

Did you know?

February 2002

CRIMINAL COURT PROCESS (PART 2)

As mentioned in the Did you Know? fact sheet, "Criminal Court Process (Part1)", the arraignment hearing is a hearing that follows the initial appearance. Unlike the initial appearance, where you appear in front of the Justice of the Peace, the arraignment hearing appearance is in front of a judge.

What happens at this hearing?

One of two things will usually take place at this hearing:

1) If you have decided to plead guilty, you can have the guilty plea done at this time. This means that you admit to the crime, and want to go ahead and get sentenced by the judge.

Always get legal advice before pleading guilty. You can get assistance and advice from the criminal duty counsel lawyers available at the courthouse.

2) If you are not pleading guilty, the judge will review with you or your lawyer the arraignment report. This report deals with what can be admitted at the time of the trial, the number of witnesses, and the time estimates for a trial. If you do not have a lawyer, you must fill out this report yourself. If you have a lawyer, it is not essential for you to be present at this hearing, and the lawyer can fill out the report and deal with it on your behalf at this time.

If you have been refused legal aid and cannot afford a lawyer, you may be able to get assistance from the **UBC Law Students**. You can call them at :**(604)822-5791**. They can assist you in dealing with minor and non-serious charges.