**LAW CLASS**

**The Sixth Amendment**

The Sixth Amendment states:

*“In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense.* ”

Vocabulary

Impartial: without bias or favoritism

Wherein: in that place

Ascertained: found

Accusation: charge

Jeopardy: danger

Compulsory: forced, mandatory

Obtaining: getting

Counsel: lawyer

**A Guide to the Sixth Amendment**

The Sixth Amendment of the United States Constitution is the section of the Bill of Rights that guarantees a citizen a speedy trial, a fair jury, an attorney if the accused person wants one, and the chance to confront the witnesses who is accusing the defendant of a crime, meaning he or she can see who is making accusations.

**Understanding the Sixth Amendment Line by Line**

Here are some good explanations to make the Sixth Amendment easier to understand:

“In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial”:

*The person who is accused of a crime has the right to get a quick trial. The country or state cannot make the person sit in jail for a very long time, for example 5 years, while they for their trial. This would be very unfair to anyone who is not guilty. The person who is accused also has the right to receive a public trial. The process must be seen by the public so that it more fair to the accused person.*

“By an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law”:

*The trial has to have an impartial jury. This means that the jurors cannot be prejudiced or biased against the accused individual or the specific crime that the individual has been accused of, or it would be unfair to the accused. The trial also must be held in an area where the crime took place, or else it may also be unfair to the accused.*

“And to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him”:

*The accused person has the right to find out what he or she is being charged with exactly and why he or she is being held in jail. The accused person also has the right to learn who is claiming that he or she committed the crime, along with the right to ask questions.*

“To have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense”:

*The accused person has the right to make anyone attend their trial if they believe that person can help with the case. The court can also force a person to come to a court. The accused person also has the right to hire an attorney. If he or she cannot afford an attorney, the court can provide one*

Questions to Consider:

1. What does it mean to have a “speedy trial?”
2. What steps are taken to make sure your trial is fair?
3. Where must your trial be held?
4. Can you confront the witness against you?

1. What does it mean to have a “compulsory process for obtaining witnesses?”
2. How can you get a lawyer if you cannot afford one?