



Attention All Yoga Teachers - a Guide to Liability and Lawsuits

Flexibility is the name of the game in yoga - but all experienced yoga teachers know that you can't be flexible on keeping your students safe and managing risks.

It may sound extreme - but any injury that could be potentially linked to you or the environment of your yoga class is a potential lawsuit. Between 2001 and 2014 there were [29,590 yoga-related injuries](#) recorded by hospital emergency departments in the United States. The actual number of yoga-related injuries is undoubtedly much higher - and the world is becoming more litigious day by day.

Here are just a few instances where yoga instructors or studios were sued:

- A man sues yoga studio after an [unsolicited yoga pose adjustment allegedly led to injury](#) resulting in a permanent disability.
- A woman sues yoga alleged that an [improper yoga adjustment allegedly led to a serious spinal injury](#) that required major surgery.

- A woman sues a yoga studio after [a wall mirror falls and shatters on her during yoga class](#), causing severe lacerations.
- Alec Baldwin's wife sued after [a student is injured in her yoga class](#) allegedly due to overcrowded classroom conditions.

You may be shocked after reading about those lawsuits. While they may sound extreme or unlikely, these situations could happen to anybody! It's all the more important to make sure you manage risks and protect yourself against legal action.

Reasons a yoga instructor might get sued

All yoga lawsuits are predicated on the accusation of **negligence** on the part of the yoga teacher or studio - that specific action (or inaction) of the yoga studio staff or class teacher was a direct cause of physical and/or emotional injury.

Here are a few common accusations that yoga students have leveled against their teachers.

Lack of Proper Training

If you are reading this after taking a crash course in yoga and want to start teaching - stop. Please consider undergoing formal training before taking on classes. Taking a weekend yoga class and learning various poses is not the same as a full understanding of how poses affect the body or a full internalization of the proper flow for different levels of yoga.

Comprehensive yoga training takes anywhere between 200 and 500 hours by certified [Registered Yoga Teachers](#).

Have you been trained to perform adjustments properly? Are you comfortable adjusting your program for different ability levels? Are you comfortable working with students who have pre-existing conditions? If you answered no to any of these questions, it's important that you get the additional training you need.

Unwanted Physical Manipulation

All yoga teachers need direct consent from their students to manipulate their bodies. It is NEVER implied by their attendance to your class.

Many studios have adopted laminated, double-sided "consent cards" that students place side-up with their preference: Yes or no to adjustments. Some yoga practitioners, however, feel that the cards can cause anxiety that comes with a potential adjustment, and prefer to primarily [give verbal cues](#) so students can self-adjust. Whichever method you choose, consent is key.

Adjustment Issues

When you do give adjustments, it is important that you do so safely. You should always ensure that you ask new students about any existing medical conditions either in person on the first class or during registration. When making adjustments, make sure you take into consideration the student's level of yoga experience, their overall comfort with the material, as well as their age.

Improper Supervision

Adjustment or no adjustment, it is important that you provide proper supervision to your students. If they are misinterpreting your instructions, or look as if they are struggling, you should be there to course-correct as quickly as possible!

Environmental Hazards and Equipment Malfunction

Your facility and all equipment should be regularly maintained to prevent accidents. Slips and falls are one of the leading causes of lawsuits against any business, and particularly when training in a room full of drippy, sweaty students! The lawsuit that involved the mirror falling on the student could have easily been prevented had that mirror been secured properly.

Getting Protected - Why do I need yoga insurance?

Simply put - yoga liability insurance is not optional for teachers these days. Many studios won't hire you without it. Yoga insurance covers legal and damage costs arising from your yoga instruction. If you are sued, insurance helps cover your legal fees. Insurance also helps you cover any damage that occurs in a studio during one of your classes.

Waivers are key to deflecting lawsuits

A well-written [yoga liability waiver](#) helps defend you or your studio in court in the event of a lawsuit. A waiver is a legal agreement between you and a student that ensures the student acknowledges the risks in yoga and waives the right to sue you for negligence.

While a yoga waiver form is not a foolproof defense about litigation, there are many cases in which [waivers have successfully had lawsuits dismissed in court](#).

You can find samples of yoga waiver templates here:

- [Stretchtopia](#)
- [Yoga Hive LLC](#)
- [Yoga Activist](#)

It is important to note that laws regarding waivers vary between countries and individual states or provinces. While these yoga waiver form templates can help you draft a framework, all legal documents should be checked over by a lawyer.

Capture waivers any time, anywhere - No paper needed

If you're looking for an easy solution to have your [students sign your yoga waivers](#) or yoga agreement, give our waiver app a try. Our document builder lets you easily create your yoga waiver forms, which can then be presented as an entry kiosk in your studio or on any smart device.

All signed waivers are shared with your students by email and stored permanently in the cloud. Even better, our affordable service also includes a customer management dashboard that lets you easily manage communication and marketing to your students, as well as powerful customer analytics.

Best of all - **you can try us for free** - no credit card required!

[Give WaiverForever a try today](#) - we protect and grow your business.