



**Court Interpreter Services
U.S. District Court, Central District of California**

**Orientation for Contract Court Interpreters
POST-INDICTMENT ARRAIGNMENT(PIA)**

A defendant accused of a felony in the federal court is entitled to a preliminary hearing within 10 days of the initial appearance if detained, or within 20 days if released. The purpose of the preliminary examination is to see if there is probable cause to justify holding the defendant for further court proceedings. If the grand jury decides the probable cause issue by returning an indictment prior to the scheduled preliminary examination date, the preliminary hearing is not held and the case is set on the post-indictment arraignment calendar. In this district, PIA is held on Mondays in Los Angeles and Santa Ana, and on Wednesday afternoons in Riverside.

When you arrive in the courtroom, check with the staff interpreter, the courtroom deputy clerk (CRD), or the defense attorney to obtain a copy of the indictment and the constitutional rights form (CR044) so that you can interpret them to the defendant before the proceedings begin. Both you and the defendant have to sign the rights form.

The interpreter's arrival time for PIA varies depending on the division. If assigned to 341 Roybal in Los Angeles, you should arrive at 8:00 a.m. The assignment office will give you the arrival times for the Santa Ana and Riverside divisions.

The interpreter should remain in close proximity to the defendant in the courtroom so that interpreting can begin as soon as the judge takes the bench. Nobody will ask you to start interpreting, it is your duty to start interpreting immediately. This includes the courtroom deputy clerk's announcement declaring the court in session. The judge will begin the proceedings by reading the defendants' constitutional rights; you must again interpret the rights to the defendant as they are being read by the court. The defendant must be put in the same situation as if he/she were English-speaking.

When the defendant's case is called, you should accompany the defendant and counsel to the lectern. Interpret simultaneously while the defendant's case is being heard; the defendant's answers should be interpreted consecutively.



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The defendant will be asked what his true name is and whether the rights and the indictment have been sight-translated to him. He will then be asked whether he wants the indictment read to him in open court, or whether he waives reading of the indictment. The defendant then enters a plea or response to the charges in the indictment. This is most likely going to be a not guilty plea. The court may set deadlines for completion of other pretrial proceedings, and may set a trial date. Make a note of these dates so that you can pass them on to the assignment office.

On occasion, a defendant asks the interpreter not to interpret, because he/she understands some English and finds it difficult to listen to two languages at the same time. **Please be advised that you cannot accept such requests from any defendant.** Your assistance has been sought by the court through the interpreter services office. Ask defense counsel to state for the record that the defendant requests that the interpreter to be placed on “stand-by” or excused from the case altogether. **Only the court may excuse you from interpreting on the case.**

Any questions that the defendant may have regarding his case or the proceedings must be referred to the attorney. Do not engage in conversations with family members. If approached, tell the person(s) that you are the interpreter and hence not at liberty to discuss any aspect of the case.

Once there are no other cases pending where your services are needed, you should ask the CRD and defense counsel if you may be excused. Call interpreter services (213 894-4370) before you leave the courthouse. Please inform the office if you were placed on “stand-by” or excused from the case.

At the end of each twice-monthly pay-period, you should deliver your claim form to the interpreter services office at the following address:

U.S. District Court, Interpreter Services, Room 541, 312 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.



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GLOSSARY

Acknowledgment of the defendant
All motions are reserved
All stages of the proceedings
Appointed attorney
Arraignment and plea
Assistance of an attorney
Case file
Charged with a crime against the U.S.
Competent evidence
Constitutional rights
Court is in session
Court proceedings
Defendant in a criminal case
District court judge
Draw the name of the judge
Enter a plea to the charges
Enter a plea of not guilty
Entitled to a preliminary hearing
Evidentiary motions
Federal public defender
Felony
Free on bond
Further proceedings
Grand jury
Guilt beyond a reasonable doubt
In open court



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Initial appearance
Minimum and maximum sentence
Plaintiff
Plea and trial setting
Plead guilty/not guilty
Post-indictment arraignment
Pre-trial detention/release
Pretrial services supervision
Probable cause
Promises of leniency
Prosecutor
Retained attorney
Set trial date
Speedy and public trial by jury
Statement of rights
Submit a financial affidavit
Subpoena witnesses on your own behalf
Subsequent hearings
U.S. probation office
Voluntary plea
Waive reading of the indictment