

WHO'S WHO INSIDE THE BAR

MOST OF US HAVE HEARD ATTORNEYS REFERRED TO AS "THE BAR", BUT DO YOU KNOW WHY?

The bar is an architectural feature of most courtrooms. It is the railing which runs across the room to separate the general public from the space occupied by the judge, the jury, the lawyers and others involved in the trial of a cause. Thus, the "Bar" are those permitted to enter the barred off portion of a courtroom, or the attorneys.

INSIDE THE BAR, YOU WILL SEE...

- The presiding judge, seated on the bench (a raised platform) at one end of the courtroom. Tradition, and respect for the profession, dictates that the court officer (also called the bailiff in some states), will ask that everyone in the courtroom stand when the judge enters or leaves the courtroom. In many Vermont courts there is also a tradition for everyone, including the judge, to stand when the jury enters the courtroom, as a sign of the respect.
- The recording equipment operator (recorder) is usually seated in the front of the bench. It is the job of the recorder to be sure that every word spoken in the courtroom during the trial is available for review in the future. As a juror you will be asked to speak so that your voice can be heard both by the parties and the recorder.
- The attorneys representing each side in a trial are seated at tables directly inside the bar. Their clients sit with them. In criminal trials, the prosecutor's table has an empty chair representing the prosecutor's client, the People of Vermont.
- The jurors, who sit in the jury box consisting of two rows of chairs, usually slightly above ground level, on one side of the courtroom.