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2.01 Recesses

We are about to take a break or recess during the trial, and I want to remind you of the instructions I gave you earlier about your conduct as jurors.

During this recess and all other recesses, do not discuss this case with anyone, including your fellow jurors, other people involved in the trial, members of your family, friends, or anyone else. Do not speak at all with any of the parties, the witnesses, or the attorneys. Do not permit anyone to discuss the case with you. If anyone approaches you and tries to talk to you about the case, please report that to me, through my courtroom deputy, immediately.

[Before Each Daytime Recess During the Case:

While I do not know whether there is any news coverage of this case, do not watch or listen to any news reports concerning this trial on television or on radio and do not read any news accounts of this trial in a newspaper or on the Internet. Do not use the internet to search for information about the parties, witnesses, lawyers, or anyone else associated with the trial. The only information you are to consider in deciding this case is what you learn in this courtroom.]

[At the End of Each Day of the Case:

As I indicated before this trial started, you as jurors will decide this case based solely on the evidence presented in this courtroom. This means

that, after you leave here for the night, you must not watch or listen to any news reports concerning this trial on television or on radio or read any news accounts of this trial in a newspaper or on the Internet. Further, you must not conduct any independent research about this case, the matters in the case, the legal issues in the case, or the individuals or other entities involved in the case. This is important for the same reasons that jurors have long been instructed to limit their exposure to traditional forms of media and information such as television and newspapers. You also must not communicate with anyone, in any way, about this case. And you must ignore any information about the case that you might see while browsing the internet or your social media feeds.]

[At the Beginning of Each Day of the Case:

As I reminded you last night and continue to emphasize to you today, it is important that you decide this case based solely on the evidence and the law presented here. So you must not learn any additional information about the case from sources outside the courtroom. To ensure fairness to all parties in this trial, I will now ask each of you whether you have learned about or shared any information about this case outside of this courtroom, even if it was accidental.

ALTERNATIVE 1 (in open court) (in the judge's discretion): If you think you might have done so, please let me know now by raising your hand.

[Wait for a show of hands]. I see no raised hands; however, if you would

prefer to talk to a member of the court’s staff privately in response to this question, please do so at the next break. Thank you for your careful adherence to my instructions.

**ALTERNATIVE 2 (during voir dire with each juror, individually):
Have you learned about or shared any information about this case outside of this courtroom? . . . Thank you for your careful adherence to my instructions.]**

Remember to keep an open mind. Do not make up your mind about the verdict until you have heard all the evidence, I have given you final instructions about the law at the end of trial, and you have discussed the case with your fellow jurors during your deliberations.

Comment

See Kevin F. O'Malley, Jay E. Grenig, & Hon. William C. Lee, 1A Federal Jury Practice and Instructions [hereinafter O'Malley et al, supra] § 11.01(Admonitions At Court Recess--Long Form), § 11.02 (Admonitions At Court Recesses--Short Form); Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration and Case Management, Proposed Model Jury Instructions on The Use of Electronic Technology to Learn or Communicate about a Case (2020). For variations, see Eighth Circuit § 2.01; Ninth Circuit § 2.1.

The Model Instruction incorporates the recommendation of the Judicial Conference Committee on Court Administration and Case Management and recommends giving these instructions frequently during the trial. However, when and how often to instruct the jurors on their use of electronic technology as well as how to express that instruction lie within the discretion of the court.

(Revised 2/2021)

2.02 Stipulated Testimony

The parties have agreed what (*name of witness*)'s testimony would be if called as a witness. You should consider that testimony in the same way as if it had been given here in court by the witness.

Comment

The instruction is derived from Ninth Circuit § 2.3. For variations, *see* Hon. Leonard Sand, John S. Siffert, Walter P. Loughlin, Steven A. Reiss & Nancy Batterman, *Modern Federal Jury Instructions - Criminal Volumes* (Matthew Bender 2003) [hereinafter, Sand et al., *supra*] 5-7 and Eighth Circuit § 2.02.

When the parties stipulate to what a witness would testify to if called, it is error to instruct the jury that it must consider the stipulated testimony as true. *See United States v. Bennally*, 756 F.2d 773 (10th Cir. 1985). *See* Instruction 2.03 (Stipulation of Fact) if the stipulation is as to an issue of fact.

2.03 Stipulation of Fact

The Government and the defendant(s) have agreed that (*set forth stipulated fact(s)*) (*is*)(*are*) true. You should therefore treat (*this fact*) (*these facts*) as having been proved. You are not required to do so, however, since you are the sole judge of the facts.

Comment

See 1AO'Malley et al., supra, § 12.03, Sand et al., supra, 5-6, and Ninth Circuit § 2.4. For variations, see Ninth Circuit § 2.4 and Federal Judicial Center § 12.

In a criminal case, the jury is not necessarily bound by a stipulation between the parties. In *United States v. Cornish*, 103 F.3d 302 (3d Cir. 1997), the defendant unsuccessfully argued that the trial court's instruction gave too binding an effect to the stipulation concerning the defendant's prior conviction. The trial court simply instructed the jury that "it's been agreed that on April 16th, 1994, defendant had been previously convicted of such a crime." The Third Circuit concluded that the instruction was not plain error. Nevertheless, the court appeared to express a preference for instructions that tell the jurors they "should" treat stipulated facts as having been proved, commenting that such instructions "avoid the hazard, apparent or not, of directing a verdict on a factual issue and would be shielded from constitutional challenge." *Id.* at 306-07.

In cases where a stipulation may amount to an admission to an element of the offense, the judge may wish to exercise caution. The Third Circuit has yet to address the question, but judges may wish to ascertain that the defendant understands the contents of the stipulation and agrees to it.

2.04 Judicial Notice (F.R.E. 201)

I have taken judicial notice of certain facts. (*State the fact(s) that are being judicially noticed.*) **I believe** (*this fact is*) (*these facts are*) [(*of such common knowledge*) (*can be so accurately and readily determined from*) (*name accurate source*)] **that** (*it*)(*they*) **cannot reasonably be disputed. You may accept this fact as proven, but are not required to do so. As with any fact, the final decision whether or not to accept it is for you to make, and you are not required to agree with me.**

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit § 2.04. For variations, *see* 1A O'Malley et al., *supra*, § 12.03; Sand et al., *supra*, 5-5; Sixth Circuit § 7.19; Seventh Circuit § 1.02; and Ninth Circuit § 2.5.

Rule 201 of the Federal Rules of Evidence governs judicial notice of adjudicative facts. Rule 201(b) defines the kinds of facts that may be judicially noticed:

The court may judicially notice a fact that is not subject to reasonable dispute because it:

- (1) is generally known within the trial court's territorial jurisdiction; or
- (2) can be accurately and readily determined from sources whose accuracy cannot reasonably be questioned.¹

Judicial notice may be taken at any stage of the proceedings, but generally only after the parties have been afforded an opportunity to be heard on the matter. An instruction on judicial notice should be given at the time that notice is taken. It may also be given at the time the jury is charged at the close of the evidence.

¹ Before the restyling of the Federal Rules of Evidence, Rule 201(b) provided:

A judicially noticed fact must be one not subject to reasonable dispute in that it is either (1) generally known within the territorial jurisdiction of the trial court or (2) capable of accurate and ready determination by resort to sources whose accuracy cannot reasonably be questioned.

Rule 201(g) directs that “[i]n a criminal case, the court must instruct the jury that it may or may not accept the noticed fact as conclusive.”² In this regard, the rule for criminal cases differs from the rule for civil cases, in which the jury has no discretion to reject judicially noticed facts. The Third Circuit has noted with approval instructions that adhere to the language of the rule for criminal cases. *See United States v. Mitchell*, 365 F.3d 215, 251 n.28 (3d Cir. 2004); *United States v. Saada*, 212 F.3d 210, 223 (3d Cir. 2000). While approving the trial court’s instructions in both *Mitchell* and *Saada*, the court did not include the text of either instruction. As a result, it is not clear whether the court tracked the language of the rule exactly.

² Before the restyling of the Federal Rules of Evidence, Rule 201(g) provided that “[i]n a criminal case, the court shall instruct the jury that it may, but is not required to, accept as conclusive any fact judicially noticed.”

2.05 Audio/Video Recordings - Consensual

You are about to hear *(audio)(video)* recordings of conversations with the defendant(s) made without *(his)(her)(their)* knowledge. These recordings were made with the consent and agreement of *(name)*, one of the other parties to the conversations.

The use of this procedure to gather evidence is lawful and the recordings may be used by either party.

Comment

See Sand et al., supra, 5-10.

This instruction addresses the jurors' possible concern about the legality of recordings offered in evidence. It should not be given routinely, but should be given if there is reason to believe the jury would be concerned and if it is requested by either party.

2.06 Audio/Video Recordings - Non-consensual (Wiretaps)

You are about to hear recordings of conversations with the defendant(s) which were made without the knowledge of the parties to the conversations, but with the consent and authorization of the court. These recordings, sometimes referred to as wiretaps, were lawfully obtained.

The use of this procedure to gather evidence is lawful and the recordings may be used by either party.

Comment

See Sand et al., supra, 5-11.

This instruction addresses the jurors' possible concern about the legality of recordings offered by the government. It should not be given routinely but should be given if there is reason to believe the jury would be concerned and if it is requested by either party.

2.07 Audio/Video Recordings - Transcripts

You are about to hear (audio)(video) recordings that were received in evidence, and you will be given written transcripts of the recordings.

Keep in mind that the transcripts are not evidence. They are being given to you only as a guide to help you follow what was being said. The recordings themselves are the evidence. If you notice any differences between what you hear in the recordings and what you read in the transcripts, you must rely on what you hear, not what you read. And if you cannot hear or understand certain parts of the recordings, you must ignore the transcripts as far as those parts are concerned.

[The transcripts name the speakers. But remember, you must decide who is actually speaking in the recording. The names on the transcript are used simply for your convenience.]

Comment

See Sixth Circuit § 7.17 and Eighth Circuit § 2.06. For variations, see 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 14.09; Sand et al, supra, 5-9; First Circuit § 2.08; Fifth Circuit § 1.42; Seventh Circuit § 3.17; and Ninth Circuit § 2.17.

Audio and video recordings are generally admissible “[u]nless the unintelligible portions of the tapes are so substantial as to render the recordings as a whole untrustworthy.” *United States v. Salvo*, 34 F.3d 1204, 1220 (3d Cir. 1994) (citing *United States v. Arango-Correa*, 851 F.2d 54, 58 (2d Cir. 1988) (quoting *Monroe v. United States*, 234 F.2d 49, 55 (D.C. Cir.), cert. denied, 352 U.S. 873 (1956))). Of course, the court should not admit a recording if the risk of unfair prejudice flowing from the evidence substantially outweighs its probative value in the case. F.R.E. 403; *United States v. Bailey*, 840 F.3d 99 (3d Cir. 2016).

The trial judge has discretion to admit transcripts for use with the recordings. In *United States v. Adams*, 759 F.2d 1099, 1115 (3d Cir.), cert. denied, 474 U.S. 906 (1985),

the court upheld the admission of a tape recording and transcript, noting that “the judge instructed the jury that the tape recording controlled over the transcript in case of error or ambiguity.” *See also Salvo*, 34 F.3d at 1220 (concluding that trial court’s instruction that tape controlled and transcript was not evidence protected against unfairness).

This instruction should be given when the recording is played. Instruction 4.06 (Audio/Video Recordings - Transcripts) should be included in the final charge.

The bracketed paragraph should be included only if there is a dispute about the identity of the speakers in the recording. *Government of the Virgin Islands v. Martinez*, 847 F.2d 125, 128 (3d Cir. 1988). When such a dispute arises, the preferred solution is to use neutral designations, such as “Speaker 1” and “Speaker 2” rather than names. *Id.* at 129.

If defense counsel contests the accuracy of a government transcript, the court should consult with the attorneys to determine how to handle the question of the accuracy of the transcript. In some cases, the defense may prefer to address the question entirely on cross-examination and will not offer a defense transcript. If the defense offers its own transcript, the attorneys may request that the jurors have both the defense transcript and the prosecution transcript as they listen to the recording. Alternatively, the defense may prefer to have the entire recording or portions of the recording replayed for the jury during the defense case. If the court admits two alternative transcripts, the court should give the jury an appropriately adapted version of the following instruction, based on the instruction suggested by Sand in the notes to Instruction 5-9:

You have been handed two separate transcripts. One contains the government's interpretation of what appears on the tape recording; the other contains the defense interpretation. Both of these versions of the transcript have been given to you as a guide to assist you in listening to the tapes. Neither transcript has been received in evidence. Rather, it is the tape recording which is the evidence and the transcripts are only guides. Therefore, you must listen to the tapes themselves very carefully. You alone should make your own interpretation of what appears on the tapes from what you hear. You may use both the government version and the defense version of the transcripts to assist you in this task. If you think you hear something differently than the government or the defense has interpreted on their versions of the transcripts, then you are to follow your own interpretation. You may agree partially with each, and you may accept those portions you agree with and reject those portions you disagree with. You need not select between the two versions, and you may come up with your own findings of what appears on the tapes. You, the jury, are the sole judges of the facts.

(Revised 2017)

2.08 Transcript of Recording in Foreign Language

You are about to listen to (an audio)(a video) recording in (language used). Each of you has been given a transcript of the recording which has been admitted into evidence. The transcript is a translation of the foreign language recording.

Although some of you may know the (language used), it is important that all jurors consider the same evidence. Therefore, you must accept the English translation contained in the transcript and disregard any different meaning.

Comment

This instruction is derived from Ninth Circuit § 2.8.

This instruction should be given when recordings in a foreign language are admitted.

When foreign language recordings are introduced, the court should first encourage the parties to agree on a transcript. *United States v. Zambrana*, 841 F.2d 1320, 1335-36 (7th Cir. 1988). If the parties cannot agree on a transcript, then each party may produce its own version either of the entire transcript or of disputed portions of the transcript and also present evidence to establish the accuracy of its transcript. In addition, each party may introduce evidence to challenge the accuracy of the other party's transcript. *Zambrana*, 841 F.2d at 1336. In the event of a dispute, the court should add the following language to the instruction:

Whether a transcript is an accurate translation, in whole or in part, is for you to decide. In considering whether a transcript is an accurate translation of a conversation, you should consider the testimony presented to you regarding how, and by whom, the transcript was made. You may consider the knowledge, training, and experience of the translator, as well as the nature of the conversation and the reasonableness of the translation in light of all the evidence in the case.

See United States v. Gutierrez, 367 F.3d 733, 736 (8th Cir. 2004); Seventh Circuit § 3.18.

The Committee on Federal Criminal Jury Instructions of the Seventh Circuit also suggests that, if the jury views a visual recording of the conversation, the court should instruct the jury that, “[y]ou may consider the actions of a person, the facial expressions and lip movements that you can observe on videotapes to help you to determine the identity of speakers." *See* Seventh Circuit § 3.18 (comment).

2.09 Opinion Evidence (Expert Witnesses)

The rules of evidence ordinarily do not permit witnesses to state their own opinions about important questions in a trial, but there are exceptions to these rules.

You will hear testimony from *(state the name of the person(s) who will offer an opinion)*. **Because of** *(his)(her)(their)* **knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education in the field of** *(state the witness(es)'s field)*, *(Mr.)(Ms.)(Dr.) (name)* **will be permitted to offer** *(an)* **opinion(s) in that field and the reasons for** *(that)(those)* **opinion(s).**

The opinion(s) *(this)(these)* **witness(es) state(s) should receive whatever weight you think appropriate, given all the other evidence in the case. In weighing this opinion testimony you may consider the witness' qualifications, the reasons for the witness' opinions, and the reliability of the information supporting the witness' opinions, as well as the other factors I will discuss in my final instructions for weighing the testimony of witnesses. You may disregard the opinion(s) entirely if you decide that** *(Mr.)(Ms.)(Dr.) (name)'s* **opinion(s)** *(is)(are)* **not based on sufficient knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education. You may also disregard the opinion(s) if you conclude that the reasons given in support of the opinion(s) are not sound, or if you conclude that the opinion(s)** *(is)(are)* **not supported by the facts shown by the evidence, or if you think that the opinion(s)** *(is)(are)* **outweighed by other evidence.**

Comment

See Fed. R. Evid. 702; 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 14.01. For model or pattern instruction from other Circuits regarding expert or opinion testimony in criminal cases, see First Circuit § 2.06; Fifth Circuit § 1.17; Sixth Circuit § 7.03; Eighth Circuit § 4.10; Ninth Circuit § 4.16; Eleventh Circuit § 7.

