**Sample Interview Script**

*[These are the standard introductory comments, the admonition, and the ending questions an investigating committee might ask during a routine interview.]*

**At the beginning of the interview, say:**

Thank you for meeting with us today for this interview. I’m \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . And let me introduce the other members of our committee. [*Introduce them or ask them to introduce themselves.*]

As a standard practice, we record all of our interviews so we can be sure that our notes are complete and accurate. Do I have your permission to record this interview?

[*If yes, start the recorder and then say the following*]

For the record, today’s date is \_\_\_\_\_\_ and the time is \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Please state your name and spell your last name.

Please acknowledge that you agree that this interview may be recorded.

Have you ever met with a grand jury before?

*[If no, or if further explanation is needed, say:)]*

Let me tell you a little about what we do. Each county in California has a grand jury. Each year, the grand jury looks into the operations of local governmental entities and in some instances, writes a report about its findings. The investigation is ordinarily based on research and a number of interviews.

If the grand jury identifies any problems with the entity’s operations and chooses to write a report, the report must provide recommendations about how those operations might be improved.

Unless a report is written and approved by the court, all aspects of our investigations must remain confidential.

Under state law, grand jury reports cannot directly or indirectly identify any witnesses. The grand jurors are sworn to secrecy for life and witnesses are also obligated to maintain secrecy until after a report is issued.

All grand jury interviews are confidential. As grand jurors, we are required by law, under oath, to preserve this confidentiality forever. We may never discuss any aspect of our investigations, including naming anyone we interview. So you should feel free to speak openly and honestly, knowing that your identity and statements are fully protected.

Do you have any questions about confidentiality?

I am now going to administer an admonition that obligates you to keep secret anything that any of us says during this interview.

*[Read the admonition aloud. At in-person interviews, have the witness sign two copies; at the end of the interview, you will give one of them to the witness. At remote interviews, say that you will email them a copy of the admonition immediately after the interview.]*

I will be conducting the interview, based on a list of questions we’ve prepared. The other jurors might ask clarifying questions as we go along or follow-up questions at the end.

*[The lead interviewer asks the questions from your list, plus any follow-up questions needed to clarify or expand the witness’s answers.]*

**[After the lead interviewer has asked all the questions on the list and any follow-up questions:]**

I’m now going to turn this over to the other jurors so they can ask any follow-up questions they might have.

*[Invite each juror to ask additional questions. Go around the table twice to be sure that all questions are asked (so you won’t need to come back for a second interview). Make sure you have fully explored any operational problems or shortcomings the witness has information about and any solutions the witness might suggest.]*

**Final standard questions**:

Is there anything else we should know about this topic?

Is there anyone else we can speak with who has pertinent information about this topic*? [If so, get the person’s full name, title, and contact information.]*

[*If relevant*:]

You said you would provide us some documents. *[Give the witness a list that has been kept by one of the jurors during the interview. Keep a list for the committee as well.]*

When and how can we get those documents?

Are there any (other) documents that relate to this topic? *[If so, have the witness describe them, and determine how the committee will get copies of them.]*

That concludes our interview.

At this point, I need to remind you of the admonition you signed. *[Provide one of the signed copies to the witness (at an in-person interview) or say you will email them a copy (if the interview is conducted remotely).]*

Please remember that you cannot reveal to anyone any of the information you learned today, or any of our questions or any of your answers.

Do you agree to maintain confidentiality?

Thank you very much for meeting with us. We will get back in touch if there is anything additional we need from you.