

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA) Case No. 24 CR 00424
)
vs.)
)
FRANCESCO DISTEFANO,) Chicago, Illinois
) April 24, 2025
Defendants.) 9:31 a.m.

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS - MOTION HEARING
BEFORE THE HONORABLE JEREMY C. DANIEL

APPEARANCES:

For the Government: MR. ANDREW S. BOUTROS
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
BY: MR. JEFFREY S. SNELL
219 S. Dearborn Street, 5th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60604

For Defendant: FISHER LEVINE LAW GROUP, LLP
BY: MR. ROBERT A. FISHER
20 S. Clark Street, Suite 700
Chicago, Illinois 60603

Court Reporter: KRISTA BURGESSON, CSR, RMR, CRR
219 S. Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60604
312-435-5567
krista_burgesson@ilnd.uscourts.gov

* * * * *

PROCEEDINGS REPORTED BY STENOTYPE
TRANSCRIPT PRODUCED USING COMPUTER-AIDED TRANSCRIPTION

1 (Proceedings heard in open court:)

2 THE CLERK: 24 CR 424, USA versus Distefano for motion
3 hearing.

4 MR. SNELL: Good morning, Your Honor. Jeff Snell on
5 behalf of the United States.

6 THE COURT: Good morning.

7 MR. FISHER: Good morning, Your Honor. Robert Fisher
8 on behalf of Francesco Distefano, who is present.

9 THE COURT: Good morning.

10 And good morning, Mr. Distefano.

11 THE DEFENDANT: Good morning, Your Honor.

12 THE COURT: All right.

13 We are here on a motion to set conditions of pre-trial
14 release.

15 MR. SNELL: Yes, Your Honor.

16 MR. FISHER: Yes, Judge.

17 THE COURT: Do we have the forms prepared?

18 MR. FISHER: We do.

19 MR. SNELL: Yes, Your Honor.

20 THE COURT: Can I see them?

21 PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OFFICER: And good morning, Your
22 Honor. Tiffany Minarik with Pre-Trial Services.

23 THE COURT: Sorry. Good morning.

24 The motion didn't give a definitive position from the
25 government on whether it agrees to these conditions.

1 Are these conditions okay with the government?

2 MR. SNELL: They are, Your Honor. The conditions have
3 now been agreed to by the government, Pre-Trial Services, and
4 the defendant.

5 THE COURT: Ms. Minarik, Pre-Trial Services is in
6 agreement?

7 PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OFFICER: That is correct, Your
8 Honor.

9 THE COURT: And as I understand it, this is a secured
10 bond of \$1 million secured by two properties in Addison,
11 Illinois?

12 MR. FISHER: That is correct.

13 THE COURT: And where will the defendant reside while
14 on pre-trial release?

15 MR. FISHER: 733 North 8th Avenue, Addison, Illinois.

16 I had incorrectly stated the other house in my motion
17 and had intended to ask to amend it. The family owns these two
18 houses in a Distefano trust and I confused which one he would
19 be living at.

20 THE COURT: And are the beneficiaries of the trust
21 here?

22 MR. FISHER: They are.

23 THE COURT: Where are they?

24 MR. FISHER: Connie and Sam Distefano.

25 Do you wish them to approach?

1 THE COURT: If you are comfortable you can stay at
2 counsel table or you can step up.

3 MRS. DISTEFANO: We are fine here.

4 THE COURT: If you could state your name into the
5 microphone.

6 MR. DISTEFANO: Sam Distefano.

7 MRS. DISTEFANO: Connie Distefano.

8 THE COURT: Okay.

9 Mr. and Mrs. Distefano, you understand that you are
10 alleging these two properties to serve as security for
11 Francesco Distefano?

12 MRS. DISTEFANO: Yes, Your Honor.

13 MR. DISTEFANO: Yes.

14 THE COURT: And you understand that should he fail to
15 appear at Court ordered hearings, you are at risk of losing one
16 or both of these properties?

17 MRS. DISTEFANO: We understand, Your Honor, yes.

18 MR. DISTEFANO: Yes.

19 THE COURT: And you are both willing to undertake that
20 risk?

21 MRS. DISTEFANO: Yes, we are.

22 MR. DISTEFANO: Yes.

23 THE COURT: And to be clear, should he fail to appear
24 at a Court ordered hearing and I issue a warrant for his
25 arrest, even if the government were to take him into custody,

1 his failure to appear would be grounds to take the security for
2 his bond.

3 Do you understand that?

4 MRS. DISTEFANO: We do. It was fully explained to us.
5 We understand.

6 THE COURT: And I hope none of that comes to pass, but
7 I want to make sure you know, despite knowing that you are
8 willing to put up these properties.

