

Glossary of Arbitration Terms

answer-the defendant's response to the plaintiff's complaint. The answer admits or denies the claims in the plaintiff's complaint.

appeal-a legal action which seeks review by a court of a lower court's decision

arbitration hearing-an informal legal proceeding held before a neutral court official called an arbitrator. The arbitrator renders a decision on the facts and issues in the case.

arbitrator-the court official who presides at an arbitration hearing and renders a decision in the case.

award-the arbitrator's decision rendered at the close of or shortly after the conclusion of the arbitration hearing.

complaint-the document which, when filed with the court, initiates a lawsuit. It sets forth the plaintiff's claims against the defendant.

defendant-the person against whom relief or recovery is sought in a lawsuit; the one that defends against a lawsuit.

docketing the appeal-the court's formal recording of the filing of an appeal by one of the parties to the lawsuit. An appeal is a legal action which seeks review by a court of a lower court's decision.

execution-an order to the sheriff to seize and sell certain property of a judgment debtor to satisfy the judgment.

exemptions-a privilege allowed by law to a judgment debtor by which a certain amount or class of property is protected from sale to satisfy a judgment against the debtor.

judgment-the decision of a judge, jury or arbitrator resolving a dispute and determining the rights and obligations of the parties.

lien-a legal claim against a piece of land for payment of some debt, obligation or duty. The lien results from the court's entry of a judgment against a landowner.

motion-a document filed with the court seeking to obtain a ruling or order from the court which is favorable to the party filing the motion.

notice-a formal, written announcement communicating scheduling information or other information about a case. The original notice is filed with the Clerk of Superior Court and copies are mailed or hand-delivered to parties to the litigation.

party-the plaintiff or defendant in a case. The plaintiff is the party who files the lawsuit and the defendant is the party who is being sued.

plaintiff-the person who brings an action in court; the one that sues.

responsive pleading-the documents setting forth the parties respective claims and defenses. The plaintiff's complaint initiates the lawsuit and the answer is the defendant's opportunity to respond to what is claimed by the plaintiff in the complaint.

sanction-the court's imposition of a penalty on a party who violates or fails to observe an order or rule of the court.

stipulation-the name given to an agreement made by parties or attorneys on opposite sides of a case. The stipulation is filed with the court for purposes of notifying the court of the agreement.

trial de novo-a new trial or retrial during which a whole case is retried as if no trial ever occurred in the first place.

witness/document subpoena-a document by which the court commands that a witness appear at a legal proceeding or by which the court orders that an individual appear at the proceeding with certain specified documents.