

## Main Steps In A Trial

### *THROUGH THESE STEPS, THE JURORS WILL DECIDE THE VERDICT!*

- 1. OPENING OF A CRIMINAL/CIVIL TRIAL**  
Judge comes in courtroom, names the case and asks if the prosecution/ plaintiff and defense attorneys are ready
- 2. OPENING STATEMENTS BY ATTORNEYS**  
Prosecuting attorneys go first, introduce themselves and state what they intend to prove. Defense attorneys then introduce themselves and explain the evidence on their side that will deny what the other side is attempting to prove
- 3. WITNESSES OF THE STATE OR PLAINTIFF** They are sworn in – prosecutor/plaintiff witnesses go first and then defense witnesses
- 4. DIRECT EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES** Questioning by prosecuting/plaintiff attorney
- 5. CROSS EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES** Questioning by opposing lawyers
- 6. DEFENSE WITNESSES** Direct examination by defense attorney and then cross-examined by prosecuting attorney/plaintiff attorney
- 7. CLOSING ARGUMENTS** Summary of testimony first by prosecuting/plaintiff attorney, then by defense attorney
- 8. INSTRUCTIONS OF LAW BY THE COURT** The directions given by the Judge to the Jury concerning the law relating to the case
- 9. JURY DELIBERATIONS** Jury discusses trial to decide guilt or innocence based on the testimony and evidence provided during trial
- 10. VERDICT** Guilty (on the charge/charges) or not guilty  
(in a “real” trial – no set time and verdict must be a unanimous decision. If the jury cannot agree, it’s called a mistrial!) In a civil case, damages must be decided