

Beat: Politics

Obama sworn in for second term during low-key ceremony

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USPA News - U.S. President Barack Obama on Sunday took the oath of office for his second term during a small and low-key ceremony at the White House in Washington, D.C. Both Obama and Vice President Joe Biden will repeat their oaths on Monday during a public inauguration ceremony. Only about a dozen people attended the administration of the oath of office which took place in the Blue Room, which is one of the oval rooms and the formal reception room in the White House.

The event began at approximately 11:55 a.m. Eastern time and lasted just over a minute. The U.S. Constitution requires that both Biden and Obama are sworn in before noon local time on January 20, when the presidential term expires and a new one begins. Biden earlier took the oath of office during a small ceremony with friends and family at his official residence at the United States Naval Observatory in the U.S. capital. Unlike Biden's swearing-in, which took place at 8:15 a.m. Eastern time, Obama's inauguration by Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts was broadcast live on television. Roberts was first to enter the Blue Room, followed by Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, and their two daughters Sasha and Malia. Both men recited the oath carefully and resolutely without any hint of trouble. During the first inauguration in January 2009, both Roberts and Obama made several mistakes as they recited the oath, leading to public discussion whether Obama should retake the oath and say it as outlined in the U.S. Constitution. A second oath ceremony took place the following day at the White House. But there were no mistakes during Sunday's ceremony, and Obama hugged his wife and daughters after taking the oath of office. Although not visible on camera, a dozen family members of the Obamas were seated in the Blue Room and clapped after Obama was sworn in for his second term. Also attending was Justice Roberts' wife Jane. At the end of the 35-word oath, Roberts said "Congratulations, Mr. President" as they shook hands. Obama replied, saying: "Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice. Thank you so much." Both men seemed warm, but formal, with no hint of animosity even though then-Senator Obama voted against confirming Roberts as Chief Justice in 2005. Obama told Michelle "Thank you, sweetie" after she congratulated him. Sasha was also caught on microphone, telling her father he did a "good job." "I did it," Obama told her. "You didn't mess up," Sasha responded, apparently referring to the mistakes he made during the 2009 inauguration. The bible used during the ceremony was the First Lady's Family Bible, which was held by Michelle during Sunday's inauguration. According to the Presidential Inaugural Committee, the bible was a gift from the First Lady's father, Fraser Robinson III, to his mother, LaVaughn Delores Robinson, on Mother's Day in 1958. Both Biden and Obama will repeat their oaths on Monday during a public inauguration ceremony which takes place at the U.S. Capitol. District of Columbia's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency estimates between 500,000 and 700,000 people will attend the public inauguration.

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