9 Now that I have so many Distefanos, I will refer to
10 you today as the defendant so that we know who I am speaking
11 with.

12 So everyone is in agreement that you can be released
13 on pre-trial -- under pre-trial conditions.

14 You have reviewed the documents and it seems like you
15 have signed them, correct?

16 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

17 THE COURT: So I am going to go through the conditions
18 with you and then I will give you -- tell you briefly what my
19 expectations are.

20 The first condition is that you must not violate
21 federal, state, or local law, while on release.

22 I would assume that if you were required to give a DNA
23 sample that has been collected.

24 You have to work with your Pre-Trial Services officer,
25 meaning you have to report to them as ordered, and failure to

1 do so could be viewed as a violation of the terms of your
2 pre-trial release.

3 Your attorney will likely communicate any Court
4 appearances that you need to appear at.

5 There is no third-party custodian, but you will be on
6 home incarceration, which we will cover in a moment.

7 You will submit to supervision by and report to
8 Pre-Trial Services.

9 You will surrender any passport in your possession to
10 the government. You will not obtain or attempt to obtain any
11 other passport or international travel document.

12 I have got 7(g) checked, and it says, avoid all
13 contact directly or indirectly with any person who is or may be
14 a victim or witness in the investigation or prosecution.

15 I will ask first, counsel, what that means? Like how
16 many witnesses are we talking? I know there is one
17 co-defendant, but can we be a bit more specific?

18 MR. SNELL: Yes, Your Honor.

19 That is specifically contemplated with respect to two
20 people, the first being the co-defendant Sargis Urumieh and the
21 second being an individual named Alfredo Manslow (phonetic).

22 So Mr. Fisher, is that your understanding of what 7(g)
23 is referring to as well?

24 MR. FISHER: Yes, Judge.

25 THE COURT: And Mr. Distefano, you understand you are

1 not to have contact with those individuals?

2 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

3 THE COURT: Specifically those individuals, but
4 otherwise, any folks that you come to learn to be a victim or a
5 witness in the investigation.

6 You are ordered to get medical or psychiatric
7 treatment as directed by Pre-Trial Services.

8 You are not to possess a firearm, destructive device,
9 or any other weapon.

10 You are not to use alcohol excessively, excessively
11 typically would mean to a point where you would be above the
12 legal limit to operate a motor vehicle. That is one metric.
13 Of course if you were to indulge in alcohol and create a ruckus
14 such that it were to violate a federal, state, or local law,
15 that can also be a problem tied to alcohol. So I encourage you
16 to exercise discretion and restraint in that respect.

17 You are not to use or unlawfully possess a narcotic
18 drug or other controlled substance unless prescribed by a
19 licensed medical practitioner.

20 You are to submit to testing for a prohibited
21 substance if required by the Pre-Trial Services officer.

22 And then you are restricted to your home, or to this
23 733 North 8th Avenue address, 24 hours a day, except for
24 medical necessities and court appearances, or other activities
25 specifically approved by the Court.

1 This is where working with your Pre-Trial Services
2 officer is important, because if there is a medical necessity
3 that comes about, you need to communicate with them to
4 authorize movement ahead of time. Medical emergency, that
5 might be an exception, but if that happens, I am going to
6 expect to see proof that you were transported in an ambulance
7 and it was a true medical emergency. In other words, if there
8 is any opportunity to notify Pre-Trial Services ahead of time,
9 I expect you to do that.

10 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, your Honor.

11 THE COURT: You will submit to location monitoring as
12 directed by the Pre-Trial Services office.

13 And you will report as soon as possible to Pre-Trial
14 Services or the supervising officer every contact with law
15 enforcement personnel including arrests, questioning, or
16 traffic stops. There is no explanation. If there is contact
17 with law enforcement, and there shouldn't be because you will
18 be at home 24 hours a day, but if for some reason there is
19 contact, exercise caution and report it to the Pre-Trial
20 Services office.

21 THE DEFENDANT: Understood.

22 THE COURT: You are to comply with all Court ordered
23 conditions in Cook County case number 22 CR 622401.

24 And you are to report to Pre-Trial Services for
25 installation of the electronic monitoring equipment within two

1 business days.

2 Any current and future employment must be approved by
3 the Court to mitigate any third-party risk and to --
4 practically, just to lessen the conditions, because I guess you
5 could work from home, but any outside employment would require
6 a modification to the home incarceration condition.

7 You have had the opportunity to review the forms that
8 you signed with your lawyer?

9 THE DEFENDANT: Yes, Your Honor.

10 THE COURT: And do we know where he is currently
11 detained?

12 MR. FISHER: Kankakee.

13 THE COURT: Okay.

14 MR. FISHER: Judge, may I include -- I know in our
15 email go-arounds with the order, attorney visits as disclosed
16 to Pre-Trial and approved by them.

