for a company, and kept the money instead of turning it in to the company.

**First Offender – Non-conviction** – One who has never before been convicted of a crime and hence one generally given special consideration in the disposition of his/her case. For example, first offender placed on probation.

**Forcible Entry** – Entering or taking possession of property with force, threats or menacing conduct.

**Fraud** – A broad term used to cover all kinds of acts. Generally, fraud is the commission of an act with the goal to benefit or gain advantage at another’s expense. A purposeful misrepresentation with the intent to deceive.

**Fugitive File** – This case has not been to trial yet and is normally found in Virginia.

**Grand Jury** – A body of citizens with the authority to investigate and accuse, but not to try cases. The grand jury will listen to and review evidence to see if there is sufficient grounds to bring an individual to trial.

**Grand Larceny** – The theft of property over a specified value. Dollar amounts vary by state.

**Gross** – Flagrant, out of measure.

**Gross Misdemeanor** – Serious misdemeanor.

**Guilt/Guilty** – Final disposition. Having committed a crime.

**Guilty in Absentia** – The jury has found the defendant guilty without them having appeared in court.

**Habeas Corpus** – A proceeding where a prisoner challenged the lawfulness of his or her imprisonment; refers to the constitutionality of the imprisonment.

**Habitual Violator** – To have committed the same offense three times. Can also be charged as a habitual offender.

**Hijacking** – To take control of a vehicle by intimidation, force or threatened force. Also, the theft of goods while in transit, as when transported in trucks.

**Homicide** – The killing of another human being. “Justifiable homicide” occurs in cases such as during the enforcement of law, and/or occurs without evil intent. “Excusable homicide” may occur by accident or in self-defense. “Felonious homicide” is the killing of another without justification. This type has two degrees – manslaughter and murder, depending on circumstances or intent. See Manslaughter; Murder.

**Hung Jury** – A hung jury is one in which all jurors cannot reach a consensus required for a verdict.

**Ignored – Non-conviction** – The case never went to trial. It was ignored by the state.

**Illicit** – Prohibited or unlawful.

**Incendiary** – One who intentionally set fires. Arsonist.

**Incorrigible** – One who is incapable of reform.

**Indictment** – A formal, written accusation originating with a prosecutor and issued by a grand jury against a party charged with a crime. An indictment is referred to as a True Bill, whereas failure to indict is called a No Bill.

**Infraction** – Violation of local ordinance or state statute usually resulting in a fine or limited period of incarceration. Term usually used in traffic offenses.

**Injunction** – A court order which prohibits a person from doing a specified act for a specified period of time.

**Intent** – The frame of mind or attitude of the person at the time an act was committed. See Culpability.

**Intoxication** – Reduction of physical or mental capabilities caused by the ingestion of an intoxicating substance such as alcohol or drugs.

**Involuntary Dismissal** – Dismissed due to lack of prosecution or lack of evidence.

**Judgment** – The final decision of the court regarding a claim or case.

**Judgment of Conviction** – A final judgment of guilty in a criminal case and the punishment that is imposed.

**Jurisdiction** – The power of a court to question facts, apply law, make decisions and judgments. The limits or territory within which authority may be exercised.

**Jury Trial** – The determination of a case by a jury.

**Kidnapping** – Taking and carrying away a person by force, fraud, threats or intimidation. Unlawfully confining a person for a substantial period of time in an isolated place.

**Larceny** – The unlawful taking of another person’s property. Larceny is commonly classified as “petty” or “grand” depending on the value of the property. Dollar values to establish classifications of “petty” and “grand” may vary from state to state.

**Legal Malice** – An act, committed without just cause or excuse, intended to inflict harm or cause death.

**Lewd and Lascivious** – Obscene, indecent.

**Libel** – Defamation of another person through print, pictures, or signs.

**Lis Pendens** – A pending lawsuit.

**Magistrate** – Public officials, including judicial officers who have limited jurisdiction in criminal cases and civil causes. Example: a justice of the peace.

**Mail Fraud** – The use of the mail system to commit a fraud.

**Malice Aforethought** – Planning to commit an unlawful act without just cause or excuse.

**Manslaughter** – The unpremeditated killing of a person. Can be voluntary or involuntary, determined by circumstances. The feature distinguishing involuntary manslaughter from voluntary is the absence of intent to cause death or commit an act that might be expected to produce death or harm. Voluntary manslaughter is homicide that is committed during an act, in the heat of passion.

**Mayhem** – The intentional infliction of injury on another which causes amputation, disfigurement or impairs the function of any part of the body.

**Merged Judgment** – merged into another related charge/judgment.

**Misdemeanor** – A crime that is less serious than a felony for which the punishment is usually a fine, penalty, forfeiture or imprisonment in a penitentiary for one year or less.



**Misdemeanor Intervention Program – Non-conviction** – A program designated only for misdemeanor offenses in which the defendant may comply to the conditions of the program in order to avoid conviction

**Mistrial** – A trial which is terminated or declared invalid. Reasons for mistrial include misconduct on the part of the jury, defense team or the court, or illness on the part of the judge, jury or defendant. May be followed by a retrial on the same charges.

