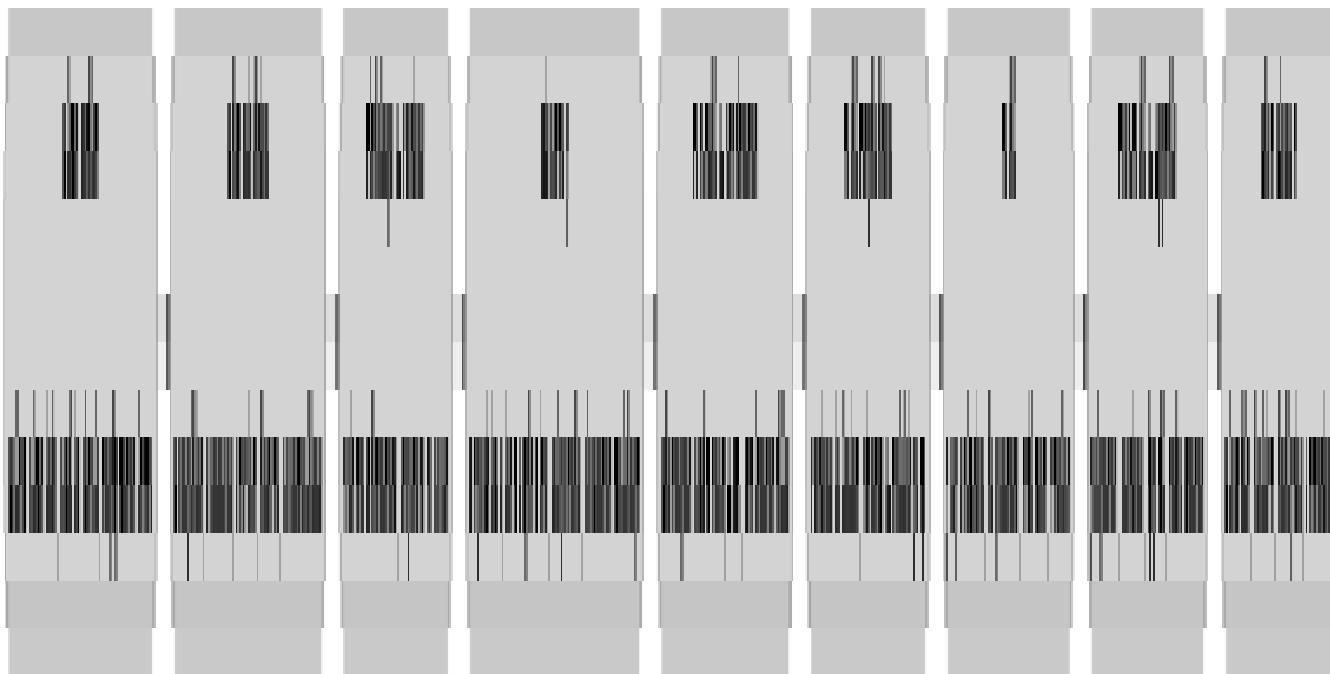


Legal Case Lifecycle (Civil Litigation – Massachusetts Example)



1. Client Intake & Conflict Check

- Collect client details, facts of the case, contact info, and initial documents.
- Run conflict checks to avoid representing opposing parties.
- Engagement Letter / Retainer Agreement sets scope of representation, billing terms, and responsibilities.

2. Case Initiation

- Complaint/Petition filed by plaintiff.
- Summons issued and served to defendant.
- Defendant files Answer; may include Counterclaims or Crossclaims.

3. Pleadings & Motions

- Pleadings include Complaint, Answer, Reply, Counterclaims.
- Motions include Motion to Dismiss, Motion for Summary Judgment, Motion to Compel.

4. Discovery Phase

- Interrogatories: written Q&A; under oath.
- Depositions: oral testimony under oath.
- Requests for Production of Documents.
- Requests for Admission and Subpoenas.

5. Pre-Trial Conferences & Settlement Negotiations

- Case Management Conference sets schedules and deadlines. - Settlement discussions, mediation, or arbitration may resolve case without trial.

6. Trial Preparation

- Pre-trial motions (exclude evidence, set jury instructions). - Witness lists, exhibit preparation, trial briefs.

7. Trial

- Jury Selection (Voir Dire). - Opening Statements, Presentation of Evidence, Cross-Examination. - Closing Arguments, Verdict by judge or jury.

8. Post-Trial Motions & Appeals

- Judgment entered by the court. - Motions for New Trial or Alter Judgment. - Appeals to higher courts, Enforcement of Judgments (liens, garnishment).

9. Case Closure & Archiving

- Close file, finalize billing, confirm settlement payments. - Archive records for compliance (7+ years). - Analytics: win/loss rates, case durations, billing efficiency.