

Character Letters for Peppy

A character witness letter, also known as a character reference letter, is typically written by someone who knows the defendant well and can speak to their character, integrity, and positive qualities. This letter will be presented to the judge to help provide context about the defendant's behavior and personality.

We are soliciting character letters for Peppy's upcoming sentencing hearing.

Should I write a letter for Peppy? Maybe. Character witnesses should not be indictable in the present case, nor be involved in any other potentially indictable or felony-level activities. Character letters are public record, so if you don't want to be publicly linked to the defendant, don't write one.

Where should I send my letter? Please send your letter to freepeppyandkrystal@riseup.net. We will submit it on your behalf.

What should my letter say? Below is a guide to help you write an effective character witness letter. Remember the point of the letter is to support his case in front of the judge. Do not make political arguments or inflammatory statements in your letter. Stay focused on his good qualities and his peaceful, non-violent nature. Use his legal name: Brian Dipippa.

1. Format the Letter Properly

- **Use Professional Formatting:** Write the letter in a formal format, including your name, address, phone number, and email at the top.
- **Date:** Include the date when the letter is being written.
- **Recipient's Details:** Address the letter to:

Honorable J. Nicholas Ranjan, Judge
United States District Court
Joseph F. Weis, Jr. U.S. Courthouse
700 Grant Street,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

Re: United States v. Brian Dipippa
2:23-cr-00146-NR

2. Introduce Yourself

- **Identify Yourself:** Start with a brief introduction about who you are. Include your name, occupation, and how you know the defendant.
- **Explain Your Relationship:** Describe your relationship with Brian and how long you have known him. This helps establish the credibility and relevance of your opinion.

3. State the Purpose of the Letter

- **Explain the Reason:** Clearly state that you are writing to provide a character reference for Brian Dipppa who is facing sentencing.
- **Express Your Support:** Briefly mention your support for Brian and why you believe the letter is important.

4. Describe the Defendant's Character

- **Highlight Positive Traits:** Focus on positive qualities such as honesty, kindness, work ethic, responsibility, or community involvement.
- **Give Specific Examples:** Provide concrete examples that demonstrate the defendant's admirable character. For instance, you could describe volunteering, advocacy, examples of kind and supportive behavior, or other examples that demonstrate positive qualities.

5. Express Hope for a Lenient Sentence

- **Advocate for Leniency:** Politely request leniency, expressing your belief that the defendant is committed to making positive changes.
- **Offer Support:** Mention any ways you or others are willing to support the defendant (e.g., by offering a job, helping with community service, or providing a stable environment).

6. Conclude the Letter

- **Reiterate Your Support:** Conclude by reaffirming your belief in the defendant's character and your hope for a positive outcome. Offer to be present, either in person or by videoconference or other means to testify on Brian's behalf.
- **Thank the Judge:** Express gratitude to the judge for considering your letter.
- **Sign Off Properly:** Use a formal closing like "Sincerely" or "Respectfully," and sign your name.

7. Proofread and Edit

- **Check for Errors:** Ensure the letter is free of grammatical errors and typos.
- **Keep It Concise:** Aim for a letter that is one to two pages in length. Make sure it is concise and to the point.

Sample Character Witness Letters

Dear Judge Ranjan:

I am writing on behalf of my former colleague Brian Dipippa. I retired in April as the News Co- Director at Radio Station KPFA-FM in Berkeley after a 44 year long career there. During my last eight years, Brian served as the chief engineer.

I had the chance to interact most closely with Brian during a six month period between October of 2020 and April of 2021 when KPFA's General Manager organized regular 90 minute management training sessions with an independent facilitator, usually attended by nine managers and supervisors. Brian was calm and reflective during these sessions and demonstrated a commitment to the principles of "nonviolent communication".

As KPFA's chief engineer he operated in an open and empathetic way while troubleshooting multiple technical issues in a high-stress environment. He kept his calm even while fielding competing staff demands and occasional equipment malfunctions caused by earthquakes, subterranean flooding and more. Another example stands out. After Brian had invested many hours to investigate and coordinate with an outside vendor to provide new News Department recording and playback software, one of our news staff lodged an objection and insisted we revert to the previous software. Even though I knew Brian disagreed with the request, he agreed to go along with the proposal, saying he wanted to best serve the needs of the staff he was supporting.

During my eight years of interacting with Brian I found him to be hard working, trustworthy, principled and an adherent of open communication. I would be happy to testify to any of the above under oath. Thank you for taking the time to consider my comments.

Sincerely,

Dear Honorable Judge Rangan,

I write of behalf of Brian DiPippa, currently detained at Butler County Prison. My understanding is that you will be holding a hearing to adjudicate his further detention. I hoped to take this opportunity to offer my support to Mr. DiPippa and offer my hopes that you will allow reasonable bail toward his pretrial release. I do not believe in any regard that he poses a flight risk or a threat to the community. If anything, the reverse.

