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Career	Lawyer (Animal Law)
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What training is needed to work in this field?	At a minimum, a law degree or equivalent. Some states allow people to become lawyers by apprenticing for several years and sitting for the bar exam without attending school. Alternatively, one can train at a technical school as a paralegal.
What is a typical week like or what do you spend most of your time doing in your job?	I am a civil litigator focusing on animal injury, death, custody, cruelty, and rights. Therefore, I spend most of the week preparing for trial or appeal. This includes arguing motions before a judge, deposing witnesses, trying a case to a judge or jury, or writing legal memoranda in an effort to persuade appellate justices that certain aspects of animal law need to change. I negotiate with insurance adjusters and other attorneys. Occasionally, I draft agreements to avoid trial. Hours are unpredictable and can spill into the weekends or evenings. I tend to work 7-10 hours a day, 5-6 days a week. I do not have a paralegal to whom I turn for document preparation, calls to witnesses, and other details that make legal practice tedious and time-consuming. As a solo litigator, I do not handle transactional work (such as drafting animal trusts or commercial agreements involving animals).
What is the job outlook for this field?	The field is burgeoning. Now over 50 law schools offer a course in animal law and several county and state bar associations have formed animal law sections. Even the national bar association (the ABA) just last year formed an animal law committee. So long as people love and rely upon nonhuman animals, the field will always accommodate lawyers and paralegals. That said, one must remember that it is not the most lucrative area of law and, because it is in development, much time is spent tilting at windmills and always fighting for incremental gains that always come too slowly. With patience, optimism, and non-animal law-related practice areas to keep you afloat, the field has much to offer.

What are the benefits of working in this field?	I can handle only the cases I choose, and 99% of them are animal law-related.
What advice or other information do you want to share with someone considering this field?	Despite its allure, animal law litigation is not for the faint-hearted. You will be ridiculed and pigeonholed and prejudged. You will be threatened with sanctions and other bullying tactics. But you must stand firm – the animals depend upon it, and you are their voice. Make sure to study hard, and be extra certain about your position and the rules before making bold demands of the court. Historically, nothing has changed; the minority positions have always needed to run twice as fast just to be seen as keeping up with the majority.