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# Testifying in Court

### Before Court:

- Ask for help if needed.
  - If you need an interpreter or help due to a disability, call the court clerk before your hearing.
  
- Choose appropriate clothing
  - Wear clean, neat clothes like you're going to an office job or formal event.
  - Don't wear casual or inappropriate clothes, including hats.
  - Take out any facial piercings and cover tattoos, if possible
  
  - If jewelry or makeup is to be worn, only wear a small amount.
  
- Bring what you need.
  - Physical evidence (pictures, receipts, etc.)
  
  - Evidence that is on your phone (emails, messages, pictures)
  
- Do NOT bring:
  - Pepper spray/mace, sharp objects, or weapons.
  - Your children - unless they are testifying or the hearing is about them.
  - Try not to bring a purse or bag; getting it through security could make you late

### When to Get There and What to Do?

- Be at court at least 15 minutes before your case is scheduled. Leave time to get through security.
- Ask a security officer where to go if you're not sure. You can show them your court papers.
- Listen for instructions (i.e. wait for your name to be called).
- Let the judge know you're there once your name is called.
- If the other attorney attempts to speak with you, you do NOT have to speak with them.

### While Testifying

- Tell the truth.
- Be polite
- Call the judge "Your Honor."
- Call the lawyers "sir" or "ma'am."
- Stop talking after answering a question.
- If you need to explain an answer, then say you need to explain it and do so.

### What if the Lawyer Objects to Your Testimony?

Pause your talking immediately. Wait for the judge to over-rule or sustain the objection. If over-ruled, you may continue speaking. If sustained, simply wait to be asked another question.

### What else?

- If you don't understand a question, don't answer it. Ask for clarification.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, just say you don't know.

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