This instruction should be given at the time a witness is qualified to give an opinion. For a comparable instruction that should be given in the final instructions to the jury, see Instruction 4.08 (Opinion Evidence (Expert Witnesses)). This instruction should only be used when an “expert” witness is about to offer opinion testimony. When lay witnesses are permitted to offer an opinion, use Instruction 4.09 (Opinion Evidence (Lay Witnesses)). If both expert and lay witnesses are permitted to give opinion testimony, both sets of instructions should be given.

These instructions avoid labeling the witness as an “expert.” If the court refrains from designating the witness as an “expert” this will “ensure[] that trial courts do not inadvertently put their stamp of authority” on a witness’ opinion, and will protect against the jury’s being “overwhelmed by the so-called ‘experts’.” Hon. Charles Richey, *Proposals to Eliminate the Prejudicial Effect of the Use of the Word “Expert” Under the Federal Rules of Evidence in Criminal and Civil Jury Trials*, 154 F.R.D. 537, 559 (1994). See also Fed. R. Evid. 702 advisory committee’s note (2000) (cautioning against instructing the jury that the witness is an “expert”).

Before the beginning of trial, the judge should discuss with counsel that they should also avoid using the word “expert” to refer to the witnesses. However, if counsel refers to witnesses as “experts,” the trial judge should modify the instruction by telling the jury what an “expert” is. Therefore, the court should include, after the first paragraph of the model instruction set forth above, the following additional paragraph:

The defendant’s lawyer/the prosecutor called (*Mr.*) (*Ms.*) (*Dr.*) (*name*) an expert witness. Someone who is called an expert witness is simply a witness who, because of his or her knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education, may have become knowledgeable in some technical, scientific, or specialized field and therefore is permitted to state an opinion about that field. You should not give any greater weight or credit to (*Mr.*) (*Ms.*) (*Dr.*) (*name*)’s testimony merely because he or she was called an expert witness by the lawyers.

See 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 14.01, 248-49.

Fed. R. Evid. 703 provides that facts or data which are the basis for an expert’s opinion but are otherwise inadmissible may nonetheless be disclosed to the jury if the court determines that their probative value in assisting the jury to evaluate the expert’s opinion substantially outweighs their prejudicial effect. In that situation, the comment to the 2000 amendments to the rule states: “If the otherwise inadmissible information is admitted under this balancing test, the trial judge must give a limiting instruction upon request, informing the jury that the underlying information must not be used for

substantive purposes.” See *Pineda v. Ford*, 520 F. 3d 237, 247 n. 14 (3d Cir. 2008) (civil case discussing Rule 703 limiting instruction); *United States v. Gradys*, 357 F. App’x. 481, 482-83 (3d Cir.2009) (non-precedential) (finding that the defendant’s Rule 703 argument was not raised in the trial court and was not plain error).

(Revised 11/2010)

2.10 Opinion Evidence (Lay Witnesses) (F.R.E. 701)

Witnesses are not generally permitted to state their personal opinions about important questions in a trial. However, a witness may be allowed to testify to his or her opinion if it is rationally based on the witness's perception and is helpful to a clear understanding of the witness's testimony or to the determination of a fact in issue.

In this case, I am permitting *(name)* to offer *(his)(her)* opinion based on *(his)(her)* perceptions. The opinion of this witness should receive whatever weight you think appropriate, given all the other evidence in the case and the other factors I will discuss in my final instructions for weighing and considering whether to believe the testimony of witnesses.

Comment

Federal Rule of Evidence 701 provides:

If a witness is not testifying as an expert, testimony in the form of an opinion is limited to one that is:

- (a) rationally based on the witness's perception;
- (b) helpful to clearly understanding the witness's testimony or to determining a fact in issue; and
- (c) not based on scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge within the scope of Rule 702.³

F.R.E. 701. *See generally United States v. Jackson*, 849 F.3d 540 (3d Cir. 2017) (holding trial court committed error by admitting lay opinion); *Hirst v. Inverness Hotel Corp.*, 544 F.3d 221 (3d Cir. 2008) (discussing requirements for admission of lay opinion); *United States v. Hoffecker*, 530 F.3d 137, 170-71 (3d Cir. 2008) (discussing Rule 701).

³ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 701 provided that “if the witness is not testifying as an expert, the witness' testimony in the form of opinions or inferences is limited to those opinions or inferences which are (a) rationally based on the perception of the witness, (b) helpful to a clear understanding of the witness' testimony or the determination of a fact in issue, and (c) not based on scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge within the scope of Rule 702.”

Whether to give this instruction on lay witness opinion testimony is within the trial judge's discretion. Ordinarily, the instruction will not be necessary, but is provided in the event one of the lawyers requests it or the trial judge otherwise considers it necessary in the case on trial. The instruction should not be given routinely for "run of the mill" lay opinion testimony, such as "he looked angry" or "she was driving fast." The instruction should be given when the lay opinion is more like an "expert" opinion or when there is also expert opinion testimony given in the same trial, to avoid the confusion that might result because Instruction 2.09 (Opinion Evidence (Expert Witnesses)) states that opinion testimony is generally not permitted.

If the trial judge decides that an instruction on lay opinion testimony is necessary, the above instruction can be given at the time the witness is giving his or her opinion testimony. For a comparable instruction that should be given in the final instructions to the jury, *see* Instruction 4.09 (Opinion Evidence (Lay Witnesses) (F.R.E. 701)).

(Revised 2017)

2.11 Limited Admissibility: Evidence Admitted for a Limited Purpose

In certain instances, evidence may be admitted only for a particular purpose and not generally for all purposes.

[You heard evidence that (name of declarant) told the Defendant that (name of victim) was looking for her and had a gun. That evidence was admitted only to explain Defendant's state of mind when she later encountered (name of victim), and you may consider that evidence only in determining Defendant's state of mind and the reasonableness of Defendant's actions. You may not, however, use (name of declarant)'s statement as evidence that (name of victim) actually was looking for Defendant or that (name of victim) actually had a gun.]

For the limited purpose for which this evidence has been received you may give it such weight as you feel it deserves. You may not, however, use this evidence for any other purpose not specifically mentioned.

Comment

This instruction is derived from 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 11.09.

If evidence is admitted for a limited purpose and one of the parties requests a limiting instruction, the court should inform the jury of the limited purpose of the evidence at the time it is introduced. This instruction provides a general template that can be adapted to the specific situation; the bracketed language is an example of a description of evidence and its limited role in the case. If the evidence is admitted against only one defendant in a multiple defendant trial, the court should give Instruction 2.12 (Limited Admissibility: Evidence Admitted Against Only One Defendant) instead. In addition, some specific types of evidence are dealt with in specific instructions. *See, e.g.*, Instruction 2.23 (Defendant's Prior Bad Acts or Crimes (F.R.E. 404(b))). *See generally United States v. Butch*, 256 F.3d 171, 176 n.4 (3d Cir. 2001) (citing with approval trial court's instruction, based on 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 11.09, limiting consideration of other act evidence admitted under F.R.E. 404(b) for limited purpose).

In some cases, the court may admit evidence of the defendant's self-expression or artistic expression in social or more traditional media. If the court admits the evidence even though the nature or style of the defendant's expression creates a risk of unfair prejudice, the court may want to instruct the jury on the limited role of the evidence in the case. The following is a general template for such an instruction:

You have heard *(and seen)* [*(expressive evidence)* (*evidence of the Defendant's (artistic expression) (self-expression)*), (*such as music, social media postings, poetry, or other writings*)]. You may not consider the nature or style of this expression or the language (*or images*) used.

Every person has the right to express himself or herself in a manner or style of their own choosing and to use any words or language they choose.

You may, however, consider the content of this evidence if the Government has shown that the words (*or images*) used are probative of the charges in this case.

[One example of the proper use of this evidence would be if you find that the Defendant's words are evidence of the existence or furtherance of the charge of conspiracy. Another example of the proper use of this evidence would be if you find that the words used were evidence that any defendant was involved in the distribution or possession of a controlled substance, such as cocaine or heroin.]

However, you may only consider the actual words (*and images*) used against the Defendant and not the style or expression (*or the type of social media*) (*or music*) that a defendant chose.

(Revised 2/2021)

2.12 Limited Admissibility: Evidence Admitted Against Only One Defendant

You *(are about to hear)(just heard) (describe testimony or exhibit)*. **You can consider** *(this testimony)(this exhibit)* **only in the case against** *(name)*. **You must not consider that evidence in the case against the other defendant(s).** **Each defendant is entitled to have** *(his)(her)* **case decided just on the evidence which applies to** *(him)(her)*.

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit § 2.14.

If requested, this instruction should be given during the trial of multiple defendants to limit the jury's consideration of evidence admitted against only one defendant. *See generally United States v. Butch*, 256 F.3d 171, 176 n.4 (3d Cir. 2001) (citing with approval trial court's instruction, based on 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 11.09, limiting consideration of other act evidence admitted under F.R.E. 404(b) for limited purpose). In *United States v. Savage*, 85 F.4th 102 (3d Cir. 2023), the court stated that it would have been preferable for the trial court to give a limiting instruction at the time evidence was admitted against only one defendant in the joint trial. However, it was not an abuse of discretion to defer the instruction to the end of the trial. *Savage*, 85 F.4th at 122-23.

(Revised 4/2024)

2.13 Prior Conviction of Defendant Charged with Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon (18 U.S.C.A. § 922(g))

You have heard evidence (*through a stipulation*) that the defendant was convicted before this incident in (*name of court; e.g., a court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*) of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year.

This prior conviction has been brought to your attention only because it tends to establish one of the elements of the crime of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon as set forth in the indictment, specifically, that the defendant had a prior felony conviction. You are not to speculate as to the nature of the conviction. You may not consider the prior conviction in deciding whether (*name of defendant*) was in knowing possession of the gun that (*he*)(*she*) is charged in this case with possessing, which is a disputed issue in this case.

The fact that the defendant was found guilty of another crime on another occasion does not mean that (*he*)(*she*) committed this crime on (*date of offense charged in indictment*), and you must not use (*his*)(*her*) guilt of the other crime as proof of the crime charged in this case except for the one element of this crime which I have mentioned. You may find the defendant guilty of this crime only if the government has proved beyond a reasonable doubt all of the elements of this crime and that the defendant committed it.

Comment

This instruction is based on the instruction approved in *United States v. Belk*, 346 F.3d 305, 309 n.4 (2d Cir. 2003).

This instruction should be given when the government introduces evidence that the defendant is a convicted felon as required to prove a violation of 18 U.S.C.A. § 922 (g). Section 922(g) provides:

It shall be unlawful for any person -

(1) who has been convicted in any court of, a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year;

* * * to ship or transport in interstate or foreign commerce, or possess in or affecting commerce, any firearm or ammunition; or to receive any firearm or ammunition which has been shipped or transported in interstate or foreign commerce.

In order to establish the defendant's guilt under this section, the government must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant was convicted of a felony. Evidence of the prior conviction tends to prejudice the defendant, generating a risk that the jury will conclude that the defendant is more likely to have committed the offense(s) for which the defendant is on trial simply because the defendant has previously been convicted. Despite this risk of prejudice, the government must be allowed to prove the felony conviction.

When the defendant is charged only with a violation of §922(g), the court should give this curative instruction when the evidence of the prior conviction is introduced; Instruction 6.18.922G-3 (Evidence of Prior Conviction of Defendant Charged with Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon (18 U.S.C. § 922(g))) should be included in the final charge to the jury. The defendant is not entitled to bifurcation of the issues. *See United States v. Jacobs*, 44 F.3d 1219 (3d Cir. 1995).

If the felon in possession charge under §922(g) is joined with other charges, the court should bifurcate the trial of the 922(g) count. In the bifurcated trial, the jury should first hear evidence and deliberate concerning the other counts of the indictment and make a factual determination of whether the defendant was in knowing possession of the firearm. In the second phase of the trial, the jury hears evidence of the defendant's criminal record and deliberates concerning the count charging a violation of Section 922(g). *See, e.g., United States v. Joshua*, 976 F.2d 844 (3d Cir. 1992).

If the court should decide for some reason not to bifurcate the trial, the Third Circuit has expressed a preference for severance of the felon in possession charge, unless the evidence of the prior conviction would be admissible even if the counts were tried separately. *See United States v. Busic*, 587 F.2d 577, 585 (3d Cir. 1978). The defendant is not entitled to severance if the trial court bifurcates the trial. *See United States v. Joshua*, 976 F.2d 844 (3d Cir. 1992).

There are additional steps that the court should take to reduce the prejudice. In *Old Chief v. United States*, 519 U.S. 172 (1997), the Supreme Court recognized the risk of prejudice and held that, where the defendant offered to stipulate that he was a

convicted felon, it was reversible error to admit evidence of the name and nature of the offense of which the defendant was convicted. In a bifurcated trial, the prior felony conviction should not be a subject of voir dire. However, in a non-bifurcated trial, the court should address the prior conviction in voir dire. In *United States v. Smith*, 104 F. App'x. 266, 275, 2004 WL 1778268 (3d Cir. 2004), a non-precedential decision, the Third Circuit noted that "careful *voir dire* can help insure that jurors who would be influenced by knowledge of the element of a prior felony conviction are not chosen for the jury."

2.14 Stricken Testimony, Disregard

I have ordered (*describe testimony or exhibits*) **stricken from the record. This is not proper evidence in the case. You must disregard it entirely. Do not consider** (*this testimony*)(*this exhibit*) **in reaching your decision.**

Comment

This instruction should be given when testimony or exhibits are stricken from the record after they have been presented to the jury. *See, e.g., United States v. Liburd*, 607 F.3d 339 (3d Cir. 2010) (approving court's curative instruction).

(Revised 11/2010)

2.15 Prior Consistent Statements (F.R.E. 801(d)(1)(B))

You *(just heard)*(*are about to hear*) evidence that, before *(he)*(*she*) testified in this trial, *(name)* made statements that were the same as, or similar to, what *(he)*(*she*) said in the courtroom. You may consider evidence of this statement in determining the facts of this case. In addition, this evidence may help you decide whether you believe *(name)*'s testimony. If *(name)* said essentially the same thing before trial, it may be reason for you to believe *(name)*'s testimony in court.

Comment

This instruction is based on Federal Judicial Center § 34. Rule 801(d)(1)(B) of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides that a prior consistent statement can be offered as substantive evidence if it

(B) is consistent with the declarant's testimony and is offered:

- (i) to rebut an express or implied charge that the declarant recently fabricated it or acted from a recent improper influence or motive in so testifying; or
- (ii) to rehabilitate the declarant's credibility as a witness when attacked on another ground.

This instruction informs the jurors that they may use the prior consistent statement both to decide the case and to bolster the in-court testimony.

Caution: This instruction should not be given routinely. The prior consistent statements are admitted without limitation, so the jury can consider them in any way it deems relevant. The significance of the prior consistent statements should generally be left to argument of counsel. However, this instruction should be included if prior inconsistent statements are admitted solely to impeach in the same trial as the prior consistent statements. This instruction is then necessary to distinguish the unlimited role of prior consistent statements from the limited role of prior inconsistent statements admitted only to impeach. *See* Instruction 2.16 (Impeachment of Witness - Prior Inconsistent Statement for Credibility Only).

2.16 Impeachment of Witness - Prior Inconsistent Statement for Credibility Only

You have heard the testimony of *(name)*. You have also heard that before this trial *(he)(she)* made a statement that may be different from *(his)(her)* testimony in this trial. It is up to you to determine whether this statement was made and whether it was different from *(his)(her)* testimony in this trial. This earlier statement was brought to your attention only to help you decide whether to believe *(his)(her)* testimony here at trial. You cannot use it as proof of the truth of what the witness said in the earlier statement. You can only use it as one way of evaluating *(name)*'s testimony in this trial.

