



**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.

Have the CRD sign the back of your claim form as soon as you check in, since there may not be a convenient break in the proceedings for you to do so after you have completed your interpreting assignment.

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	