

## NOTE-TAKING FOR LEGAL INTERPRETERS ROLE PLAY PRACTICE

Instructions:

1. In your language groups you will interpret the following role-play.
2. Rotate interpreters after each role-play.
3. Practice taking notes during the dialog. Observe what strategies you use to manage the short statements that don't need notes with the longer statements that do.
4. Wait until the end of the role play to debrief your performance as the interpreter

### Legal Role Play #1: Car Accident Testimony

*Testimony from a police officer who reconstructed a car accident.*

**District Attorney:** Good afternoon officer, my name is Jennifer Holcourt. I'm representing the State in this case that is the result of an auto accident, which I believe you investigated. And as you have indicated that you have been deposed before I won't go through all the instructions. We can just go ahead and start.

**Officer:** Yes, that is fine.

**District Attorney:** Can you please state your full name and rank for the record?

**Officer:** Officer Miles. I'm a Highway Patrol Officer and I am certified as an Accident Reconstructionist.

**District Attorney:** And can you please describe your experience with accident investigation?

**Officer:** As I said, I'm certified. I've been handling accidents since I came on the job in 1996. I've handled thousands of accidents. For the past 5 years I've been the main person in our department who handles all the accidents that involve personal involvement in our precinct.

**District Attorney:** And you said you investigated the accident that occurred on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 on Pine Road Crossing?

**Officer:** Yes.

**District Attorney:** Can you recall any specifics or details regarding that accident here today?

**Officer:** Based on reviewing my report, it was an accident involving a motorcycle and an automobile. The automobile was traveling northbound and made a left turn in front of the motorcycle that was traveling southbound on Pine Crossing Road. The motorcycle driver applied his brakes and he slid into the front passenger side of the automobile.

**District Attorney:** And when you arrived on the scene, were there other emergency personnel or other police officers already there?

**Officer:** Yes, there was at least one other officer at the scene and from my report I believe that Ambulance Number 16 was there. There was another accident farther north on the same road. One police officer responded directly to the motorcycle and one ambulance. Later on a fire engine arrived as well.

**District Attorney:** Please describe what details you focused on to reconstruct this accident.

**Officer:** Well, we interviewed the witnesses. We also focused on the skid marks left by the motorcycle tires to estimate how fast he was traveling at the time of the accident. And we also analyzed the damage to the car to estimate speed of travel.

**District Attorney:** Ok, thank you Officer Miles. That is all.

*END OF ROLE PLAY. SWITCH INTERPRETERS.*

## **Legal Role Play #2: Motorcycle Driver Testimony**

*Testimony from the driver of the motorcycle driver.*

**District Attorney:** Good afternoon Mr. Flor, my name is Jennifer Holcourt. I'm representing the State in this case that is the result of the accident in which you were involved between your motorcycle and the defendant's automobile. Now, you've already been deposed. Today we are in court asking for your direct testimony.

**Mr. Flor:** Yes.

**District Attorney:** Can you please state your full name, date of birth and address for the record?

**Mr. Flor:** My name is Jesus Flor Rivera. I was born on May 3, 1978. That's what my identification says. And I live at 679 Market Street, Apartment 9F.

**District Attorney:** Okay, thank you now. Now, Mr. Flor, today we are going to focus on exactly what happened in the accident. It's important that you answer each question accurately and truthfully.

**Mr. Flor:** Of course.

**District Attorney:** Now, according to the police report, you were traveling southbound on Pine Crossing Road when the accident happened. Can you tell us exactly what you remember happening.

**Mr. Flor:** Well, I was going to my sister's house for a birthday party. It was raining a little bit. Right by the post office, this car suddenly turned left right in front of me. I had to slam on the brakes; there was no way to go around it. But it was wet and my tires started to slide. My bike fell sideways and I crashed into the car. I broke my leg and had to go to the hospital.

**District Attorney:** Okay, let's back up and go through this more slowly. You said you were traveling southbound on Pine Crossing Road. How fast were you going?