**Murder** – Unlawful killing with malice aforethought. Murder is willful, deliberate and premeditated, or done during the commission of a crime. This classification of crime is generally divided by degrees, murder in the first degree and murder in the second degree, for the purpose of imposing penalties.

**Negligence** – Flagrant and reckless disregard of the safety of others. Willful indifference.

**Negotiated Plea** – See Plea Bargain.

**No Bill or No True Bill – Non-conviction** – The decision by a grand jury that it will not bring indictment against the accused on the basis of the allegations and evidence presented by the prosecutor.

**No Contest – Conviction** – A plea in which the defendant does not contest the charge. This has the same effect as a guilty plea except the conviction cannot be used against the defendant in a civil suit.

**No Papered – Non-conviction** – Charges were not pursued. (This is a legal term in Washington, D.C.).

**No Information Filed – Non-conviction** – Common in Florida, the abandonment or dropping of a criminal case by the State Attorney usually due to the lack of prosecution (evidence). See Nolle Pros.

**No Probable Cause** – There was not sufficient reason to bring case to trial.

**Nolle Pros or Nolle Prosequi – Non-conviction** – Latin phrase meaning “Unwilling to prosecute.” It’s used by the district attorney or plaintiff when they do not wish to prosecute or proceed with the action. The defendant can be re-indicted and prosecuted again.

**Nolo Contendere – Conviction** – It’s also referred to as a plea of no contest. In criminal trials in certain U.S. jurisdictions, it’s a plea where the defendant neither admits nor disputes a charge, serving as an alternative to a pleading of guilty or not guilty. A no-contest plea has the same effect as a guilty plea, and is often offered as a part of a plea bargain. See No Contest.

**Non-Adjudication of Guilt – Non-conviction** – Same as adjudication withheld.

**Nonsuit** – A judgment ordered by the court against a plaintiff who fails to proceed to trial.

**Obtain Property under False Pretense** – A deliberate misrepresentation of the facts, as to obtain title to money or property.

**Other – Non-conviction** – Defendant is given special provisions for one year to abide by since this is a first offense. If no further violation of the same nature occurs, case is closed.

**Pander** – To provide products or services that cater to the sexual gratification of others. To entice another into prostitution.

**Parole** – To release from jail, prison or other confinement after serving part of a sentence, usually with terms and conditions provided in the parole order. Conditional release from imprisonment entitles parolee to serve remainder of term outside confines of an institution.

**Parole Violation** – An act that does not conform to the terms of parole.

**Pending** – The case has not been to trial at this time so there is no disposition to report.

**Perjury** – Intentionally making a false statement under oath.

**Plaintiff** – The party who initiates litigation. A person who seeks remedial relief for an injury of rights; it designates a complainant.

**Plea** – The defendant's formal answer to a charge.

**Plea Bargain** – A plea of guilty to a lesser offense in return for a lighter sentence.

**Plea in Abeyance – Non-conviction** – Common in Utah. Upon successful completion of the court imposed conditions, the charge(s) will be dismissed.

**Plea in Bar – Non-conviction** – Upon successful completion of the court imposed conditions, a judgment will not be entered.

**Possible Record** – A potential record requiring further research, due to the fact that it may or may not be a Strict Match with the subject, or may or may not otherwise be reportable.

**Prayer for Judgment, 1st Offense – Non-conviction** – Asking the court to give leniency. No finding of guilt by the court.

**Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI)** – Usually conducted by a probation officer after a plea or verdict of guilt. Done before sentencing and includes information about the defendant's criminal history and personal background.

**Pre-Trial Intervention (PTI)** – An extensive background check to help determine if charges will be pressed.

**Probable Cause** – Degree of proof needed to arrest.

**Probation** – Relief of all or part of a sentence on the promise of proper conduct.

**Probation before judgment (PBJ) – Non-conviction** – Violation of probation terms may result in an entry of a conviction.

**Process Other – Non-conviction** – Defendant was not charged on this count due to being charged for another count.

**Prosecute** – To proceed against a person criminally.

**Quash** – Decline to prosecute but with the option to reopen the case. To vacate or make void as in to quash an indictment.

**Racketeering** – An organized conspiracy for the purpose of committing crimes of extortion or coercion.

**Rape** – Sex without consent. May be forcible or by intoxication, with a person who is underage and unable to give consent, or with a person with diminished mental and/or physical capabilities.

**Reckless Endangerment** – An act that does or could cause injury to another, not necessarily with intent.

**Refused – Non-conviction** – Charges were not accepted by the District Attorney’s Office.

**Rejected – Non-conviction** – The case never went to trial. The state rejected the hearing of the case.

**Remand** – To return an individual to custody pending further trial, or to return a case from an appellate to a lower court for further proceedings.