I have known Mr. Di Pippa for approximately a dozen years. I am a native of Oakland, CA, and Mr. DiPippa spent some amount of time in and around the Bay Area. I know him both socially - we met through common friends engaged in community support work and professionally, in his guise as a website technician/IT person.

His main work was for KPFA, one of California's two most venerable sister stations in public radio. The station has a storied history. It has served as a community voice and outlet for three- quarters of a century. During that time, beloved and successful, it grew to considerable size, prestige, and professionalism. Its employees tend to be both open- and

civic-minded; at the same time, it operates at a scope and level of seriousness that it vets employees with care, and is scarcely a home for malcontents and ne'er-do-wells. Progressive professionalism is its watchword and it is no small matter that Mr. DiPippa found employment there.

But he also donated his skills to various community-based projects. I myself have tried in small ways, beyond being a university teacher, to take part in shared community projects, and it was in this guise that I met Mr. DiPippa. I helped run a small, non-profit poetry press (is there any other kind?). We had a website and not much skill in making it work. Mr. DiPippa made himself available to offer. Technical support and know-how. In this regard I know him as kind, funny, generous, pacific, and humane. I am a literature professor and though I have done my best to learn, I am often at a loss when it comes to tech stuff; Brian was always knowledgeable, patient, and willing to offer his expertise even when we could not pay. I have no doubt our efforts to support the local literary community would have come to nought without his help.

I cannot of course render any opinion as to the matters for which he faces trial, other than to say, the accusations do not comport with my own experiences. But I can say with authority that Mr. DiPippa is honorable, dependable, and committed to being deeply woven into the fabric of his community wherever he is. For these reasons it strikes me as wholly implausible that he would be a risk to have at large, or that he would abandon his friends and family, or that he would put himself or anyone else at risk. I hope very much you will consider allowing him to return to his community as he faces both trial and his human obligations.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read and consider this plea. If there is any further way that I can offer assistance either to the court or to Mr. DiPippa, I hope you will let me know; I am happy to be physically (my job allowing) or virtually present for some portion of the trial, as a form of civic duty to the court and to justice.

With regards,

To the Honorable Judge Ranjan:

I have been asked to write a letter to the Court on Brian's behalf to help the Court address his continued detention.

I've known Brian for about a decade, having been friends and, briefly, coworkers in the San Francisco Bay Area some years back. I hold him in high esteem. He is someone who is

always available to help friends and family, and to support people in need within the larger community.

I have a personal and concrete example of this. When my partner and I were expecting the birth of our daughter in 2019, I mentioned how tight our finances were to Brian in casual conversation about the high cost of living in the Bay Area and all the expenses coming down the pipe for us. Without any solicitation from me (indeed, I didn't know there was an opening), Brian found a part-time job for me helping out at his radio station, drawing on some previous experience and supplementing my income at a time when that was really needed. It's a small gesture, but I offer it just as a snapshot of Brian's character. He's the kind of person who will hear a friend talk about that kind of worry or struggle, and then promptly set about trying to find an avenue to offer some help. I all but guarantee you there are many people with similar stories - small gestures from Brian with big impacts for them, offered simply because it's a kind and right thing to do.

I could write more about his genial manner, intellectual curiosity, sense of humor, and so forth, but I just offer this glimpse of my friend. We'd eat lunch together sometimes during my tenure at KPFA, and he was known by everyone wherever we went - restaurant cashier and supermarket workers, unhoused folks and buskers on Berkeley street corners, just random passersby. He's the kind of person who makes connections, listens to everyone regardless of their social status, and extends a helping hand. I hope this helps paint a fuller picture of the person before you.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the contents of this letter. I can make myself available to be present, either in person or by videoconference or other means, if I am needed to testify on Brian's behalf.

Sincerely

Your Honor,

I am writing this letter on behalf of my friend, Brian DiPippa, to address his continued detention.

I have known Brian for over six years, since 2017. During that time, Brian has consistently been a person of high integrity and strong character. I know him to be reliable and dependable, and his commitment to building and supporting communities of care and mutual support is central to how he moves through the world. In addition to his stable work and volunteer role, he has a strong network of people who love and support him, and to

whom he is dedicated and accountable in his daily life.

I am Brian's friend and not his therapist, but my work and training as a clinical social worker and marriage and family therapist do give me a level of experience that shapes how I view, assess, and experience the character of people in my life. I deeply appreciate Brian's consistent commitment to not only showing up in respectful, caring ways in all of his interactions with both loved ones and strangers, but also to continued growth and learning in these areas. He is honest and forthright, trustworthy, and a beautiful combination of deeply principled and open-hearted.

Even through his detention, Brian continues to demonstrate a positive mental attitude and respect for everyone around him, inmates and officers alike. I know that his empathy and his nonviolent communication skills continue to be assets and skills that he brings to all of his interactions, and that he will continue to do so.

I appreciate your consideration of my letter in support of Brian's pre-trial release, and I am available to testify on his behalf if you have questions regarding my support for Brian or the contents of this letter.

Sincerely,
