

SUGGESTIONS FOR WITNESSES

- Be early.
- Have a neat appearance and proper dress.
- Be patient.
- Tell the truth. Even a minor fabrication can discredit a witness and weaken the case. Telling the truth means more than refraining from telling a deliberate lie. It requires that you testify accurately about what you know. All the circumstances should be stated, even if not to the prosecutor's advantage. If you don't know the answer to the question, simply say you don't know. Do not guess or speculate. However, give positive, definite answers when you do remember. If you are uncertain, don't say "I think," or "I believe."
- If you do not understand a question, tell the attorney or judge, and ask him to explain.
- Listen carefully to the questions. Take your time. Give the question as much thought as you need to understand it to formulate your answer, then give the answer. Do not snap answer without thinking.
- Do not answer questions such as shaking or nodding your head. Your answers are being recorded and must be audible.
- Avoid distracting mannerisms, such as chewing gum or placing your hands in front of your mouth.
- Once you have been sworn, do not discuss the testimony with other witnesses. Stay away from the jurors during recess. Politely but firmly avoid letting jurors talk to you.