Did You Know?

….That the Grand Jury is totally independent of all other government bodies? Answering only to the judicial branch, which oversees its organizational functions, the Grand Jury is permitted exclusive access to all areas of county government.

….That the Grand Jury is not subject to the open meetings laws dictated by the Brown Act? Every internal function of the Grand Jury is held in the utmost secrecy, to ensure the right to privacy of the citizens it represents.

….That, by law, all of the Grand Jury's investigations, interviews and inquires are conducted with complete confidentiality for all parties involved? In order to protect the persons testifying, Grand Jury interviews, whenever possible, are conducted in the designated meeting room.

….That the contents of all Grand Jury interviews, including witness identities and their sources, are held in complete confidentiality? This is meant to protect the privacy of all parties involved.

….That all investigations by the Grand Jury, and any ensuing reports, must be completely evidence-based? Hearsay and other examples of insubstantial evidence is not considered by the Grand Jury.

….That at no time can fewer than two members of the Grand Jury conduct an interview or investigation? The Grand Jury always strives for the participation of as many jurors as is necessary to conduct full, substantial inquiries into governmental matters.

….That criminal investigations are normally initiated by the county's District Attorney, and not by the Grand Jury, except in rare cases? Civil matters are usually the sole domain of the Grand Jury.

….That the Grand Jury's discretion is what decides whether any matter is taken under advisement? All issues brought to the Grand Jury are considered for investigation, until a decision is made as to their value.

….That all detention facilities in the county are subject to inspection by the Grand Jury each and every year? The state's Penal Code mandates this, and a report is filed by the Grand Jury at the end of each fiscal year as to the state of the local jail facility.

….That citizens who submit complaints to the Grand Jury are not notified at any time as to the status of their complaints? This is to ensure the confidentiality of any and all persons named in the documents.

….That reports from the Grand Jury may or may not be made public? The discretion of the Grand Jury dictates the need for the public to know the findings, if any, from all investigations.

….That the Grand Jury has the power to issue subpoenas, through the office of the District Attorney? Witnesses to be interviewed by the Grand Jury are sometimes summoned through this method.

….That all persons, including members of the Grand Jury themselves, are subject to fines for violating any aspect of the confidentiality rules that bind them? This applies also to citizens who are interviewed by the Grand Jury, and are advised of this fact upon their meeting with jurors.

….That any person summoned to a Grand Jury interview is required only to inform their employers of that fact? No other information pertaining to the Grand Jury meeting should be released by the witness to anyone.