**Responsible – Conviction** – The defendant is responsible for the payment of the fines or fees of the crime. Often found on traffic tickets or minor violation.

**Restitution Payment** – Payment made by a defendant to victim as reimbursement for monetary losses incurred as a result of the crime.

**Restraining Order** – An order prohibiting a specified action until such time that a hearing on an application for an injunction can be held.

**Retired (as Disposition) – Non-conviction** – The case can be brought up within the next year if the individual is arrested for anything. It is the judge’s decision and only he can take action. If the individual remains “clean”, then the case can be dismissed.

**Returned Un-served** – Found in North Carolina. The case has not been to trial at this time. A warrant, summons or paper from the district attorney’s office was issued for delivery to the defendant to appear for trial; however, the defendant could not be located. Therefore, the case is technically pending; however, the paperwork was never served.

**Secreting Lien Property** – Hiding property that has a lien filed against it.

**Sedition** – Advocating the overthrow or reform of a government by unlawful means.

**Sentence** – A judgment of punishment for a criminal act.

**Serious Misdemeanor** – Having a more severe penalty than other misdemeanors.

**Slander** – Defamation verbal communication. Making false and malicious statements about another.

**Solicitation** – Asking, urging or enticing.

**Status Closed** – No further action will occur on this case; cannot be reopened at later date.

**Statutory Rape** – Sexual activity by an adult with a person under the age of consent.

**Stet – Non-conviction** – Indefinite postponement of a criminal case without a factual finding, trial or admission of culpability.

**Stricken** – To eliminate or expunge.

**Stricken Off Leave (SOL) – Non-conviction** – Stricken from docket with leave to reinstate or dismiss; Non conviction (legal term used in Illinois).

**Summons** - In criminal law, a written order notifying an individual that he or she has been charged with an offense directing the person to appear in court to answer the charge.

**Suspended Sentence or Suspend Imposition of Sentence (SIS) – Non-conviction** – Deferment of punishment usually over a period of probation. In effect, the defendant is not required at the time sentence is imposed to serve the sentence.

**Theft of Services** – Obtaining services without consent through deception, threat, tampering, etc.

**Theft/unauthorized** – Theft by using someone else's information, credit card, check, or something similar.

**Under the Influence of Intoxicating Liquor or Drugs** – Any condition where the nervous system, brain or muscles are impaired to an appreciable degree by an intoxicating substance.

**Unlawful Entry** – Entry without force and without permission by means of fraud or other wrongful act.

**Usury** – Charging more interest, than is permitted by law for a loan of money.

**Uttering** – To forge another's name.

**Vacate (Judgment) – Non-conviction** – To make void; to cancel.

**Vehicular Homicide** – Death of another caused by the intentional, unlawful or negligent operation of a motor vehicle.

**Venue** – The geographic area where the case or claim occurred, within which a court with jurisdiction can hear and determine a case. A change of venue, or the moving of a case from one court to another may be granted for such reasons as when the court does not think the defendant can get a fair trial in that area or for the convenience of the parties in a civil case.

**Verdict** – The formal, final decision or finding made by a jury or judge.

**Voluntary Dismissal** – The court or district attorney dismisses the charges against an individual.

**Waived – Conviction** – Mainly found in the state of North Carolina. This means the defendant has waived his/her right to trial and has pled guilty to the charges. In turn, the court accepts the plea of guilty.

**Waiver by Magistrate** – Charges are waived after the defendant agrees to pay a fine. The defendant is not prosecuted on this charge.

**Waiver of Jury** – The right to a jury trial is waived and the judge makes the decision of guilt or innocence.

**Wanton Reckless, Malicious** – Without regard for the rights of others, indifferent to consequences to health, life or the reputation of another. Usually done without intent, but an act so unreasonable the perpetrator should know that harm would result.

**Warrant** – Court order authorizing a law enforcement official to arrest or perform search and seizure.

**Warrant for Arrest** – A written order of the court which is made on behalf of the state or U. S. and is based upon a complaint issued pursuant to statute and/or court rule and which commands law enforcement to arrest a person and bring them before court.

**Warrant Invalidated** – A warrant issued on the individual has been ruled invalid.

**Weapons Offenses** – The unlawful sale, distribution, manufacture, alteration, transport, possession or use of a deadly or dangerous weapon.

**With Specifications (WS)** – When WS is listed after a charge, it is usually followed with a description of violence involved with the charge.

**Withheld** – Adjudication withheld.

**Writ** – A written court order or a judicial process.

**Wrongful Entrustment** – Allowing an unlicensed driver to operate a motor vehicle.

**Youthful Offender** – Classification of youths and young adults, generally older than juveniles. In the 18 to 25 year age group, these individuals are sometimes given special sentencing consideration for the purpose of rehabilitation, sometimes through education and counseling.

**Youthful Training Act** – Used for juvenile first-time offenders. Usually a non-conviction. It may be reported on a criminal record. If the juvenile complies with the sentence, the case will be dropped from the record when the offender reaches adulthood.