*[You have also heard evidence that *(this witness)(certain witnesses)* made statements before this trial that were *(describe requirement; e.g., made under oath, given before the grand jury)*. When a statement is *(describe condition; made under oath, made before the grand jury)*, you may use it not only to help you decide whether you believe the witness's testimony in this trial but also as evidence of the truth of what the witness said in the earlier statement. But when a statement is *(describe condition; e.g., not made under oath, not given before the grand jury)*, you may use it only to help you decide whether you believe the witness's testimony in this trial and not as proof of the truth of what the witness said in the earlier statement.]*

Comment

This instruction is based on Sixth Circuit § 7.04 and Seventh Circuit § 3.09. For variations, see Sand et al., supra, 7-19; First Circuit § 2.02; Fifth Circuit § 1.10; Eighth Circuit § 3.04; and Eleventh Circuit § 6.1.

Prior inconsistent statements of witnesses may be admitted for two different purposes. First, a witness's statements may be admitted substantively to prove the truth of the matters asserted. Second, a witness's statements may be admitted for the limited purpose of impeaching the witness.

Rule 801(d)(1)(A) of the Federal Rules of Evidence allows a prior inconsistent statement to be used substantively as well as to impeach if it "was given under penalty of perjury at a trial, hearing, or other proceeding or in a deposition."⁴ If the prior statement falls within Rule 801(d)(1)(A), this instruction should not be given. A key characteristic of statements falling within Rule 801(d)(1)(A) is that they were made under oath. However, even a sworn statement does not fall within the rule and may be used only to impeach if it was not given at a proceeding.

Prior inconsistent statements that do not fall within the rule may still be admissible to impeach the witness. Such a statement is not hearsay because it is not admitted for the truth of the matter asserted, but only for the purpose of impeaching the witness. This instruction should be given to inform the jury of this limited purpose. The defendant is entitled to a limiting instruction at the time of the testimony as well as at the conclusion of the trial. *United States v. Palumbo*, 639 F.2d 123, 128 (3d Cir. 1981); Instruction 4.22 (Impeachment of Witness - Prior Inconsistent Statement for Credibility Only). The court should give the instruction if the defendant requests it. Failure to give the instruction is not necessarily plain error. *United States v. Corson*, 389 F.2d 563 (3d Cir. 1968). To minimize uncertainty concerning the role of inconsistent statements and the need for an instruction, the court may want to advise counsel at the beginning of the trial that they must request a limiting instruction at the time a statement is admitted if they want the jury informed of the limited purpose of the statement.

The bracketed language should be used if both types of prior inconsistent statements have been admitted in the trial, some only to impeach and others for substantive use as well. The court may want to include the bracketed language to emphasize the distinction for the jury.

Some judges may prefer the following variation, based on 1A O'Malley et al., *supra*, § 15.06:

The testimony of a witness may be attacked by showing that the witness previously made statements which are different than the witness' testimony here in court. The earlier statements are admissible only to discredit or impeach the credibility of the witness and not to establish the truth of these earlier statements made somewhere other than here during this trial. You must determine whether to believe a witness who has made prior inconsistent statements.

[If a witness is shown to have knowingly testified falsely concerning any important or material matter, you obviously have a right to distrust the testimony

⁴ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, the Rule applied to statements "given under oath subject to the penalty of perjury at a trial, hearing, or other proceeding, or in a deposition."

of the witness concerning other matters. You may reject all of the testimony of that witness or give it such weight as you determine it deserves].

2.17 Impeachment of Defendant's Character Witness (F.R.E. 404, 405)

If character witness testified to reputation: You heard *(name of witness)* testify about the defendant's reputation for *(insert character trait covered by testimony)*. On cross-examination of *(name of witness)*, the prosecutor asked *(him)(her)* some questions about whether *(he)(she)* had heard that *(briefly describe the subject of the cross-examination on the character trait, e.g., defendant was convicted of fraud on an earlier occasion)*. The prosecutor was allowed to ask these questions only to test whether *(name of witness)* was familiar with the reputation of the defendant in the community. This is not evidence that the acts described in these questions actually occurred.

You may not use the information developed by the prosecutor on this subject for any other purpose. Specifically, you may not use this information to conclude that the defendant committed the act(s) charged in the indictment or as proof that the defendant has a bad character or any propensity to commit crimes.

If character witness testified to opinion: You heard *(name of witness)* testify about the defendant's character for *(insert character trait covered by testimony)*. On cross-examination of *(name of witness)*, the prosecutor asked *(him)(her)* some questions about whether *(he)(she)* knew that *(briefly describe the subject of the cross-examination on the character trait, e.g., defendant was convicted of fraud on an earlier occasion)*. The prosecutor was allowed to ask these questions only to test whether *(name of witness)* had a good basis for

(his)(her) opinion of the defendant’s character. This is not evidence that the acts described in these questions actually occurred.

You may not use the information developed by the prosecutor on this subject for any other purpose. Specifically, you may not use this information to conclude that the defendant committed the act(s) charged in the indictment or as proof that the defendant has a bad character or any propensity to commit crimes.

Comment

This instruction is derived from 1A O’Malley et al., supra, § 11.15, Sand et al., supra, 5-16, and Eighth Circuit § 2.10.

This instruction should be given to the jury at the time of the cross-examination when the prosecutor is permitted to cross-examine the defendant’s character witness concerning prior instances of the defendant’s conduct; Instruction 4.39 (Defendant’s Character Evidence) should be included in the final charge to the jury.

Under Rule 404(a) of the Federal Rules of Evidence, a defendant is permitted to introduce evidence of good character to support the inference that the defendant did not commit the offense charged. Instruction 2.15 (Prior Consistent Statements (F.R.E. 801(d)(1)(B))) describes the role of that evidence. Rule 405(a) permits the prosecutor to cross-examine the defendant’s character witness concerning specific instances of the defendant’s conduct relating to the character trait at issue. The rules thus continue the common law practice discussed in *Michelson v. United States*, 335 U.S. 469 (1948), but with one difference: opinion evidence, which was prohibited at common law, is allowed under the rules. Under the Federal Rules of Evidence, the character witness may testify to either reputation or opinion.

A reputation witness testifies to the defendant’s reputation for a specific trait in a specific community, based on conversations with others concerning the defendant. *See Michelson v. United States*, 335 U.S. 469 (1948). Cross-examination of a reputation witness should focus on what the witness has heard and may inquire “about conduct, and even about charges, which may have come to the attention of the relevant community.” *See United States v. Curtis*, 644 F.2d 263, 268 (3d Cir. 1981). Guilt-assuming hypothetical questions are not proper during cross-examination of a reputation witness. *See United States v. Kellogg*, 510 F.3d 188, 195-96 (3d Cir. 2007).

An opinion witness testifies to the witness’s own opinion of the defendant’s character for a specific trait based on that witness’s experience with the defendant. Cross-

examination of an opinion witness should focus on what the witness knows and will test the accuracy of and basis for the favorable opinion. In *United States v. Curtis*, 644 F.2d 263, 268 (3d Cir. 1981), the Third Circuit noted that, when the character witness testifies to an opinion, “relevant cross examination is only that which bears on the fact or factual basis for formation of the opinion.” See also *Kellogg*, 510 F.3d at 198 (“Generally speaking, a person testifying regarding a present opinion should be open to cross-examination on how additional facts would affect that opinion.”).

The cross-examination permitted by Rule 405(a) often focuses on prior bad conduct by the defendant and therefore injects a risk of unfair prejudice. The Supreme Court noted in *Michelson*:

The price a defendant must pay for attempting to prove his good name is to throw open the entire subject which the law has kept closed for his benefit and to make himself vulnerable where the law otherwise shields him.

335 U.S. at 479. The trial court has broad discretion concerning the cross-examination of character witnesses. *United States v. Boone*, 279 F.3d 163, 175 (3d Cir. 2002); *Kellogg*, 510 F.3d at 192. Correspondingly, the trial judge plays an important role in assuring the fairness of the cross-examination. In *Michelson*, the Court remarked that the discretion to allow relevant cross-examination "is accompanied by heavy responsibility on trial courts to protect the practice from any misuse." 335 U.S. at 480. The Court outlined the safeguards to be taken by the trial court. 335 U.S. at 480-81. The trial court must ensure that the question is fair, that it rests on a factual foundation, and that it is relevant to the character trait addressed by the defendant’s witness. 335 U.S. at 480-82. Of course, no evidence may be admitted for the jury establishing that the act occurred.

The Court in *Michelson* also emphasized the importance of limiting instructions directing the jury to consider any prior acts brought out in cross-examination only for purposes of assessing the witness's opinion of the defendant’s character trait. *Id.* at 472 n.3. In *Government of Virgin Islands v. Roldan*, 612 F.2d 775, 781 (3d Cir. 1979), the Third Circuit stated, “the defendant is entitled to a limiting instruction to the effect that the prior bad act testimony does not bear on the defendant’s propensity to commit such crimes again.” See also *United States v. Apfelbaum*, 621 F.2d 62, 64 (3d Cir. 1980) (emphasizing importance of limiting instructions); *Kellogg*, 510 F.3d at 192-93 (setting out trial court’s limiting instruction). In *Government of Virgin Islands v. Roldan*, however, the defendant had not requested a limiting instruction, and the Third Circuit held that the trial court did not commit plain error by failing to give an instruction.

(Revised 12/2009)

2.18 Impeachment of Witness - Prior Bad Acts (F.R.E. 608(b))

Alternative 1 (to be given if the witness admits the bad act): You have heard evidence that *(name)*, a witness, committed *(describe bad act inquired about during cross-examination)*. You may consider this evidence, along with other pertinent evidence, only in deciding whether to believe *(name)* and how much weight to give *(his)(her)* testimony.

Alternative 2 (to be given if the witness denies the bad act): You heard *(name of lawyer)* ask *(name of witness)* whether *(he)(she)* committed *(describe bad act inquired about during cross-examination)*, and *(he)(she)* denied it. I remind you that questions by the lawyers are not evidence. It is the answer of the witness that provides evidence. There is therefore no evidence that *(name of witness)* committed *(describe act)*.

Comment

This instruction is derived from Ninth Circuit § 4.8.

Rule 608(b) of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides:

Except for a criminal conviction under Rule 609, extrinsic evidence is not admissible to prove specific instances of a witness's conduct in order to attack or support the witness's character for truthfulness. But the court may, on cross-examination, allow them to be inquired into if they are probative of the character for truthfulness or untruthfulness of:

- (1) the witness; or
- (2) another witness whose character the witness being cross-examined has testified about.

By testifying on another matter, a witness does not waive any privilege against self-incrimination for testimony that relates only to the witness's character for truthfulness.⁵

⁵ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 608(b) provided:

Specific instances of the conduct of a witness, for the purpose of attacking or supporting the witness' character for truthfulness, other than conviction of crime as provided in rule 609, may not be proved by extrinsic evidence. They may, however, in the discretion of

Rule 608(b) governs only when the conduct that is the subject of the cross-examination or extrinsic evidence is relevant only to establish the witness's untruthful character. If the evidence is offered to establish something else, such as bias, incompetency, or compromised ability to perceive or recall the events, Rule 608 does not govern. Instead, the court should evaluate the propriety of questions and the admissibility of extrinsic evidence under Rules 402 and 403. *United States v. Abel*, 469 U.S. 45 (1984).

If the court permits cross-examination concerning prior conduct that suggests untruthful character under Rule 608(b), the court should instruct the jury concerning the cross-examination. The appropriate instruction depends on whether the witness admits or denies the prior conduct in response to the questions asked on cross-examination. Alternative 1 should be given if the witness admits the conduct. This instruction merely directs the jury to consider the prior acts in assessing the witness's credibility. However, if the witness denies the conduct, the court should give Alternative 2, directing the jury to draw no inference from the asking of the question. Rule 608(b) precludes the introduction of extrinsic evidence to establish the prior act, so the witness's denial concludes the inquiry. *See United States v. McNeill*, 887 F.2d 448, 453 (3d Cir. 1989); *United States v. Anderson*, 859 F.3d.1171, 1178 (3d Cir. 1988).

Rule 608(b) permits inquiry only concerning prior acts that are probative of untruthful conduct. To fall within the rule, the acts "will normally involve dishonesty or false statement as employed in Rule 609(a)(2)." Graham § 608.4 at 146-47. The Third Circuit has held that Rule 609(a)(2) applies only to crimes that "bear on the witness's propensity to testify truthfully." *See United States v. Johnson*, 388 F.3d 96 (3d Cir. 2004). In *United States v. Irizarry*, 341 F.3d 273 (3d Cir. 2003), the court noted that the trial court properly allowed the prosecutor to cross-examine the defendant about his possession of identification in someone else's name and about his possession of blank Social Security cards. 341 F.3d at 312. The Third Circuit stated that the evidence tended to show deceit and therefore fell within Rule 608(b).

The Third Circuit has also held that the decision whether to allow cross-examination under Rule 608(b) falls within the trial court's discretion. *See United States v. McNeill*, 887 F.2d 448, 453 (3d Cir. 1989). In *Johnson v. Elk Lake School District*, 283 F.3d 138 (3d Cir. 2002), the court held that the trial court acted within its discretion when it precluded plaintiff's counsel from cross-examining a key witness concerning a lie on his resume. *Id.* at 145 n.2. The court noted that the trial court's ruling was reviewed under an abuse of discretion standard with "substantial deference" to the trial court. The court stated that "the trial court was within its discretion to conclude that Stevens' lying on his resume, although duplicitous and wrong, was not so indicative of moral turpitude as to be

the court, if probative of truthfulness or untruthfulness, be inquired into on cross-examination of the witness

- (1) concerning the witness' character for truthfulness or untruthfulness, or
- (2) concerning the character for truthfulness or untruthfulness of another witness as to which character the witness being cross-examined has testified.

The giving of testimony, whether by an accused or by any other witness, does not operate as a waiver of the accused's or the witness' privilege against self-incrimination when examined with respect to matters that relate only to character for truthfulness.

particularly probative of his character for untruthfulness.” *Id.* This result is criticized in Graham who states that “the exercise of discretion should very rarely if ever be exercised to exclude an undisputed act of ‘lying’” such as that in *Johnson*. Graham § 608.4 n.5.

The inquiry under Rule 608(b) should focus on the actual acts that suggested untruthfulness and not any third-party action, such as suspension from a job, that resulted from those acts. *See United States v. Davis*, 183 F.3d 231, 257 n.12 (3d Cir. 1999). The court may preclude inquiry concerning prior acts if they are remote in time. *See Johnson v. Elk Lake School District*, 283 F.3d 138, 145 n.2 (3d Cir. 2002).

In addition, cross-examination under Rule 608(b) may be limited by the Fifth Amendment. Rule 608(b) provides that no witness, including the accused, waives the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination when examined with respect to matters that relate only to character for truthfulness. The Third Circuit appears not to have addressed this aspect of the rule.

2.19 Impeachment of Witness - Prior Conviction (F.R.E. 609)

You are about to hear evidence that *(name)* has previously been convicted of a crime *(punishable by more than one year in jail)(involving dishonesty or false statement)*. You may consider this evidence, along with other pertinent evidence, in deciding whether or not to believe *(name)* and how much weight to give to *(name)*'s testimony.

Comment

This instruction is derived from Ninth Circuit § 4.8 and First Circuit § 2.03. For variations, *see* 1A O'Malley et al., *supra*, § 15.07; Sand et al., *supra*, 7-12; Fifth Circuit § 1.12; Sixth Circuit § 7.05B; Seventh Circuit § 3.11; Eighth Circuit § 2.18; and Federal Judicial Center § 30.

This instruction should be given when a witness is to be impeached under Rule 609 of the Federal Rules of Evidence with evidence of a prior conviction. This instruction merely directs the jurors to consider the prior conviction in assessing credibility.

