

# Public law.

A general classification of law consisting generally of constitutional, administrative, criminal, and international law, concerned with the organization of the state, the relations between the state and the people who compose it, the responsibilities of public officers to the state, to each other, and to private persons, and the relations of states to one another. An act which relates to the public as a whole. (It may be (1) general (applying to all persons within the jurisdiction), (2) local (applying to a geographical area), or (3) special (relating to an organization which is charged with a public interest).

That branch or department of law which is concerned with the state in its political or sovereign capacity, including constitutional and administrative law, and with the definition, regulation, and enforcement of rights in cases where the state is regarded as the subject of the right or object of the duty, including criminal law and criminal procedure, and the law of the state, considered in its quasi-private personality, i.e., as capable of holding or exercising rights, or acquiring and dealing with property, in the character of an individual. That portion of law which is concerned with political conditions; that is to say, with the powers, rights, duties, capacities, and incapacities which are peculiar to political superiors, supreme and subordinate. In one sense, a designation given to international law, as distinguished from the laws of a particular nation or state. In another sense, a law or statute that applies to the people generally of the nation or state adopting or enacting it, is denominated a public law, as contradistinguished from a private law, affecting only an individual or a small number of persons.

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