

Ag Law



Laws are a system of rules that helps organize society. They help make sure people stay safe and are treated fairly. These rules are made by leaders and agreed upon by society. We vote for leaders that make laws. Lawyers help others understand and follow the law. In agriculture, lawyers help farmers and landowners.

Lawyers offer advice, help plan, and make agreements. In Illinois, 96% of farms are family-owned. As a team, lawyers and farmers create plans to transfer farms to the next generation. This teamwork is important to preserve the family farm. Law is called a practice because lawyers are always training in different areas of law.



Nine out of every ten lawyers in Illinois serve the areas around Chicago. There are not enough lawyers to help over 120,000 farmers in Illinois. This shortage is called a legal desert. A legal desert is a place where there are not enough lawyers to help people. There are not enough lawyers to help farmers and landowners get the help they need. This can make their jobs harder.



Lawyers in Illinois can join a group called the Illinois State Bar Association (ISBA). The ISBA has lawyers that focus on different areas of law. Those specialized lawyers help other lawyers by sharing their knowledge and teaching. This is a way lawyers help each other and work together, especially lawyers in small towns and rural communities.



Meet Illinois Law Students

Grant Minssen | Prophetstown, IL

Spencer McPheron | Heyworth, IL

What made you pursue law school?

Grant: Growing up on a family farm, preserving and growing the agricultural way of life is a deep passion of mine. I knew I wanted to pursue a career in agriculture, and I did so before deciding to attend law school. My rural community is aging, and there are not many lawyers around to help family farmers plan for the future of their farms. I am attending law school in the hope that I can return to my hometown to provide legal advice and to serve my rural community, whether it's advice on the farm or for somebody in need of help in our community.

What school subjects have prepared you the most for law school?

Spencer: The subjects that prepared me the most would have to be History, English, and Computer Science. As a law student, history is a huge portion of your studies because the law we study comes from our past. Things like cases, statutes, and the Constitution are extremely important in both History and law school. English class prepared me by teaching me how to be a good writer and speaker, which are essential skills for a lawyer. Computer science taught me to use the internet and research, which are things a lawyer spends most of their time doing.

What has surprised you the most about studying law?

Grant: The scope of law, especially as it relates to agriculture, is something that has surprised me. The seeds we plant, the land we farm, and the grain we harvest all have legal questions that many people are not aware of. Helping farmers know the law has been an honor to begin working with, and I hope to continue that for many years to come.

Spencer: The thing that surprised me about studying law was realizing how essential it is to understand our legal system. Having a good understanding of your legal rights and the rights of others is extremely important when conflict arises. Those interested in learning more about our government's legal system, and how to leave a positive impact on it, should consider a career in law. By choosing this path, individuals can play a direct role in promoting justice and fairness in society.