Rule 609(a), which governs the admissibility of prior convictions to impeach, provides:

The following rules apply to attacking a witness's character for truthfulness by evidence of a criminal conviction:

- (1) for a crime that, in the convicting jurisdiction, was punishable by death or by imprisonment for more than one year, the evidence:
 - (A) must be admitted, subject to Rule 403, in a civil case or in a criminal case in which the witness is not a defendant; and
 - (B) must be admitted in a criminal case in which the witness is a defendant, if the probative value of the evidence outweighs its prejudicial effect to that defendant; and
- (2) for any crime regardless of the punishment, the evidence must be admitted if the court can readily determine that establishing the elements of the crime required proving--or the witness's admitting--a dishonest act or false statement.⁶

⁶ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 609(a) provided:

For the purpose of attacking the character for truthfulness of a witness,

- (1) evidence that a witness other than an accused has been convicted of a crime shall be admitted, subject to Rule 403, if the crime was punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of one year under the law under which the witness was convicted, and evidence that an accused has been convicted of such a crime shall be admitted if the court determines that the probative value of admitting this evidence outweighs its prejudicial effect to the accused; and
- (2) evidence that any witness has been convicted of a crime shall be admitted regardless

of the punishment, if it readily can be determined that establishing the elements of the crime required proof or admission of an act of dishonesty or false statement by the witness.

Rule 609 governs the admissibility of prior convictions to impeach. Rule 609(a)(1) permits impeachment of witnesses other than the accused by convictions of crimes punishable by death or imprisonment greater than one year subject only to balancing under Rule 403. Rule 609(a)(2) permits impeachment by conviction of crimes involving false statement or dishonesty; if the crime falls within 609(a)(2), the trial court must admit the prior conviction. *See United States v. Wong*, 703 F.2d 65, 68 (3d Cir.), *cert. denied*, 464 U.S. 842 (1983). Rule 609(a)(2) is interpreted narrowly and does not include crimes such as theft that do not “bear on the witness’ propensity to testify truthfully.” *See United States v. Johnson*, 388 F.3d 96 (3d Cir. 2004) (quoting from the Conference Committee notes). As amended, the rule precludes inquiry into the manner in which a crime was committed to establish that it was a crime of dishonesty or false statement. Instead, the nature of the crime must be readily determined.

If more than ten years has passed since the date of conviction or release, the prior conviction is not admissible unless the proponent gives written notice and “its probative value, supported by specific facts and circumstances, substantially outweighs its prejudicial effect.”⁷ F.R.E. 609(b).

There is no clear authority requiring this instruction. However, the court should give the instruction if requested. It is not clear whether failure to give the instruction will be plain error if the defendant does not request it. *Graham, Handbook of Federal Evidence* § 609.6 at 227-28 (5th ed. 2001).

⁷ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 609(b) provided that convictions over ten years old could be admitted if the party provided notice and “the court determines, in the interests of justice, that the probative value of the conviction . . . substantially outweighs its prejudicial effect.”

2.20 Impeachment of Witness - Violation of Sequestration Order

At the beginning of trial, I ordered that no witness (*other than (names of witnesses permitted in courtroom during testimony)*) may (*hear*)(*discuss*)(*review*) the testimony of another witness before (*he*)(*she*) testifies (*himself*)(*herself*). The purpose of this order was to prevent the testimony of one witness from influencing the testimony of another witness. (*Name of witness*) violated this order. In evaluating (*name of witness*)’s testimony, you may consider the fact that (*name of witness*) (*describe violation, e.g., remained in the courtroom during the testimony of (name of other witness)*).

Comment

This instruction may be given if a witness has violated the court’s sequestration order. Rule 615 of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides:

At a party's request, the court must order witnesses excluded so that they cannot hear other witnesses' testimony. Or the court may do so on its own.

But this rule does not authorize excluding:

- (a) a party who is a natural person;
- (b) an officer or employee of a party that is not a natural person, after being designated as the party's representative by its attorney;
- (c) a person whose presence a party shows to be essential to presenting the party's claim or defense; or
- (d) a person authorized by statute to be present.⁸

Rules permitting sequestration of witnesses are intended to prevent witnesses from coordinating their testimony and to allow the parties to detect falsehood by “exposing inconsistencies in testimony.” *Government of the Virgin Islands v. Edinborough*, 625 F.2d 472, 473 (3d Cir. 1980).

⁸ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 615 provided:

At the request of a party the court shall order witnesses excluded so that they cannot hear the testimony of other witnesses, and it may make the order of its own motion. This rule does not authorize exclusion of (1) a party who is a natural person, or (2) an officer or employee of a party which is not a natural person designated as its representative by its attorney, or (3) a person whose presence is shown by a party to be essential to the presentation of the party's cause, or (4) a person authorized by statute to be present.

As the Third Circuit pointed out in *Pickel v. United States*, 746 F.2d 176, 182 (3d Cir. 1984), the rule “does not explicitly address the question of sanctions for non-compliance.” The court went on to note that “case law . . . suggests three appropriate forms of sanctions: (1) holding the witness in contempt, (2) comment by the court on the violation and its effect on weight or credibility of the witness’ testimony, and (3) barring or striking the witness’ testimony.” 746 F.2d at 182 (citations omitted). The court also noted that dismissal might be appropriate, but only in rare cases and only after consideration of lesser sanctions. 746 F.2d at 182. Determination of the appropriate sanction lies in the court’s discretion. *Wright & Miller, Federal Practice and Procedure* § 6246. In *Pickel*, however, the Third Circuit concluded that the trial court abused its discretion when it quashed the offending party’s summons. 746 F.2d at 182-83.

The Third Circuit has not approved an instruction commenting on a violation of a sequestration order. In *United States v. Ramos-Lopez*, 1988 U.S. App. LEXIS 7378 (3d Cir. 1988), a non-precedential decision, Judge Becker, dissenting from the holding that defendant’s counsel’s handling of a sequestration violation was not ineffective, commented “I would have expected competent counsel to have sought comment by the court to the jury in the charge, explaining that the jury, in assessing the agent’s credibility, could consider the fact that the agent remained in the room during (and probably heard) defendant’s testimony.” *Id.* at *11. In *United States v. Jimenez*, 780 F.2d 975, 981 (11th Cir. 1986), the Eleventh Circuit commented, “The district court adequately responded to the possibility of prejudice [from the violation of the sequestration order] by specifically instructing the jury that a violation of the rule should be considered in evaluating Agent Robertson’s credibility as a witness.” *See also Hill v. Porter Memorial Hospital*, 90 F.3d 220, 224 (7th Cir. 1996).

2.21 Fifth Amendment Privilege of Witness Other Than the Defendant

No instruction recommended.

Comment

Witnesses other than the defendant sometimes claim Fifth Amendment protection from compelled self-incrimination and decline to answer questions posed to them in the course of a trial. Generally, an attorney or the witness raises the issue, but in some instances the court may identify the problem and raise it sua sponte. When such an issue arises, the court should take protective steps. First, the court should determine whether the Fifth Amendment claim is valid. Second, the court should insulate the jury from the witness's assertion of the Fifth Amendment privilege by having the witness assert the privilege outside the presence of the jury. Third, if the witness exercises the privilege in the jury's presence, the court should give the jury a cautionary instruction.

First, the court should evaluate the validity of the witness's claim. Section 5.03 of the Benchbook for U.S. District Court Judges (March 2000 rev.) suggests the proper procedure. The Benchbook suggests that the judge should excuse the jury and then engage in a colloquy with the witness. The court must determine whether "the witness has reasonable cause to believe that answering the particular question might tend to incriminate him or her." Benchbook, §5.03. *See also United States v. Hubbell*, 530 U.S. 27 (2000); *Hoffman v. United States*, 341 U.S. 479 (1951).

The Benchbook does not detail a suggested colloquy but cautions the court "not to interrogate the witness about the claim in such a way as to force the witness to surrender the privilege in order to claim it." Benchbook, §5.03 at 147. In addition, the court should not unduly pressure the witness; a colloquy that exerts undue pressure on a defense witness and persuades the witness not to testify violates the defendant's right to due process. *See Webb v. Texas*, 409 U.S. 95 (1972).

In *United States v. Serrano*, 406 F.3d 1208, 1213-14 (10th Cir. 2005), the court approved the following colloquy, which followed the prosecutor's suggestion that the defendant's witness should be advised of his Fifth Amendment privilege against compelled self-incrimination:

THE COURT: All right. You may be asked a number of questions here by one of the attorneys that may require you to give testimony about things that you know concerning the shotgun. The government has indicated to me that you have given a statement concerning the sawed-off shotgun. You may be asked questions about matters concerning yourself and that shotgun. And before I permit any questioning about the shotgun and any involvement you may have had with that weapon, if any--I don't know, I don't know what the statements are at this point because the questions have not yet been asked--I need to ask you if you have talked to a lawyer

about any of your constitutional rights, specifically the right against self-incrimination?

THE WITNESS: No, ma'am.

THE COURT: All right. I must advise you that a person such as yourself who is now a witness having been sworn to give testimony in this case, you as a witness ha[ve] the privilege under the 5th Amendment to the United States Constitution to decline to respond to a question if that answer would tend to incriminate you. That is, if that answer would tend to indicate that you were guilty of a crime or would furnish a link in the chain of evidence that would be needed to prosecute you for a crime.

I don't know specifically what information you have and what answers you would give or statements that you would make in response to questions that may be asked of you during the course of your testimony here. However, based upon the representations made by the lawyer for the government here, there may be matters that you would be questioned about that would invoke consideration of the 5th Amendment right. And so when I say that, I ask again whether you have talked to a lawyer about any of these matters?

THE WITNESS: No, ma'am.

THE COURT: Okay. Do you wish to confer with a lawyer about this before you give any further testimony?

THE WITNESS: No, ma'am.

THE COURT: Can you explain to me why? Without going into details about the statement or anything about the gun, just tell me why you feel it is not necessary to talk to a lawyer.

THE WITNESS: Because I'm just telling the truth about everything.

THE COURT: I understand that. Has anyone advised you or talked to you about the consequences, the legal consequences that could occur if you give or make certain statements about the gun, the shotgun, and about your involvement with the shotgun?

THE WITNESS: No, ma'am.

THE COURT: All right. I'm going to--I'm not in a position to determine at this moment that this witness understands the nature of the 5th Amendment privilege. I think he needs counsel, and I'm not going to permit any further questioning until he has had an opportunity to confer with counsel....

The court then appointed an attorney to confer with the witness and recessed. The witness exercised his Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination after he conferred with his attorney. In *Serrano*, the Tenth Circuit held that this procedure did not violate the defendant's right to present a defense. 406 F.3d at 1214.

Second, if the witness intends to assert the Fifth Amendment privilege and decline to answer specific questions, the court should have the witness invoke the privilege outside the jury's presence. Jurors may not understand the invocation of the privilege and therefore may draw improper inferences from that invocation, possibly prejudicing the parties. See *Douglas v. Alabama*, 380 U.S. 415, 420 (1965); *Nezowy v. United States*, 723 F.2d 1120, 1124 (3d Cir. 1983); *Williams v. Government of the Virgin Islands*, 271 F.Supp.2d 696, 710-11(D.V.I. 2003).

Third, if the witness invokes the privilege in the jury's presence, the court may want to give the following cautionary instruction:

You heard (*witness' name*)(*describe manner in which witness invoked Fifth Amendment privilege; e.g., decline to answer a question on the ground that the answer might tend to incriminate her*). That was (*his*)(*her*) right under the Constitution, and you are not to draw any inference from that choice. A witness may make that choice for a number of reasons, and it would be improper for you to make any assumption or to try to guess why (*witness' name*) did so. You may not consider or discuss (*witness' name*)'s choice not to answer the question in deciding this case. It is not evidence.

In *Lionti v. Lloyd's Insurance Co.*, 709 F.2d 237, 243 (3d Cir. 1983), a witness asserted his Fifth Amendment privilege in the jury's presence. In discussing other evidentiary issues on appeal, the Third Circuit noted that the district court had reduced the impact of the exercise of the privilege by charging as follows:

There is one more thing you should bear in mind with regard to this particular witness Brice McLane. He exercised his privilege against self-incrimination. That was his right and you are not to infer anything adverse to either the plaintiffs or anything adverse to the defendants by reason of what Brice McLane did. There may very well be a myriad of reasons why he would choose to exercise his privilege against self-incrimination, and it would be improper for you to make any assumption or to try to guess or to surmise or puzzle out why he chose to exercise that privilege. Accordingly, you are directed that Brice McLane's exercise of his constitutional privilege is to have no evidentiary value at all.

709 F.2d at 243. The Third Circuit has not addressed the question of whether such an instruction is required to be given either *sua sponte* or if requested. In *United States v. Castillo*, 615 F.2d 878 (9th Cir. 1980), the Ninth Circuit held that the trial court's failure to give a cautionary instruction concerning invocation of Fifth Amendment privilege *sua sponte* was harmless error.

2.22 Witness Who Has Pleaded Guilty to the Same or Related Charges

You have heard evidence that *(name of witness)* pleaded guilty to charges arising from the events that are the subject of this trial. You must not consider *(name of witness)*'s guilty plea as any evidence of *(name of defendant)*'s guilt. *(Name of witness)*'s decision to plead guilty was a personal decision about *(his)(her)* own guilt. You should disregard *(name of witness)*'s guilty plea completely when considering *(name of defendant)*'s guilt or innocence.

Instead, you may consider *(name of witness)*'s guilty plea only for the purpose of *(select appropriate purpose)*:

**determining how much, if at all, to rely upon *(his)(her)* testimony; or
foreclosing the suggestion that the party producing the witness was
concealing evidence; or**

**rebutting the inference that the witness was not prosecuted and that
(name of defendant) was singled out for prosecution; or**

explaining the witness's firsthand knowledge of the events; or

**rebutting the assertion that *(name of witness)* was acting as a
government agent while engaged in the activities that formed the basis of the
guilty plea.**

**You should give *(name of witness)*'s testimony the weight you believe it
deserves, keeping in mind that it must be considered with caution and great
care.**

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit § 4.04 and Ninth Circuit § 4.9.

In some cases, the jury may learn that an accomplice has pleaded guilty. The instruction suggests some of the possible reasons the witness's plea may be relevant. The list is not exhaustive, and the court must determine on a case by case basis whether any of the reasons apply. In some cases, the court will not be able to determine the relevance of the witness's plea when it is offered mid-trial and should therefore give only the first paragraph of the instruction.

The government may be permitted to prove the guilty plea to help the jury evaluate the witness' credibility, to show that the defendant was not singled out for prosecution, or to explain how the witness has knowledge of the events. *See United States v. Jackson*, 849 F.3d 540 (3d Cir. 2017); *United States v. Universal Rehabilitation Services, Inc.*, 205 F.3d 657, 667 (3d Cir. 2000) (en banc). An accomplice's guilty plea may also serve to rebut the assertion that the accomplice was acting as a government agent while participating in the criminal conduct. *See United States v. Werme*, 939 F.2d 108, 113-14 (3d Cir. 1991). However, neither the witness's guilty plea nor the plea agreement may be considered as evidence of the defendant's guilt. *See Jackson*, 849 F.3d at 555-56; *Universal Rehabilitation Services*, 205 F.3d at 668; *United States v. Gaev*, 24 F.3d 473, 476 (3d Cir. 1994); *United States v. Gambino*, 926 F.2d 1355, 1363 (3d Cir. 1991).

The Third Circuit has emphasized the role of limiting instructions in controlling the prejudicial effect of the witness's guilty plea. *See Universal Rehabilitation Services.*, 205 F.3d at 668; *Gaev*, 24 F.3d at 478; *Werme*, 939 F.2d at 113-14 (holding failure to give limiting instruction was error, but concluding it was harmless). In *Gaev*, the Third Circuit approved the court's instructions. 24 F.3d at 475-76. At the time the witness testified, the trial court gave the following instruction:

[Y]ou have just heard evidence that this witness has pled guilty to a charge of conspiring to fix prices with the defendant now on trial in this case.

I caution you that although you may consider this evidence in assessing the credibility and testimony of this witness, giving it such weight as you feel it deserves, you may not consider this evidence against the defendant on trial, nor may any inference be drawn against him by reason of this witness' plea.

See also United States v. Chaffo, 452 F. App'x 154 (3d Cir. 2012) (non-precedential) (discussing admissibility of codefendant's guilty plea and cautionary instruction). In its final charge, the trial court reiterated this caution and also instructed the jury concerning the testimony of accomplices and admitted felons who had entered into plea agreements with the government. *See* Instruction 4.19 (Credibility of Witnesses - Witness Who Has Pleaded Guilty to Same or Related Offense, Accomplices, Immunized Witnesses, Cooperating Witnesses).

