

**OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL DEFENDER
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

**FEDERAL DEFENDER
GENERAL CLIENT INFORMATION - FRESNO**

WHO WE ARE: The Office of the Federal Defender is an organization of criminal defense attorneys. We represent people charged with federal crimes in the Eastern District of California, who cannot afford to pay a lawyer. We can represent you only if the court appoints us, based on your financial situation. Once appointed, we work FOR YOU only, and not for the court. Our only job is to give you the best defense possible. Our defense team includes investigators, paralegals, research specialists, interns, and legal secretaries who may work with your lawyer on your case.

If there are other defendants in your case, we can represent only one of you. We will arrange for a private lawyer, known as a "panel attorney," if you qualify for appointed counsel and we can't represent you. We will also arrange for a panel lawyer if we have a conflict with your case (for example, if we previously represented a witness or co-defendant).

The Assistant Federal Defender you meet the first day you come to court is responsible for all new arrests that day. He or she will speak with you about what will happen that day, and see if there is a way to get you out of jail. (See the Handout called Detention Hearing for more information.) Later, a supervisor in our office will assign the attorney who is best for your case. That attorney will then handle your case all the way through, including, in most cases, any appeals or problems with supervision after sentencing.

CONTACTING US: We are located at 2300 Tulare St., Suite 330, Fresno, CA 93721 and our web site is www.cae-fpd.org. Our phone number is (559) 487-5561. We accept collect calls. Spanish-speaking receptionists are usually available. We are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can leave a voice-mail message at other times. We cannot call you while you are in jail, but your attorney will come visit you when possible. Because each attorney has a full case load, we cannot visit every day. If you are out of custody, you will meet with us in our office. Please keep all your appointments. If you need to reschedule, call your attorney or her or his secretary in advance.

JAIL: As a federal prisoner, you are in the custody of the United States Marshals, who are responsible

for you. If the judge does not release you, the Marshals will probably hold you at the Fresno County Jail. The mailing address is P.O. Box 872, Fresno, CA 93721. The web site is www.fresnosheriff.org. If you are not getting treatment for a serious medical problem or are having other problems at the jail, let us know and we will seek to help you.

COURT: Your case will be heard in the United States District Court. The courthouse is located at 1130 O Street in Fresno. If you are out of custody, NEVER miss a court appearance or arrive late for court. You will need to show identification to enter the courthouse. If you have a problem with a date, talk to your attorney ahead of time. You may give up your right to come to many court hearings, but you must do so in writing.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

X DO NOT DISCUSS YOUR CASE WITH ANYONE EXCEPT YOUR ATTORNEY. Everything you say to your lawyer is completely confidential. Do not discuss your case with any law enforcement officers. If they try to talk to you, tell them that you want your lawyer there.

X DO NOT DISCUSS YOUR CASE WITH OTHER INMATES, INCLUDING YOUR CELLIE, in any language. The jails are full of cooperators. Anything you say could be used against you. Do not discuss the case with friends or family, in any language. Jail phone calls and social visits may be recorded. Other people, even family members, could be forced to testify about what you say to them. Your lawyer, and people working for him or her, are the only ones you should talk to about your case.

X DO NOT BELIEVE WHAT YOU HEAR FROM OTHER INMATES ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN TO YOU. Most jail inmates are not federal prisoners, and do not know about federal cases. Even among federal prisoners, there are many false rumors about sentencing deals and other matters. Your lawyer will have accurate information.