**Mr. Flor:** Well not that fast. There was a lot of traffic so I think something like 45 miles an hour. I was lucky. If it had been faster then I might have been killed.

**District Attorney:** Please just answer the questions directly Mr. Flor. Now, you say were going 45 miles an hour. But the police report estimates that you were traveling faster than that, around 60 miles an hour. That's above the 55 miles per hour speed limit. How do you know you were traveling 45 miles per hour?

**Mr. Flor:** Um. Uh. I'm not sure. I can't say exactly how fast I was going. But I remember that I was late for my sister's birthday party and so I was looking at my speed. I wanted to be able to go the speed limit but I couldn't because of the traffic.

**District Attorney:** The Defendant has claimed that you did not have your headlight on even though it was raining. Is that true?

**Mr. Flor:** No! That is not true. I always have my headlight on. It's state law, even during the day. On my motorcycle my headlight comes on automatically when I start the engine and turns off when I turn the engine off.

**District Attorney:** You say the headlight comes on automatically. Did you check to make sure it was on the day of the accident?

**Mr. Flor:** Well, I didn't check from in front of the motorcycle. But I know it was on because the I have a signal on my dashboard that shows me when the light is on.

**District Attorney:** Okay, Mr. Flor, let's take a 10 minute break.

*END OF ROLE PLAY. SWITCH INTERPRETERS.*

### **Legal Role Play #3: Defendant Testimony**

*Testimony from the defendant accused of making an illegal left hand turn.*

**District Attorney:** Now, Mrs. Gonzalez, you already been sworn in. You understand that you have agreed to tell the truth under penalty of perjury?

**Defendant:** Yes.

**District Attorney:** Good. Now, I'm going to ask you several questions about how the accident occurred.

**Defendant:** Okay. That's fine.

**District Attorney:** Please tell me in our own words what happened that day when you had the accident on Pine Crossing Road.

**Defendant:** Well, I was driving my son and daughter to their soccer practice after school. But I had to run a couple of errands first. I needed to go to the post office and mail a bill. So I had to turn left off of Pine Crossing Road to get to the Post Office. I pulled into the middle lane. You know, they have one of those turn lanes with the painted yellow lines? I put my blinker on and waited until there was room to turn. Then I turned and suddenly there was this big crash.

**District Attorney:** You didn't see the motorcycle coming in the opposite direction?

**Defendant:** No. It was raining a little bit. The motorcycle was grey and didn't have any lights on. I didn't see him at all until he hit the car. He crashed into the passenger side where my son was sitting. He must have been going so far – it was a terrible crash. My son had to go to the hospital.

**District Attorney:** We'll get to those details in a minute. Why do you think the motorcycle was going too fast?

**Defendant:** Well, I saw the police report. They did all that math to figure out how fast his motorcycle was traveling. It says he was traveling over 60 miles per hour. That's way more than the speed limit of 50 miles per hour.

**District Attorney:** Okay, well, can you please tell us what happened after the motorcycle hit the passenger side of your car?

**Defendant:** Well, it was terrifying. All of a sudden I felt this big crash and my car was moved down the road. His motorcycle went all the way under the car and all the cars coming towards us had to swerve around us.

**District Attorney:** And then what happened?

**Defendant:** Well, somebody called 911 and the police and an ambulance came. They got us out of the car. My daughter and I were okay but my son had to go to the hospital.

**District Attorney:** Okay Mrs. Gonzalez, that's all for now. But we will probably want to ask more questions tomorrow.

**Defendant:** Tomorrow? Oh. I didn't know. I have to work tomorrow.

**District Attorney:** I'm sorry Mrs. Gonzalez, but you are being requested to appear in court every day of the trial.

**Defendant:** Oh. Well. Okay. Well, I will tell my boss.

**District Attorney:** Good. Now, you are excused.

*END OF ROLE PLAY*