In addition, if a witness testifies who is cooperating with the government, has entered a plea agreement with the government, or has received immunity, a promise of non-prosecution or some other benefit from the government, the trial court may want to caution the jury. The credibility issues raised by the testimony of such witnesses are addressed in Instructions 4.19 (Credibility of Witnesses - Witness Who Has Pleaded Guilty to Same or Related Offense, Accomplices, Immunized Witnesses, Cooperating Witnesses) and 4.20 (Credibility of Witnesses - Testimony of Informer), to be given in the final charge to the jury.

(Revised 2017)

2.23 Defendant's Prior Bad Acts or Crimes (F.R.E. 404(b))

You have heard testimony that the defendant (*summarize the other act evidence*).

This evidence of other act(s) was admitted only for (a) limited purpose(s).

You may only consider this evidence for the purpose of deciding whether the defendant (*describe the precise purpose for which the other act evidence was admitted: for example [Pick only those of the following, or other reasons, that apply]*),

had the state of mind, knowledge, or intent necessary to commit the crime charged in the indictment; or

had a motive or the opportunity to commit the acts charged in the indictment; or

was preparing or planning to commit the acts charged in the indictment; or

acted with a method of operation as evidenced by a unique pattern (*describe*);
or

did not commit the acts for which the defendant is on trial by accident or mistake; or

is the person who committed the crime charged in the indictment.

You may consider this evidence to help you decide (*describe how the evidence will be used to prove identity--e.g., whether the evidence that the defendant committed the burglary in which the gun that is the subject of this trial was stolen makes it more likely that the defendant was the person who placed the gun in the*

trunk of the car).

Do not consider this evidence for any other purpose.

Of course, it is for you to determine whether you believe this evidence and, if you do believe it, whether you accept it for the purpose offered. You may give it such weight as you feel it deserves, but only for the limited purpose that I described to you.

The defendant is not on trial for committing these other acts. You may not consider the evidence of these other acts as a substitute for proof that the defendant committed the crime(s) charged. You may not consider this evidence as proof that the defendant has a bad character or any propensity to commit crimes. Specifically, you may not use this evidence to conclude that because the defendant may have committed the other act, *(he)(she)* must also have committed the act(s) charged in the indictment.

Remember that the defendant is on trial here only for *(state the charges briefly)*, not for these other acts. Do not return a guilty verdict unless the government proves the crime(s) charged in the indictment beyond a reasonable doubt.

Comment

See Sixth Circuit § 7.13. See United States v. Lee, 612 F.3d 170 (3d Cir. 2010) (commenting that trial court's instruction based on Model Instruction 4.29 was not error).

This instruction should be given if evidence of defendant's other crimes or acts is about to be or has been admitted under Federal Rules of Evidence Rule 404(b). Rule 404(b) provides:

(1) Prohibited Uses. Evidence of a crime, wrong, or other act is not admissible to prove a person's character in order to show that on a particular occasion the person acted in accordance with the character.

(2) Permitted Uses. Notice in a Criminal Case. This evidence may be admissible for another purpose, such as proving motive, opportunity, intent, preparation, plan, knowledge, identity, absence of mistake, or lack of accident. On request by a defendant in a criminal case, the prosecutor must:

(A) provide reasonable notice of the general nature of any such evidence that the prosecutor intends to offer at trial; and

(B) do so before trial--or during trial if the court, for good cause, excuses lack of pretrial notice.⁹

Evidence admitted under Rule 404(b) is allowed for a limited purpose, and the court should instruct the jury accordingly. *See United States v. Caldwell*, 760 F.3d 267 (3d Cir. 2014); *United States v. Givan*, 320 F.3d 452, 460-61 (3d Cir. 2003); *United States v. Scarfo*, 850 F.2d 1015 (3d Cir. 1988); *United States v. Morena*, 547 F.3d 191 (3d Cir. 2008) (reversing conviction where government exceeded limited purpose for which other act evidence was admissible by repeatedly injecting prejudicial references to defendant's drug use and collateral drug transactions in firearms case). *See also Graham, Handbook of Federal Evidence*, § 404.5 at 364 (5th ed. 2001).

Admissibility of other act evidence. In *United States v. Caldwell*, 760 F.3d 267, 277-78 (3d Cir. 2014), the court emphasized that the trial court must analyze the admissibility of other act evidence carefully and summarized the steps necessary to admit evidence under Rule 404(b). When other act evidence is offered, the court must determine that the other act evidence is:

(1) offered for a proper non-propensity purpose that is at issue in the case; (2) relevant to that identified purpose; (3) sufficiently probative under Rule 403 such that its probative value is not outweighed by any inherent danger unfair prejudice; and (4) accompanied by a limiting instruction, if requested.

Caldwell, 760 F.3d 267, 277-78. *See also United States v. Scarfo*, 241 F.4th 136 (3d Cir. 2022); *United States v. Repak*, 852 F.3d 230 (3d Cir. 2017) (outlining steps for assessing admission of other act evidence); *United States v. Scarfo*, 850 F.2d 1015 (3d Cir. 1988); *United States v. Johnson*, 2021 WL 5412591 (3d Cir. 2021) (non-precedential).

The Third Circuit has said that the law “favor[s] the admission of such evidence, ‘if relevant for any other purpose than to show a mere propensity or disposition on the part of the defendant to commit the crime.’” *United States v. Long*, 574 F.2d 761, 766 (3d

⁹ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 404(b) provided:

Evidence of other crimes, wrongs, or acts is not admissible to prove the character of a person in order to show action in conformity therewith. It may, however, be admissible for other purposes, such as proof of motive, opportunity, intent, preparation, plan, knowledge, identity, or absence of mistake or accident.

Cir. 1978). *See also United States v. Daraio*, 445 F.3d 253, 263 (3d Cir. 2006) (stating that admission of 404(b) evidence is favored); *United States v. Johnson*, 199 F.3d 123, 128 (3d Cir. 1999) (noting that rules favor admission). The Third Circuit has also stated that Rule 404(b) is a rule of inclusion rather than exclusion. *See, e.g., United States v. Jemal*, 26 F.3d 1267, 1272 (3d Cir. 1994); *Scarfo*, 850 F.2d at 1019. However, it is clear that other act evidence is not presumptively admissible. *United States v. Caldwell*, 760 F.3d 267, 276 (3d Cir. 2014). Also, as the court explained in *Caldwell*, the statements that Rule 404(b) is inclusive rather than exclusive mean only that the rule's list of purposes for which other act evidence may be admitted is not exclusive - that is, the uses of other act evidence are not limited to those specified in Rule 404(b). *See Caldwell*, 760 F.3d at 276; *see also Jemal*, 26 F.3d at 1272; *Scarfo*, 850 F.2d at 1019.

The proponent of evidence of prior acts “must clearly articulate how that evidence fits into a chain of logical inferences, no link of which may be the inference that the defendant has the propensity to commit the crime charged.” *United States v. Morley*, 199 F.3d 129, 133 (3d Cir. 1999). *See also United States v. Caldwell*, 760 F.3d 267, 277-78 (3d Cir. 2014); *United States v. Himelwright*, 42 F.3d 777, 782 (3d Cir. 1994).

The district court should also articulate its reasoning; the court should explain the permissible inference, unless the purpose of the evidence is “plainly obvious,” and balance the probative value of the evidence against any prejudicial impact. *Daraio*, 445 F.3d at 263. *See also Scarfo*, 850 F.2d at 1019 (noting that one factor under Rule 403 balance is government's genuine need for the evidence which the court must balance against the risk that the other act evidence will influence the jury to convict on improper grounds). If the trial court does not explain its grounds for ruling on an objection under Rules 404(b) and 403, the Third Circuit will not defer to the ruling unless the reasons are apparent from the record. *See Becker*, 207 F.3d at 181.

The government sometimes argues that evidence should be admitted over an objection under Rule 404(b) because it is intrinsic to the charged offense. In *United States v. Green*, 617 F.3d 233 (3d Cir. 2010), the Third Circuit considered this argument. In *Green*, the court discussed whether evidence that the defendant had threatened to kill an undercover officer was properly admitted as intrinsic evidence of the charged offense in the defendant's trial for attempted narcotics possession. The court noted that labeling evidence as intrinsic serves only to deprive the defendant of the procedural protections that accompany admission under Rule 404(b): notice from the prosecution and a limiting instruction from the court. In determining whether the evidence was intrinsic to the charged offense, the Third Circuit rejected as unhelpful the “inextricably intertwined” test used in some other circuits. Instead, the court adopted a limited definition of intrinsic evidence, applying it to only two categories of evidence: 1) evidence that directly proves the charged offense and thus does not fall in the realm of “other crimes, wrongs, or acts” governed by Rule 404(b); and 2) uncharged acts performed contemporaneously with the charged crime provided the uncharged act facilitates the commission of the charged crime. The court held that the threat evidence in *Green* was not intrinsic to the charged offense but was properly admissible as proof of motive under Rule 404(b) or as proof of bias. *See also United States v. Savage*, 85 F.4th 102 (3d Cir. 2023) (concluding evidence

was intrinsic); *United States v. Bailey*, 840 F.3d 99 (3d Cir. 2016) (concluding that other act evidence was not intrinsic).

Under Rule 404(b), the court may admit proof of conduct that allegedly occurred either before or after the charged offense; other act evidence is not limited to prior, as distinct from subsequent, conduct. *See United States v. Bergrin*, 682 F.3d 261, 281 n.25 (3d Cir. 2012).

In ruling on the admissibility of evidence under Rule 404(b), the court should not assess the credibility or weight of the other act evidence but should only determine whether the jury could reasonably find the necessary facts by a preponderance of the evidence. *See United States v. Savage*, 85 F.4th 102 (3d Cir. 2023); *United States v. Bergrin*, 682 F.3d 261, 278-79 (3d Cir. 2012).

The trial court's ruling under Rule 404(b) will be reviewed for abuse of discretion. *See United States v. Savage*, 85 F.4th 102 (3d Cir. 2023); *United States v. Bailey*, 840 F.3d 99 (3d Cir. 2016); *United States v. Balter*, 91 F.3d 427, 437 (3d Cir. 1996). If the record does not provide a basis for reviewing the trial court's exercise of discretion, the court "may undertake to examine the record and perform the required balancing [itself]." *Becker v. ARCO Chemical Co.*, 207 F.3d 176, 181 (3d Cir. 2000). However, improper use of other act evidence may be reversible error. *See, e.g., United States v. Brown*, 765 F.3d 278 (3d Cir. 2014) (holding that trial court committed harmful error by admitting other act evidence); *United States v. Davis*, 726 F.3d 434, 440-46 (3d Cir. 2013) (holding that defendant's prior possession convictions were not properly admitted as other act evidence to prove intent or knowledge and vacating conviction); *United States v. Smith*, 725 F.3d 340, 344-49 (3d Cir. 2013) (reversing conviction because court improperly admitted other act evidence); *United States v. Morena*, 547 F.3d 191 (3d Cir. 2008) (reversing conviction where government exceeded limited purpose for which other act evidence was admissible by repeatedly injecting prejudicial references to defendant's drug use and collateral drug transactions in firearms case). *See also United States v. Steiner*, 2017 847 F.3d 103 (3d Cir. 2017) (holding that trial court committed error by admitting evidence of defendant's prior arrest, but concluding error was harmless).

In some instances, the use of other act evidence is governed by different rules. *See, e.g., United States v. Gilmore*, 553 F.3d 266, 271 (3d Cir. 2009) (approving use of prior drug convictions to impeach defendant by contradicting his testimony that he had never sold drugs and noting that admission of the evidence is governed by Rules 607 and 403); *see also* F.R.E. 413 and 414 (allowing other act evidence to be admitted without restriction in sexual assault and child molestation cases). The court has also stated that "the Government has broad latitude to use 'other acts' evidence to prove a conspiracy." *United States v. Cross*, 308 F.3d 308, 324 (3d Cir. 2002).

The instruction. The instruction should not merely include a laundry list of permitted uses of other act evidence. Rather, it should specifically state the limited purpose for which the other act evidence is admitted. *Graham, Handbook of Federal Evidence*, §

404.5 n.56 (5th ed. 2001). *See also United States v. Davis*, 726 F.3d 434, 440-46 (3d Cir. 2013) (criticizing instruction that included list of uses as not providing sufficient guidance to jury); *United States v. Lee*, 612 F.3d 170 (3d Cir. 2010) (Rendell, J. dissenting) (criticizing trial court for failing to specify limited purpose).

The instruction is most helpful if it explains to the jury the precise role of the other act evidence. In *Scarfo*, the Third Circuit approved the trial court's instructions.

The trial judge charged the jury: "Mr. Scarfo is not on trial here for any murders, for any gambling or any other kind of illegal activities [T]hose kinds of offenses would be dealt with in other tribunals than this I think you can understand that it would be utterly improper for you to take them into account in this case in the sense of saying to yourselves: 'Well, maybe he didn't do this extortion; but he did a lot of other stuff. So it doesn't much matter whether they prove this case. I am going to find him guilty anyway.' That obviously would be totally improper."

In instructing on the proper use of other crimes evidence, the judge explained that the testimony could be used to assess the nature of the relationship among Caramandi, DelGiorno, and defendant.

It is a position of the Government that Caramandi and DelGiorno were subordinates within this carefully organized and structured organization; that they did Mr. Scarfo's bidding; [that] they never would dream of doing anything this large without his approval; and that the tapes and other evidence in the case corroborate their testimony to the effect that he was involved and did approve.

The judge also told the jurors that they could use the evidence to decide whether defendant adopted a standardized scheme or mode of operation, to determine whether he had knowledge of or an intent to participate in the conspiracy, as well as to evaluate the witnesses' motives for cooperating with the government. Finally, the judge stated that the government had the right to reveal the witnesses' unsavory criminal records 'so as not to be accused of trying to hoodwink the jury by pretending that people like Caramandi and DelGiorno were Boy Scouts.'

These clear, frank, and comprehensive instructions did all that was possible under the circumstances to place the other crimes evidence in proper perspective.

850 F.2d at 1020-21. For other Third Circuit decisions approving instructions on other act evidence, *see; United States v. Cruz*, 326 F.3d 392 (3d Cir. 2003); *United States v. Givan*, 320 F.3d 452, 460-61 (3d Cir. 2003); *United States v. Butch*, 256 F.3d 171 (3d Cir. 2001); *United States v. Palma-Ruedas*, 121 F.3d 841, 852 n.11 (3d Cir. 1997); *United States v. Ferguson*, 2010 WL 3638928 (3d Cir. 2010) (non-precedential); *United States v. Major*, 293 F. App'x. 160, 2008 WL 4229933 (3d Cir. 2008) (non-precedential) (approving admission of other act evidence to prove intent and approving instruction). *See also United States v. Scarfo*, 241 F.4th 136 (3d Cir. 2022) (assuming effectiveness of limiting instruction). *But see United States v. Morena*, 547 F.3d 191 (3d Cir. 2008)

(concluding that court's instruction was not adequate and reversing conviction).

Other act evidence admitted under Rule 413 or 414. This instruction should not be given when the other act evidence was admitted under Rule 413 or 414 of the Federal Rules of Evidence. Those rules allow the prosecution to introduce evidence of similar acts in prosecutions for sexual assault or child molestation. The evidence of prior conduct admitted under those rules “may be considered on any matter to which it is relevant.” As a result, no limiting instruction should be given.

(Revised 4/2024)

2.24 Impeachment of Defendant - Prior Bad Acts (F.R.E. 608(b))

Alternative 1:

You have heard evidence that the defendant (*name*) on a previous occasion committed (*describe bad act elicited on cross-examination of defendant*). You may consider that evidence only to help you decide whether to believe (*name*)'s testimony and how much weight to give it. That evidence does not mean that (*name*) committed the crime charged here, and you must not use that evidence as any proof of the crime charged in this case.

[This evidence may not be used in any way at all in connection with the other defendant(s)].

Alternative 2 (to be given if the defendant denies the bad act):

You heard the prosecutor ask (*name*) whether on a previous occasion (*he*)(*she*) committed (*describe bad act elicited on cross-examination of defendant*). You also heard (*name*) deny committing that act. I remind you that questions by the lawyers are not evidence. It is the answer of the witness that provides evidence. There is therefore no evidence that (*name of witness*) committed (*describe act*).

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit §2.16.

