**Criminal law**

is the body of [law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law) that relates to [crime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crime). It proscribes conduct perceived as threatening, harmful, or otherwise endangering to the [property](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Property), [health](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health), [safety](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Safety), and [moral welfare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welfare) of people inclusive of one's self. Most criminal law is established by [statute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statute), which is to say that the laws are enacted by a [legislature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislature). Criminal law includes the [punishment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punishment) and [rehabilitation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehabilitation_(penology)) of people who violate such laws. Criminal law varies according to [jurisdiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jurisdiction), and differs from [civil law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_law_(common_law)), where emphasis is more on dispute resolution and victim compensation, rather than on [punishment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punishment) or [rehabilitation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehabilitation_(penology)). Criminal procedure is a formalized official activity that authenticates the fact of commission of a crime and authorizes punitive or rehabilitative treatment of the [offender](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Offender).

The first civilizations generally did not distinguish between [civil law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_law_(area)) and criminal law. One of the most important early codes was the [Code of Hammurabi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_Hammurabi), which formed the core of [Babylonian law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babylonian_law). Only fragments of the early criminal laws of [Ancient Greece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece) have survived, e.g. those of [Draco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draco_(lawgiver)) (→Draconian penalty is a punishment so severe that it seems excessive with respect to the crime being punished).

Five objectives of punishments are widely accepted to be enforced by the criminal law:

* [Retribution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Retributive_justice) – criminals ought to be punished in some way. Individuals may be [incarcerated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incarcerated) in [prison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prison) or [jail](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jail) in a variety of conditions depending on the jurisdiction. Confinement may be solitary. Length of incarceration may vary from a day to life. Government supervision may be imposed, including [house arrest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_arrest), and convicts may be required to conform to particularized guidelines as part of a [parole](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parole) or [probation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Probation) regimen. [Fines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fine_(penalty)) also may be imposed, seizing money or property from a person convicted of a crime. [Capital punishment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital_punishment) may be imposed in some jurisdictions for the most serious crimes.
* [Deterrence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deterrence_(legal)) – the aim is to discourage the offender from criminal behaviour.
* [Incapacitation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incapacitation_(penology)) – serves to keep criminals away from society so that the public is protected from their misconduct.
* [Rehabilitation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rehabilitation_(penology)) – aims at transforming an offender into a valuable member of society. Its primary goal is to prevent further offense by convincing the offender that their conduct was wrong.
* [Restoration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative_justice) – the goal is to repair, through state authority, any injury inflicted upon the victim by the offender.