17 THE COURT: Any objection from the government?

18 MR. SNELL: No objection, Your Honor.

19 THE COURT: And from Pre-Trial Services?

20 PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OFFICER: No, Your Honor.

21 THE COURT: I will handwrite in -- I will put an
22 asterisk next to the home incarceration, and at the bottom I
23 will write, pre-approved by Pre-Trial Services attorney visits.

24 MR. FISHER: Thank you.

25 THE DEFENDANT: Thank you, Your Honor.

1 THE COURT: So it reads, pre-approved by Pre-Trial
2 Service attorney visits are approved by the Court, but
3 understand I stress the pre-approved because what you don't
4 want is someone saying, where is he or why is he not within
5 range of the electronic monitoring equipment. It just creates
6 a bad framework for the approach. We shouldn't have to answer
7 those questions, because in agreeing to release you, I am
8 expecting to know or at least have Pre-Trial Services know
9 where you are.

10 THE DEFENDANT: Understood, Your Honor.

11 THE COURT: Okay. So I will sign these.

12 I believe you will have to be transported back to
13 Kankakee and will be released from there; is that correct,
14 Marshals?

15 THE MARSHAL: Correct.

16 THE COURT: All right.

17 Anything else from the government's perspective that I
18 need to address?

19 MR. SNELL: No, Your Honor.

20 Thank you.

21 THE DEFENDANT: Your Honor, I have a question for my
22 attorney.

23 THE COURT: One second.

24 We will need signatures from Mr. and Mrs. Distefano on
25 the surety form.

1 MR. SNELL: Your Honor, I spoke a second ago, and I am
2 informed there is a rider with respect to the collateral just
3 to -- it will have to be signed by the defendant and the
4 sureties, but then there is also a signature line for Your
5 Honor, that if anything changes with respect to conditions of
6 release, it could make it more stringent or less stringent, but
7 if more stringent, then the sureties' collateral would still be
8 liable even if the conditions changed.

9 THE COURT: Okay.

10 And Ms. Bissell, good morning.

11 MS. BISSELL: Good morning.

12 THE COURT: You will correct me if I am wrong on any
13 of this, but for Mr. and Mrs. Distefano, what this rider is, as
14 I understand it, today I have gone through the conditions of
15 Mr. Distefano's release.

16 There may come a time, as I have already alluded to,
17 where perhaps he wants to lessen the restrictions, meaning
18 maybe he wants to get approval to go to work four hours a day
19 or something like that. The way that works is the parties will
20 talk, they will then file a motion and ask me to modify the
21 conditions of release, and by allowing him more movement in
22 theory that could change the risk that you are agreeing to.

23 So what this rider does is it says that if I were to
24 exercise my discretion and change the conditions of release,
25 these two properties remain security for his release; is that

1 okay with you, Ms. Distefano?

2 MRS. DISTEFANO: Yes, we understand.

3 THE COURT: And Mr. Distefano?

4 MR. DISTEFANO: Yes.

5 THE COURT: Did I get that right, Ms. Bissell?

6 MS. BISSELL: Basically if there is an increase or
7 decrease, their ability to -- it is basically saying that the
8 government doesn't have to tell them it is coming up, it is on
9 their son and it is on their son's counsel to let them know
10 there is going to be changes so that they can say, we don't
11 feel comfortable, or great.

12 THE COURT: Right.

13 MS. BISSELL: That's basically it.

14 THE COURT: So you are telling me now you are
15 comfortable with any changes that I were to make?

16 MRS. DISTEFANO: Yes, we are, sir.

17 MR. DISTEFANO: Yes.

18 THE COURT: Okay.

19 So everything is signed. I would imagine he will be
20 returned to Kane or Kankakee, whichever it was, and be
21 processed out.

22 Anything else from Pre-Trial Services?

23 PRE-TRIAL SERVICES OFFICER: No, Your Honor.

24 THE COURT: For the government?

25 MR. SNELL: No, thank you.

1 THE COURT: Mr. Fisher?

2 MR. FISHER: No, sir.

3 Thank you.

4 THE COURT: Mr. Distefano, I hope to only see you at
5 required court appearances, and I wish you well on release.

6 THE DEFENDANT: Thank you so much, Your Honor.

7 Have a great week.

8 (Proceedings concluded at 9:51 a.m.)

9

10 * * * * *

11 I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript
12 of the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

13

14 /s/Krista Burgeson, CSR, RMR, CRR
15 Official Court Reporter

October 14, 2026
Date

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25