This instruction should be used when the prosecution is permitted to cross-examine the defendant under Rule 608(b) of the Federal Rules of Evidence concerning prior bad acts that did not result in conviction. Rule 608(b) of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides:

Except for a criminal conviction under Rule 609, extrinsic evidence is not

admissible to prove specific instances of a witness's conduct in order to attack or support the witness's character for truthfulness. But the court may, on cross-examination, allow them to be inquired into if they are probative of the character for truthfulness or untruthfulness of:

- (1) the witness; or
- (2) another witness whose character the witness being cross-examined has testified about.

By testifying on another matter, a witness does not waive any privilege against self-incrimination for testimony that relates only to the witness's character for truthfulness.¹⁰

If the court permits the prosecutor to cross-examine the defendant concerning prior bad acts under Rule 608(b), the court should instruct the jury concerning the cross-examination, whether or not requested, after consultation with the defendant. The appropriate instruction depends on whether the defendant admits or denies the prior conduct in response to the questions asked on cross-examination. Alternative 1 should be given if the defendant admits committing those acts. The instruction simply limits the jury's consideration of the prior acts to the defendant's believability. The Third Circuit has not determined whether failure to give the instruction if requested is reversible error or whether failure to give the instruction if the defendant does not request it is plain error. The bracketed language in Alternative 1 should be given in a multi-defendant case.

Alternative 2 should be given if the prosecutor asks about the prior acts on cross-examination and the defendant denies committing the prior acts. Rule 608(b) precludes the introduction of extrinsic evidence to complete the impeachment with bad acts. As a result, if the prosecutor is permitted to ask about the prior bad acts on cross-examination and the defendant denies committing the acts, the prosecution can go no further with the subject. *See United States v. McNeill*, 887 F.2d 448, 453 (3d Cir. 1989); *United States v. Anderson*, 859 F.3d.1171, 1178 (3d Cir. 1988).

Caution: This instruction should not be given when the defendant has been impeached with a prior conviction under Rule 609 of the Federal Rules of Evidence. *See* Instruction 2.25 (Impeachment of Defendant - Prior Conviction (F.R.E. 609)). Nor should this instruction be given when evidence of other crimes has been admitted to prove motive, opportunity, intent or the like under Rule 404(b) of the Federal Rules of

¹⁰ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 608(b) provided:

Specific instances of the conduct of a witness, for the purpose of attacking or supporting the witness' character for truthfulness, other than conviction of crime as provided in rule 609, may not be proved by extrinsic evidence. They may, however, in the discretion of the court, if probative of truthfulness or untruthfulness, be inquired into on cross-examination of the witness

- (1) concerning the witness' character for truthfulness or untruthfulness, or
- (2) concerning the character for truthfulness or untruthfulness of another witness as to which character the witness being cross-examined has testified.

The giving of testimony, whether by an accused or by any other witness, does not operate as a waiver of the accused's or the witness' privilege against self-incrimination when examined with respect to matters that relate only to character for truthfulness.

Evidence. Instead, the jury should be specifically instructed on the purpose for which such evidence was admitted. *See* Instruction 2.23 (Defendant's Prior Bad Acts or Crimes (F.R.E. 404(b))). If evidence of the defendant's prior conduct or conviction has been admitted under Rule 404(b) or Rule 609 and the defendant is impeached with prior bad acts under Rule 608(b), this instruction should be given in conjunction with Instructions 2.23 and 2.25, respectively. If evidence has been admitted under all three rules, all three instructions should be given, highlighting the difference in relevance for the jury.

Rule 608(b) permits inquiry only concerning prior acts that are probative of untruthful conduct. To fall within the rule, the acts "will normally involve dishonesty or false statement as employed in Rule 609(a)(2)." Graham § 608.4 at 146-47. The Third Circuit has held that Rule 609(a)(2) applies only to crimes that "bear on the witness' propensity to testify truthfully." *See United States v. Johnson*, 388 F.3d 96 (3d Cir. 2004). In *United States v. Irizarry*, 341 F.3d 273 (3d Cir. 2003), the court noted that the trial court properly allowed the prosecutor to cross-examine the defendant about his possession of identification in someone else's name and about his possession of blank Social Security cards. *Id.* at 312. The Third Circuit stated that the evidence tended to show deceit and therefore fell within Rule 608(b).

The Third Circuit has also held that the decision whether to allow cross-examination under Rule 608(b) falls within the trial court's discretion. *See United States v. McNeill*, 887 F.2d 448, 453 (3d Cir. 1989). In *Johnson v. Elk Lake School District*, 283 F.3d 138 (3d Cir. 2002), the court held that the trial court acted within its discretion when it precluded plaintiff's counsel from cross-examining a key witness concerning a lie on his resume. *Id.* at 145 n.2. The court noted that the trial court's ruling was reviewed under an abuse of discretion standard with "substantial deference" to the trial court. The court stated that "the trial court was within its discretion to conclude that Stevens' lying on his resume, although duplicitous and wrong, was not so indicative of moral turpitude as to be particularly probative of his character for untruthfulness." *Id.* This result is criticized in Graham who states that "the exercise of discretion should very rarely if ever be exercised to exclude an undisputed act of 'lying'" such as that in *Johnson*. Graham § 608.4 n.5.

The inquiry under Rule 608(b) should focus on the actual acts that suggested untruthfulness and not any third-party action, such as suspension from a job, that resulted from those acts. *See United States v. Davis*, 183 F.3d 231, 257 n.12 (3d Cir. 1999). The court may preclude inquiry concerning prior acts if they are remote in time. *See Johnson v. Elk Lake School District*, 283 F.3d 138, 145 n.2 (3d Cir. 2002).

Cross-examination may be limited by the Fifth Amendment; Rule 608(b) provides that no witness, including the accused, waives the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination when examined with respect to matters that relate only to character for truthfulness. *See United States v. Hudson*, 422 F.Supp. 395 (E.D. Pa. 1976), *aff'd* 556 F.2d 566, *aff'd* 556 F.2d 569, *cert. denied*, 431 U.S. 922, *cert. denied*, 434 U.S. 839 (1977). The Third Circuit appears not to have addressed this aspect of the rule.

2.25 Impeachment of Defendant - Prior Conviction (F.R.E. 609)

You *(are about to hear)*(heard) evidence that the defendant *(name)* was previously convicted of *(a)* crime(s). You may consider evidence of *(name)*'s previous conviction of a crime only to help you decide whether to believe *(name)*'s testimony and how much weight to give it. That evidence does not mean that *(name)* committed the crime charged here, and you must not use that evidence as any proof of the crime charged in this case.

[This evidence may not be used in any way at all in connection with the other defendant(s)].

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit 2.16. For variations, *see* 1A O'Malley et al., *supra*, §§ 11.12 and 15.08; Sand et al., *supra*, 7-13; Federal Judicial Center § 41; First Circuit §2.04; Fifth Circuit § 1.11; Sixth Circuit §7.05A; Seventh Circuit § 3.05; Ninth Circuit § 4.6; and Eleventh Circuit §6.4.

This instruction should be used when the defendant's prior conviction will be or has been admitted to attack the defendant's credibility under Rule 609 of the Federal Rules of Evidence. If evidence of the prior conviction is elicited during cross-examination of the defendant, the word "heard" should be substituted for "are about to hear."

Rule 609(a), which governs the admissibility of prior convictions to impeach, provides:

The following rules apply to attacking a witness's character for truthfulness by evidence of a criminal conviction:

- (1) for a crime that, in the convicting jurisdiction, was punishable by death or by imprisonment for more than one year, the evidence:
 - (A) must be admitted, subject to Rule 403, in a civil case or in a criminal case in which the witness is not a defendant; and
 - (B) must be admitted in a criminal case in which the witness is a defendant, if the probative value of the evidence outweighs its prejudicial effect to that defendant; and
- (2) for any crime regardless of the punishment, the evidence must be admitted if the court can readily determine that establishing the elements

of the crime required proving--or the witness's admitting--a dishonest act or false statement.¹¹

See *United States v. Gilmore*, 553 F.3d 266, 272-73 (3d Cir. 2009) (discussing application of Rule 609).

It is important to distinguish between the two subsections of Rule 609(a). Rule 609(a)(1) permits impeachment with felony conviction in the judge's discretion. The Rule allows impeachment by convictions of crimes punishable by death or imprisonment greater than one year if "the court determines that the probative value of admitting this evidence outweighs its prejudicial effect to the defendant." See *Government of the Virgin Islands v. Bedford*, 671 F.2d 758 (3d Cir. 1982) (establishing four-factor balancing test to assess admissibility of prior conviction to impeach defendant). See also *United States v. Caldwell*, 760 F.3d 267 (3d Cir. 2014) (discussing heightened balancing test that applies when government offers prior conviction to impeach defendant).

Rule 609(a)(2) applies to crimes of dishonesty or false statement and makes admission of the evidence mandatory. If the crime falls within (a)(2), the trial court must admit the prior conviction. See *United States v. Wong*, 703 F.2d 65, 68 (3d Cir.), cert. denied, 464 U.S. 842 (1983). Rule 609(a)(2) is interpreted narrowly and does not include crimes such as theft that do not "bear on the witness' propensity to testify truthfully." See *United States v. Johnson*, 388 F.3d 96 (3d Cir. 2004) (quoting from the Conference Committee notes). As amended, the rule precludes inquiry into the manner in which a crime was committed to establish that it was a crime of dishonesty or false statement. Instead, the nature of the crime must be readily determined.

Rule 609 also includes a time restriction. If more than ten years has passed since the date of conviction or release, the prior conviction is not admissible unless the proponent gives written notice and "its probative value, supported by specific facts and circumstances, substantially outweighs its prejudicial effect."¹² F.R.E. 609(b).

Ordinarily, evidence of the defendant's prior conviction is admissible only for the limited purpose of attacking credibility. As a result, the defendant is entitled, upon request, to an instruction limiting the jury's consideration of the conviction to the purpose

¹¹ Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 609(a) provided:

For the purpose of attacking the character for truthfulness of a witness,

(1) evidence that a witness other than an accused has been convicted of a crime shall be admitted, subject to Rule 403, if the crime was punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of one year under the law under which the witness was convicted, and evidence that an accused has been convicted of such a crime shall be admitted if the court determines that the probative value of admitting this evidence outweighs its prejudicial effect to the accused; and

(2) evidence that any witness has been convicted of a crime shall be admitted regardless of the punishment, if it readily can be determined that establishing the elements of the crime required proof or admission of an act of dishonesty or false statement by the witness.

¹² Before the Federal Rules of Evidence were restyled, Rule 609(b) provided that convictions over ten years old could be admitted if the party provided notice and "the court determines, in the interests of justice, that the probative value of the conviction . . . substantially outweighs its prejudicial effect."

for which it was admitted. The Third Circuit has not addressed the question of whether it is plain error not to give this instruction if the defendant fails to request it. Professor Graham opines that failure to give the instruction “will more likely result in plain error where the conviction is similar.” *Graham, Handbook of Federal Evidence* § 609.6 at 227-28 (5th ed. 2001).

In some cases, a defendant’s prior criminal record is introduced for other purposes. In those cases, this instruction should not be given. Instead, the jury should be specifically instructed on the purpose for which the evidence was admitted. A prior conviction may be required to establish an element of the offense charged, as when the defendant is charged under 18 U.S.C. § 922(g) or (h). *See* Instruction 2.13 (Prior Conviction of Defendant Charged with Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon (18 U.S.C.A. § 922 (g))). Evidence of other crimes may also be admitted to prove motive, opportunity, intent or the like under Rule 404(b) of the Federal Rules of Evidence. *See* Instruction 2.23 (Defendant’s Prior Bad Acts or Crimes (F.R.E. 404(b))). *See also United States v. Gilmore*, 553 F.3d 266, 271-72 (3d Cir. 2009) (approving use of prior conviction to impeach defendant by contradiction).

The bracketed language should be given in a multi-defendant case.

(Revised 2014)

2.26 Impeachment of Defendant - Prior Inconsistent Statement Taken in Violation of *Miranda*

Alternative 1: You just heard the defendant, *(name)*, testify on *(his)(her)* own behalf. You also heard evidence that *(name)* made *(a statement)(certain statements)* before trial. *(Name)* admitted making *(this)(these)* statement(s). *(This)(These)* earlier statement(s)*(is)(are)* brought to your attention only to help you decide if you believe what the defendant testified to here in court. You may consider *(this)(these)* statement(s) as you decide if what *(name)* said here in court was true. You must not, however, consider the earlier statement(s) as evidence of *(name)*'s guilt. The government must use other evidence to prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the defendant committed the crime.

Alternative 2: You will recall that the defendant, *(name)*, testified on *(his)(her)* own behalf. You are about to hear evidence that *(name)* made *(a statement)(certain statements)* before trial. *(This)(These)* earlier statement(s) by *(name)* *(is)(are)* brought to your attention only to help you decide if you believe what the defendant testified to here in court. *(Name)* has denied making *(this)(these)* statement(s). If you find that *(name)* made statement(s) before trial that are different from *(name)*'s testimony here at trial, then you may consider *(this)(these)* statement(s) as you decide if what *(name)* said here in court was true. You must not, however, consider the earlier statement(s) as

evidence of *(name)*'s guilt. The government must use other evidence to prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the defendant committed the crime.

Comment

This instruction is derived from Federal Judicial Center § 42. For variations, *see* 1A O'Malley §11.13, Eighth Circuit § 2.17.

Normally, prior statements of the defendant are admissible without limitation under Rule 801(d)(2)(A) of the Federal Rules of Evidence. If the defendant's prior statement is admitted without limitation, no instruction is necessary. However, if a statement is obtained in violation of *Miranda v. Arizona*, 384 U.S. 436 (1966), or in violation of the Sixth Amendment, and the defendant successfully moves to suppress it, the statement is not admissible substantively, but may nevertheless be admitted to impeach the defendant if the defendant elects to testify. *Kansas v. Ventris*, 556 U.S. 586 (2009); *Harris v. New York*, 401 U.S. 222 (1971).

One of these instructions should then be used during the trial either before or immediately after the statement is introduced, to restrict the statement to its limited role. In addition, Instruction 4.37 (Impeachment of Defendant - Prior Inconsistent Statement Taken in Violation of Miranda) should be given as part of the final instructions.

Which alternative to use depends on the procedure followed at trial as well as the defendant's testimony. Rule 613 of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides that extrinsic evidence of the prior statement "is not admissible unless the witness is afforded an opportunity to explain or deny" the statement. Therefore, it is likely that the prosecution will question the defendant concerning the statement on cross-examination in order to lay the foundation for introducing extrinsic evidence of the statement during rebuttal. The court should use Alternative 1 if the defendant is asked about the prior statement on direct or cross-examination and admits making the statement(s). The instruction should be given immediately after the defendant testifies concerning the statement(s). The court should use Alternative 2 if the defendant denies making the statement(s) and the prosecution introduces extrinsic evidence of the statement(s) in rebuttal. In that case, the court should give the instruction immediately before the prosecution introduces its evidence that the defendant made the statement(s).

If other prior statements of the defendant have been introduced without limitation, the court should give Instruction 2.11 (Limited Admissibility: Evidence Admitted for a Limited Purpose) with this instruction to emphasize the difference in the relevance of the two sets of statements.

2.27 Prior Statement of Defendant - Single Defendant on Trial

The government has introduced evidence that the defendant (*name of defendant*) made a statement to (*name of person who took statement*). You must decide whether (*name of defendant*) did in fact make the statement. If you find that (*name of defendant*) did make the statement, then you must decide what weight, if any, you feel the statement deserves. In making this decision, you should consider all matters in evidence having to do with the statement, including those concerning (*name of defendant*) (*himself*)(*herself*) and the circumstances under which the statement was made.

*[If, after considering the evidence, you determine that a statement, was made voluntarily, you may give it such weight as you feel it deserves under the circumstances. On the other hand, if you determine that the statement was not made voluntarily, you must disregard it. In determining whether any alleged statement was made voluntarily, you should consider (*name of defendant*)'s age, training, education, occupation, and physical and mental condition, and (*his*)(*her*) treatment while in custody or under interrogation as shown by the evidence in the case. Also consider all other circumstances in evidence surrounding the making of the alleged statement.]*

Comment

This instruction was derived from Seventh Circuit § 3.02 and 1A O'Malley et al., *supra*, § 14.03.

This instruction should not ordinarily be given during trial. Instead, the subject will be covered in the final instructions. *See* 4.32 (Prior Statement of Defendant - Single Defendant on Trial).

If the court held a pretrial proceeding on a motion to suppress the defendant's statement, the court may be aware of the issues that will be raised concerning the voluntariness of the defendant's statement or the weight it should be accorded. The court may choose to give the instruction during the trial if the prosecution introduces a defendant's confession or similar statement and the defendant raises questions about the weight that the jury should accord that evidence. The bracketed language should be included if the defendant raises a colorable question of whether the statement was given voluntarily. In *Crane v. Kentucky*, 476 U.S. 683 (1986), the Supreme Court noted that the pretrial determination that the defendant's confession is voluntary is not conclusive and held that the trial court violated the defendant's constitutional rights when it precluded the defendant from introducing evidence relating to the circumstances of the confession at trial. The evidence "will often be germane to its probative weight, a matter that is exclusively for the jury to assess." *Id.* at 688. Congress has spoken to this issue in 18 U.S.C. § 3501(a), which provides in part:

[T]he trial judge shall permit the jury to hear relevant evidence on the issue of voluntariness and shall instruct the jury to give such weight to the confession as the jury feels it deserves under all the circumstances.

In *Government of the Virgin Islands v. Gereau*, 502 F.2d 914 (3d Cir. 1974), the Third Circuit held that the trial court properly instructed the jury to consider the voluntariness of the defendant's confessions and to disregard them if they were not given voluntarily. If a question of voluntariness is raised, the trial court must admit the relevant evidence and instruct the jury on the question.

2.28 Prior Statement of a Defendant - Multi-Defendant Trial

The government has introduced evidence that the defendant *(name of defendant)* **made a statement to** *(name of person who took statement)*. **I caution you that you may consider** *(name of defendant)* **'s statement only in resolving the case against** *(name of defendant)*. **You must not consider or discuss this evidence in any way with respect to** *(name of co-defendant, if there is only one)**(any of the other defendants on trial)*.

[You must decide whether (name of defendant) did in fact make the statement. If you find that (name of defendant) did make the statement, then you must decide what weight, if any, you feel the statement deserves. In making this decision, you should consider all matters in evidence having to do with the statement, including those concerning (name of defendant)(himself)(herself) and the circumstances under which the statement was made.]

[If, after considering the evidence, you determine that a statement, was made voluntarily, you may give it such weight as you feel it deserves under the circumstances. On the other hand, if you determine that the statement was not made voluntarily, you must disregard it. In determining whether any alleged statement was made voluntarily, you should consider (name of defendant)'s age, training, education, occupation, and physical and mental condition, and (his)(her) treatment while in custody or under interrogation as shown by the evidence in the case. Also consider all other circumstances in evidence surrounding the making of the alleged statement.]

Comment

This instruction is derived from Seventh Circuit § 3.02 and Sand et al, supra, 5-20. For variations, see 1A O'Malley et al., supra, §14.04; Fifth Circuit § 1.27; Eighth Circuit § 2.15; and Eleventh Circuit § 2.2.

This instruction should be given during the trial in a multiple defendant trial when one defendant's testimonial statement which names or implicates the other defendant(s) is admitted in a joint trial unless it is clear that the confessing defendant will testify. A defendant may be deprived of his right under the Confrontation Clause when a non-testifying co-defendant's incriminating testimonial statement is introduced at their joint trial even if the jury is instructed to consider that statement only against the co-defendant. Limiting instructions may be inadequate to protect the defendant against the risk that the jury will misuse the co-defendant's statement and consider it as evidence against the defendant. See *Bruton v. United States*, 391 U.S. 123 (1968); see also *Cruz v. New York*, 481 U.S. 186, 194 (1987) (protection applies even if the defendant also confessed). However, because this protection rests on the Confrontation Clause, it applies only if the statement is testimonial. See *Crawford v. Washington*, 541 U.S. 36, 51 (2004) (holding that Confrontation Clause applies only to testimonial statements); *United States v. Berrios*, 676 F.3d 118 (3d Cir. 2012) (recognizing limitation on confrontation protection and applying it to *Bruton* claim); see also *Ohio v. Clark*, 576 U.S. 237 (2015) (discussing how to determine whether a statement is testimonial); *Michigan v. Bryant*, 562 U.S. 344 (2011) (same); *Waller v. Varano*, 562 F.App'x. 91 (3d Cir. 2014) (rejecting *Bruton* claim where statement was not testimonial).

Moreover, if the prosecution adequately redacts the co-defendant's statement, the co-defendant's confession may be admitted in a joint trial. In *Samia v. United States*, 143 S. Ct. 2004 (2023), the Court held that a codefendant's confession that had been redacted to replace the defendant's name with "the other person" was properly admitted with a limiting instruction. The Court emphasized the presumption that jurors follow the trial court's instructions and stressed the distinction "between confessions that directly implicate a defendant and those that do so indirectly." *Samia*, 143 S. Ct. at 2013-14. The Court concluded that the redacted confession did not directly implicate the defendant and also noted that the confession could not have been further redacted to "make it appear . . . that [the codefendant] had acted alone." *Samia*, 143 S. Ct. at 2017. See also *Richardson v. Marsh*, 481 U.S. 200 (1987) (holding redaction adequate to protect defendant); *Priester v. Vaughn*, 382 F.3d 394 (3d Cir. 2004) (concluding redaction provided adequate protection); but see *Gray v. Maryland*, 523 U.S. 185 (1998) (holding redaction inadequate where the word "deleted" or "deletion" was substituted for the defendant's name in the confession); *United States v. Richards*, 241 F.3d 335 (3d Cir. 2001) (holding redaction inadequate); *United States v. McIntosh*, 2022 WL 212310 (3d Cir. 2022) (non-precedential) (concluding trial court may not have adequately protected defendant but holding that the error, if any, was harmless). When a redacted confession is admitted, this instruction is necessary to protect the defendant's rights under the Confrontation Clause.

The language in the bracketed paragraphs may be given if appropriate. The first

bracketed paragraph may be appropriate if the defendant raises a question concerning whether the statement was made or the circumstances under which it was made. The second bracketed paragraph should be included if the defendant raises a colorable question of whether the statement was given voluntarily.

(Revised 4/2024)

2.29 Photographs, Inflammatory

This photograph (*these photographs*) (*was*)(*were*) **admitted in evidence for the purpose of helping you understand the testimony by** (*describe purpose, e.g., showing you the conditions at the alleged scene of the crime, showing the nature of the wounds received by the deceased, showing you what (name of witness) was referring to.*) **It is not a pleasant photograph to look at. You should not let it stir up your emotions to the prejudice of the defendant. Your verdict must be based on a rational and fair consideration of all the evidence and not on passion or prejudice against the defendant, the government, or anyone else connected with this case.**

Comment

This instruction is derived from Pennsylvania Suggested Standard Jury Instructions - Criminal § 3.18.

Photographs may be admitted even though they are inflammatory if their probative value is sufficient. *See United States v. Lopez*, 271 F.3d 472, 482 (3d Cir. 2001); *Government of Virgin Islands v. Albert*, 241 F.3d 344 (3d Cir. 2001). Before admitting a potentially inflammatory photograph the trial court must determine (1) that it is relevant and (2) that the need for the picture and its probative value are not substantially outweighed by the likelihood of unfair prejudice to the defendant. When admitting a photograph, the court should take measures to minimize the risk of prejudice, such as masking portions and limiting the time the jury is allowed to look at it.

This instruction reduces the likelihood of improper use or influence of the photograph. It directs the jurors' attention to the purpose for which the photograph was admitted and cautions them not to permit it to stir up their emotions to the defendant's prejudice. Although it appears that a limiting instruction may not be required, the court should provide a limiting instruction to minimize the prejudicial impact of the evidence. *See Government of Virgin Islands v. Albert*, 89 F.Supp.2d 658, 665 (D.V.I. 2000) (upholding conviction even though the trial court admitted a gruesome videotape of the murder scene and gave no limiting instruction other than to direct the jury not to listen to the audio narration on the tape, but expressing concern about the risk of unfair prejudice and possible reversal).

2.30 Photograph of Defendant (“Mug Shots”)

[Select whichever of the following applies:

((Name of witness) testified that (he)(she) viewed a photograph of (name of defendant) which was shown to (him)(her) by the (police)(law enforcement agents).)

(You were shown a picture of (name of defendant) that was taken by (the government).)]

The government collects pictures of many people from many different sources and for many different purposes. The fact that the government had (name of defendant)’s picture does not mean that (he)(she) committed this or any other crime, and it must have no effect on your consideration of the case.

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit § 2.21.

This instruction may be given if the jury sees or learns of a law enforcement booking photograph - mug shot - of the defendant. The committee recommends that this instruction not be given unless specifically requested by the defense.

In some cases, the jury will learn that law enforcement had a mug shot of the defendant before the defendant was charged with the offense for which the defendant is on trial. For example, if identification is an issue in the trial, the jury may hear testimony concerning pre-charge photo identification of the defendant using a mug shot. *See United States v. Hines*, 470 F.2d 225 (3d Cir. 1973). The decision about whether to admit the evidence should be approached with caution. If the defendant’s mug shot is introduced in evidence or if the jury is informed that law enforcement had a photograph of the defendant, the jury may conclude that the defendant has a criminal record. *United States v. Hines*, 470 F.2d 225, 227-28 (3d Cir. 1973). Nevertheless, the evidence is properly admitted if its probative value outweighs the risk of unfair prejudice. *See United States v. Dunbar*, 767 F.2d 72 (3d Cir. 1985); *United States v. Gimelstob*, 475 F.2d 157 (3d Cir. 1973). One way to reduce the risk of unfair prejudice is to redact the photograph, removing indications that it is a mug shot.

A cautionary instruction may also reduce the risk of unfair prejudice. In *United States v. Amorosa*, 167 F.2d 596, 599 (3d Cir. 1948), the Third Circuit concluded that the defendant had not been prejudiced by the government's use of two F.B.I. photographs of the defendant. The court commented on the trial court's instruction to the jury:

The trial judge in his charge instructed the jury as to the F.B.I. number on the picture, 'You are not to infer because of that number that the defendant is guilty of this crime or of any other crime. In other words, you are to predicate no finding of fact on the mere fact that on the front of the picture there appears this F.B.I. number. You will, for the purpose of this case, completely disregard the fact that one of the pictures bears a number.'

Nevertheless, it does not appear that a cautionary instruction is required. The Third Circuit has rejected arguments based on the prejudicial impact of the defendant's mug shot without considering whether the trial court gave a cautionary instruction. See *United States v. Gimelstob*, 475 F.2d 157 (3d Cir. 1973); *United States v. Hines*, 470 F.2d 225, 227-28 (3d Cir. 1973).

2.31 Dismissal During Trial of Some Charges Against Single Defendant

At the beginning of the trial, I described the charges against the defendant. At this time, the charge(s) of *(describe dismissed count(s)) (is)(are)* no longer before you. You should not be concerned with nor should you speculate about the reason the charge(s) *(is)(are)* no longer part of this trial.

The defendant is on trial only for the charge(s) of *(remaining count(s))*. You may consider the evidence presented in the case only as it relates to the remaining charge(s).

Comment

This instruction is derived from Ninth Circuit § 2.12. For variations, *see* Sand et al, *supra*, 2-20 and Eighth Circuit § 2.11.

This instruction may be given during the trial when charges are dismissed, most likely after the close of the government's case-in-chief. If those charges were called to the jury's attention in the preliminary instructions or opening statements, or if evidence was introduced that relates only to those charges, the jury may expect the defendant to respond to the charges or to the evidence offered to establish the charges. This instruction explains to the jury that the charges are no longer part of the trial and thereby lets the jurors know why there will be no response to those aspects of the government's case. If more than one defendant is on trial, Instruction 2.32 (Disposition During Trial of All Charges Against One or More Co-Defendant(s)) should be given instead.

If evidence is stricken as a result of the dismissal of charges, the court may want to instruct the jury on that point. The Eighth Circuit suggests the following language: "The following evidence is now stricken by me, and is thus no longer before you and may not be considered by you: (Describe stricken evidence)." When describing the stricken evidence, the court risks being either over inclusive or under inclusive. The Committee therefore suggests that, if the court elects to give such an instruction, it do so only if the parties agree to the description of the stricken evidence.

2.32 Disposition During Trial of All Charges Against One or More Co-Defendant(s)

The co-defendant(s)(name(s)) (is)(are) no longer on trial and you are not being asked to reach a verdict as to (name(s)). You are not to be concerned with nor are you to speculate about why (he)(she)(they) (is)(are) no longer part of this trial. This fact should not affect or influence your verdict with respect to the remaining defendant(s). You must base your verdict as to (name(s) of remaining defendant(s)) solely on the basis of the evidence or lack of evidence against (him)(her)(them).

Comment

This instruction is derived from Sand et al, supra, 2-19. For variations, see 1A O'Malley et al, supra, §§ 11.14 and 12.16; Eighth Circuit § 2.12; and Ninth Circuit § 2.13.

When charges against a co-defendant are disposed of after the jury has been empaneled, the court should instruct the jury that the co-defendant's case is no longer before them and caution the jury not to draw any inference from that fact. See *United States v. Gambino*, 926 F.2d 1355, 1364 (3d Cir. 1991) (concluding that trial court's instruction to jurors that they should infer nothing from absence of defendant who had pleaded guilty adequately protected remaining defendants from prejudicial inference). The disposition of charges may result from causes as different as the entry of a judgment of acquittal on grounds of insufficient evidence or the entry of a conviction based on a guilty plea. The jury should not normally be informed of the reason. See *United States v. Restaino*, 369 F.2d 544 (3d Cir. 1966) (concluding trial court's cautionary instructions adequately protected defendant when court informed jury that co-defendants had pleaded guilty). This instruction avoids any reference to the reason for the disposition of the co-defendant's case.

In *United States v. Ragbir*, 2002 WL 1273657 at *2 (3d Cir. 2002), a non-precedential decision, the Third Circuit approved the following instruction after a co-defendant pleaded guilty partway through the trial:

You'll notice that neither Mr. Robert Kosch nor his attorney, Mr. DeGroot, are seated at the defense table. They will be absent from this court for the remainder of the trial. I instruct you that the charges against Robert Kosch are no longer part of the Government's case and they are not

to be considered by you at the time of your deliberations. You should not speculate or concern yourselves about the reason for the absence of Mr. Kosch.

You are not to consider his absence in any way when you hear the rest of this case or when you deliberate on a verdict as to Mr. Ragbir. The Government has an absolute obligation under the United States Constitution to prove every element of every offense charged against Mr. Ragbir beyond a reasonable doubt. Again I instruct you emphatically that in considering the evidence as to Mr. Ragbir, you shall not take into account the absence of Mr. Kosch. To do otherwise would be to violate your oaths as jurors.

If some, but not all, charges against a defendant in a multi-defendant case are dropped, an instruction may be unnecessary, since the defendant will still be before the jury. If the court chooses to give an instruction in such a case, the court should adjust the language of the instruction accordingly. *See* Eighth Circuit § 2.13 for suggested language.

If evidence is stricken as a result of the dismissal of charges, the court may want to instruct the jury on that point. The Eighth Circuit suggests the following language: “The following evidence is now stricken by me, and is thus no longer before you and may not be considered by you: (Describe stricken evidence).” When describing the stricken evidence, the court risks being either over inclusive or under inclusive. The Committee therefore suggests that, if the court elects to give such an instruction, it do so only if the parties agree to the description of the stricken evidence.

2.33 Previous Proceeding (Trial) of Defendant

You (will hear)(have heard) that there was a prior proceeding (trial) in this case. You should not, however, concern yourself with this fact.

Your verdict must be based solely on the evidence in the present trial in accordance with the Court's instructions without any regard to what may have occurred earlier.

Comment

This instruction is based on 1A O'Malley et al, supra, § 10.08.

This instruction should only be given if it is clear that the jury will, for some reason, learn of an earlier trial. When used, this instruction should be given at the time of the first reference to the earlier trial or proceeding.

It is preferable to refer to the earlier trial simply as a proceeding. The Committee recommends that the court suggest to the attorneys in the case that they should avoid references to a prior “trial” and that they so instruct their witnesses. The attorneys should, if necessary, instruct the witnesses to refer to the prior trial as a “prior proceeding.” If reference is made to a prior trial, the language of the instruction should be adapted accordingly.

In some cases, it will be difficult or impossible not to let the jury know that the case has been previously tried. For example, in *United States v. Hykel*, 463 F.2d 1192, 1194 (3d Cir. 1972), the trial followed an earlier trial that ended in a mistrial. A number of witnesses had testified at the first trial and were likely to mention that fact. The prosecutor therefore mentioned to the jury that the trial would be the defendant's second one for the same offense. The defendant argued to the Third Circuit that these remarks prejudiced his case. In *United States v. Hykel*, 461 F.2d 721, 726 (3d Cir.1972), the Third Circuit affirmed and commented favorably on the trial court’s instruction:

The remarks, which do not appear on the record, were brought to the attention of the District Court, which cautioned the jury that:

[T]he fact that this is the second trial of this case should mean nothing to you. Do you understand that? No inference of any kind should be drawn from that.

We believe that the District Court's cautionary words were sufficient to cure whatever prejudice, if any, the prosecutor's remarks may have caused in the absence of the caution.

2.34 Disruptive Defendant

Inappropriate verbalization: You just [describe behavior; e.g., heard the defendant speak to the witness]. The defendant's statements are not evidence in this case. You must disregard any statement that the defendant makes in this courtroom unless (he)(she) is testifying as a witness.

Inappropriate conduct requiring restraint of defendant: You may notice that the defendant [describe restraints; e.g., is wearing handcuffs in the courtroom]. You must not consider this fact in deciding the issues in this case. It is not evidence in the case and should not be discussed by you in your deliberations. It has no bearing on defendant's guilt or innocence.

Inappropriate conduct requiring removal of defendant: You may notice that the defendant is no longer in the courtroom. The defendant's absence is unrelated to (his)(her) guilt or innocence and is not evidence in the case. You must not consider this fact in deciding the issues in this case.

Comment

Defendants sometimes disrupt the orderly process of trial with inappropriate verbal or physical conduct. The Benchbook for U.S. District Court Judges suggests a protocol for handling disruptive defendants. Benchbook for U.S. District Court Judges § 5.01 (March 2000 rev.). Whether and how to instruct the jury will depend on the type and severity of the defendant's misconduct as well as the court's response to that misconduct.

First, in the case of a verbal outburst, the court may simply want to direct the jury to disregard it. For example, in *Norde v. Keane*, 294 F.3d 401, 405 (2d Cir. 2002), the Second Circuit quoted from the state court's caution to the jury after the defendant's outburst:

Now ladies and gentlemen, you just heard the defendant yell out in the courtroom. He's been instructed by me not to do that. And I am going to instruct you to disregard any statements that the defendant makes in this

courtroom[] other than if he should take the stand and testify. Just disregard it.

In *Norde*, the Second Circuit held that the defendant's rights had been protected but disapproved the trial court's further elaboration to the jury discussing the defendant's expressed desire to be represented by a different lawyer. 294 F.3d at 412.

Second, in some cases, the defendant's conduct may prompt the court to order the disruptive defendant restrained. Such action does not necessarily violate the defendant's rights, but it may prejudice the defendant in the eyes of the jury. *See Szuchon v. Lehman*, 273 F.3d 299 (3d Cir. 2001); *United States v. Brantley*, 2009 WL 2618811 (3d Cir. 2009) (non-precedential) (expressing concern about shackling but upholding conviction and discussing steps trial court must take before ordering defendant shackled); *see also Deck v. Missouri*, 544 U.S. 622 (2005); *Illinois v. Allen*, 397 U.S. 337 (1970). To the extent possible, the court should rely on restraints not visible to the jury. In *Wilson v. McCarthy*, 770 F.2d 1482 (9th Cir. 1985), the Ninth Circuit held that the trial court was not required to instruct the jury concerning the shackles used on the defendant in the absence of a defense request. Nevertheless, an instruction may be helpful. In *Szuchon*, the Third Circuit noted that the trial court had "carefully instructed the jury to remain focused solely on the evidence." 273 F.3d at 315. *See also United States v. Taylor*, 562 F.2d 1345 (2d Cir. 1977) (noting that the trial court had cured possible prejudice after jurors inadvertently observed the defendants in manacles through cautionary instruction "pointing out that the reason for some defendants (not identified by the court) being in custody while others were not was that some defendants were able to afford bail and others were not and that the jury was to draw no inference from whether or not a defendant was able to afford bail"); *United States v. Larkin*, 417 F.2d 617 (1st Cir. 1969) (noting that trial court gave cautionary instruction after jurors observed the defendant being transported in handcuffs, directing jury to disregard the fact that defendant was in custody and "that such custody was not unusual in this kind of case and had no bearing on defendant's guilt or innocence").

Finally, in some cases, the defendant's disruptive behavior may be so severe and persistent that the trial court removes the defendant from the courtroom. *See* Benchbook, § 5.01. The court should then instruct the jury that the absence is not related to the defendant's guilt on the charges and is not evidence in the case. The court must permit the absent defendant to communicate with counsel, either directly during the proceedings or at least at frequent intervals. In addition, if possible, the court should arrange a connection - video or at least audio - to allow the absent defendant to observe the court proceedings.

(Revised 12/2009)

2.35 Discharge of Defense Counsel During Trial

Even though *(name of defendant)* **was represented by a lawyer when this trial began, *(he)(she)* has decided to continue the trial representing *(himself)(herself)* and not to use the services of a lawyer. *(He)(She)* has a constitutional right to do that. *(His)(Her)* decision has no bearing on whether *(he)(she)* is guilty or not guilty, and it must not affect your consideration of the case.**

Because *(name of defendant)* **has decided to act as *(his)(her)* own lawyer, you will hear *(him)(her)* speak at various times during the trial. *(He)(She)* may make *(a)(an)* *(opening statement and)* closing argument. *(He)(She)* may ask questions of witnesses, make objections, and argue to the court. I want to remind you that when *(name of defendant)* speaks in these parts of the trial *(he)(she)* is acting as a lawyer in the case, and *(his)(her)* words are not evidence. The only evidence in the case is the testimony of witnesses under oath and exhibits admitted into evidence.**

Comment

This instruction is derived from Eighth Circuit § 2.22 and Federal Judicial Center § 6.

This instruction should be given when a defendant exercises the constitutional right under *Faretta v. California*, 422 U.S. 806 (1975), to waive the Sixth Amendment right to assistance of counsel and proceed pro se. In order to assure that the waiver is valid, the court should engage in a colloquy with the defendant such as the one suggested in § 1.02 of the Benchbook for U.S. District Court Judges (4th ed. 2000).

The instruction informs the jury of the defendant's choice to proceed pro se. In addition, it directs the jury to treat the words spoken by the defendant while functioning as counsel like those of any other lawyer and not to treat them as evidence in the case.

The court may appoint standby counsel to assist the pro se defendant. A pro se defendant is not constitutionally entitled to standby counsel or to hybrid representation, in which the defendant shares the role of counsel with standby counsel. *See McKaskle v. Wiggins*, 465 U.S. 168 (1984). Nevertheless, the trial court has discretion to permit either and may even appoint standby counsel over the defendant's objection. *See McKaskle*, 465 U.S. at 182-83; *Faretta*, 422 U.S. at 834 n.46. If the court appoints standby counsel, the court may wish to inform the jury of standby counsel's role in the case. *See also United States v. Bankoff*, 613 F.3d 358 (3d Cir. 2010) (holding trial court responded appropriately to defendant's request to proceed pro se made after commencement of trial; court deferred consideration of request until end of first day of trial, conducted full colloquy and then allowed defendant to conduct some aspects of trial and to rely on stand-by counsel for others).

(Revised 11/2010)

2.36 Prejudicial Publicity During Trial

I am advised that reports about this trial are appearing (*in the newspapers*) and/or (*on radio and television*) and/or (*on the Internet*). The reporter responsible for the story may not have listened to all of the testimony as you have and may be getting information from people who will not testify under oath and subject to cross-examination in this trial. In addition, the reporter may emphasize an unimportant point or may simply be wrong.

As I have instructed you (*throughout*)(*previously during*) this trial, you must avoid listening to or reading any media accounts of this trial on the radio, television or the internet and in the newspaper. You are required to disregard any and all reports which you have [(*read*)(*seen*)(*heard*)] [(*in the newspapers*) and/or (*on radio and television*) and/or (*on the Internet*)] and any statements or inferences contained therein. Such information is not part of the evidence in this case. You must not permit such information to influence your judgment in arriving at a true verdict in this case.

Do not read anything or listen to anything or watch anything with regard to this trial. If you are exposed to any publicity about this case, you must not discuss anything which you have seen, heard, or read with your fellow jurors at any time during the trial or your deliberations. The case must be decided by you solely and exclusively on the evidence which will be received here in court.

Comment

This instruction is derived from 1A O'Malley et al., supra, § 11.08, Sand et al., supra, 2-16 (Publicity--Reminder (Alternate Form)), and *United States v. DeLarosa*, 450 F.2d 1057 (3d Cir. 1971), *cert. denied*, 419 U.S. 1120 (1975).

The preliminary charge instructs the jury to consider only evidence deemed competent by the court and disregard any form of media coverage outside the courtroom. See Instruction 1.10 (Credibility of Witnesses). If jurors are later exposed to prejudicial publicity during the trial, the fairness of the trial has not necessarily been compromised, and the trial court has broad discretion to determine whether the defendant's right to a fair trial has been impaired. *United States v. DeLarosa*, 450 F.2d 1057 (3d Cir. 1971) *cert. denied*, 419 U.S. 1120 (1975). Typically, the trial court will voir dire the jury concerning exposure to the prejudicial publicity and give a cautionary instruction.

The Third Circuit addressed the appropriate measures in *United States v. DeLarosa*, 450 F.2d 1057 (3d Cir. 1971). In *DeLarosa*, two local newspapers reported on the second day of trial that shots were fired into the home of the government's chief witness. 450 F.2d at 1061. Upon learning of the publicity, the trial court conducted a voir dire and discovered that four jurors had seen the articles. 450 F.2d at 1061. The court then asked: "With the knowledge that you have of that article, do you feel that you are able to continue as a juror in this case, and decide the facts, and bring in a verdict based solely upon the facts you have heard in the courtroom and the evidence which has been adduced in the courtroom without being influenced . . . [by the articles]." 450 F.2d at 1062. When the jurors responded in the affirmative and assured the court that they had not shared the contents of the article with other jury members, the trial court denied motions for a mistrial. 450 F.2d at 1062.

In determining whether the trial court abused its discretion, the Third Circuit considered the cautionary instruction given by the court. 450 F.2d at 1062. Defense counsel had requested the following instruction:

You must disregard any and all reports which you have read, seen or heard in or through the news media; any statements or inferences contained therein. Such matters are not facts in evidence in this case because they are not relevant, competent or material to the issues which have been developed in this Courtroom. You must not permit such matters to influence your judgment in arriving at a true verdict in this case. 450 F.2d at 1062 n.3.

The trial court denied the request and, instead, instructed the jury:

You would violate your sworn duty if you base your verdict on anything but the evidence heard in the courtroom and these instructions on the law. 450 F.2d. at 1062.

The Third Circuit held that the combination of the voir dire and the instruction was sufficient to dispel any prejudice, but nevertheless remarked that "[I]t would have been better practice to give the charge requested [by counsel], which unmistakably prohibited

consideration by the jury of information obtained from the news media." 450 F.2d at 1062.

Similarly, in *United States v. Jackson*, 649 F.2d 967 (3d Cir. 1981), the Third Circuit held that the steps taken by the trial court adequately responded to the prejudicial publicity. In *Jackson*, many news reports concerning the case were circulating, and the unsequestered jury was on weekend recess. 649 F.2d at 974. When the trial resumed, defense counsel asked the court to inquire into whether the individual jurors had seen or heard news coverage of the case during the recess. 649 F.2d at 974. The trial court observed that it had "specifically, on more than one occasion, instructed the jury that they were not to read any newspaper accounts concerning the trial or listen to any radio or television accounts," and agreed to "inquire as to whether any of them have (read or listened to newspaper, radio and TV reports)," but would conduct an individual voir dire of only those jurors who said they had been exposed to publicity about the case. 649 F.2d at 974-75. The court addressed the jurors as follows:

Members of the jury, I want to again instruct you that during the course of the trial you must not discuss the case in any manner among yourselves or with anyone else, and you must not permit anyone to attempt to discuss it with you or in your presence, and insofar as the lawyers are concerned as well as others whom you may come to recognize as having some connection with the case, you are instructed that in order to avoid even the appearance of impropriety you should have no conversation whatever with those persons while you are serving on the jury.

You must also avoid reading any newspaper articles that might be published about the case now that the trial is in progress, and you must also avoid listening to or observing any broadcast news program on either television or radio because of the possibility that mention might be made of this case during such a broadcast.

The reasons for these cautions, of course, lies (sic) in the fact that it will be your duty to decide this case solely on the basis of the testimony and evidence presented during the trial without consideration of any other matters whatsoever.

If at any time during the trial you read or hear something outside the courtroom that you think will influence your decision, please bring it to my attention through the bailiff, Mrs. Flaherty.

Have any members of the jury since the beginning of this trial read any newspaper accounts or heard or listened to any radio or television accounts concerning this case and this trial?

649 F.2d at 975. There was no response, and the trial proceeded. The Third Circuit upheld the trial court's actions, stating:

To require the trial court to conduct an individual voir dire of all of the jurors, who have been repeatedly and properly instructed regarding news media reports,

whenever there are prejudicial news media reports, rather than to limit the voir dire to jurors, if any, who have seen or heard such reports, is not consistent with the 'large discretion' needed by the court to move the trial along both expeditiously and fairly.

649 F.2d at 975-76. Thus, the district court's general inquiry concerning the effect of media coverage on the bias of the jury, coupled with proper limiting instructions, did not amount to an abuse of discretion by the court. 649 F.2d. at 976.

If a juror acknowledges being exposed to publicity regarding the trial, the court should question that juror individually in the presence of counsel and the defendant. At that time, the court should consider including the following questions and admonition:

1. What publicity about the case have you read, seen or heard?
2. As a result of what you (read)(saw)(heard), have you been influenced in this case in any way?
3. As a result of what you have (read)(seen)(heard), have you formed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the defendant?
4. Can you disregard the publicity which you (read)(saw)(heard) and decide the case based solely on the evidence presented in court?
5. Have you discussed this publicity or your feelings about it with any of the other jurors? If so, what did you say to them and what response did you receive from them?
6. Do not discuss the publicity which you (read)(saw)(heard) or anything with reference to this discussion with any of the other jurors.

In combination with the suggested cautionary instruction, this inquiry and admonition should protect the trial from the effect of the prejudicial publicity.

2.37 Instructions Prior to Closing Arguments

Members of the jury, you have heard and seen all the evidence in this case. The lawyers now have the opportunity to present their closing arguments. Under the Rules of Criminal Procedure, the government will argue first, then the defense will present its closing argument(s), and finally the government may, if it chooses, argue in response or in rebuttal to the defense's argument(s).

Closing arguments are designed to present to you the parties' theories about what the evidence has shown and what conclusions may be drawn from the evidence. Remember, what is said in closing arguments is not evidence. You have already heard and seen all the evidence in this case.

After the lawyers present their closing arguments, I will give you my final instructions concerning the law that you must apply to the evidence in reaching your verdict. Although the lawyers may mention points of law in their closing arguments, the law that you must follow in reaching your verdict is the law that I will give you in my final instructions. If there is any difference between what the lawyers say about the law and what I tell you in my final instructions, you must follow my instructions.

Comment

Neither O'Malley nor any of the other Circuits suggest model instructions to be given before closing arguments. This instruction is included here for trial judges who may want to explain again the nature, purpose, and limits of closing arguments. The points covered are also covered in certain preliminary and final instructions. *See* Instructions 1.02 (Role of the Jury), 1.07 (Description of Trial Proceedings), 1.08

(Evidence (What Is)), 3.01 (Role of the Jury), and 3.02 (Evidence). This instruction should be modified if final instructions will be given before closing arguments.