**GUIDELINES FOR WORKING
WITH COURT INTERPRETERS**
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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH
INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR SERVICES
www.jud.ct.gov

Please follow these recommendations to maximize the effectiveness of your communications with limited English proficient (LEP) individuals through the assistance of a court interpreter for in-court and out-of-court proceedings:

• Brief the court interpreter on the nature and purpose of the encounter.

• Share information and allow the court interpreter to have access to documents that will be used during the interaction with the LEP individual. Interpreters take an oath of confidentiality.

• A well informed court interpreter allows for a smooth encounter and for accurate interpretation.

• Court interpreters are bound by a code of professional responsibility, which imposes ethical restrictions on interpreter conduct.

• Court interpreters are not advocates, and may not have one-on-one conversations with LEP individuals. They cannot explain, restate information, or give advice. These limitations also apply to filling out and filing documents.

• Depending on the type of proceeding, the interpreter will interpret simultaneously or consecutively.

• Expect the court interpreter to interpret **everything** that is said during the encounter, even if it is directed to someone else.

• Speak directly and clearly to the LEP individual and maintain eye contact with them (not the interpreter).

• Communicate directly with the LEP individual as if there were no interpreter present. Avoid statements such as "tell them this," "they said," or "can you find out from them."

• To the extent possible, avoid acronyms, abbreviations, idiomatic phrases, colloquial terms, and legal jargon. Avoid questions posed as double negatives. Clarify specialized concepts and terms.

• Be aware of the interpreter's impartial role, and avoid asking the interpreter for their opinion or for any comments.

• Be aware of cultural and linguistic differences. The interpreter's goal is to provide meaningful access to the court through accurate and effective interpretation.

• Interpreters are not able to interpret audio or video recordings as they are being admitted into evidence.

Court interpreters are appointed to serve the court. As officers of the court, they are bound by a professional code of ethics. The Code of Professional Responsibility for Court Interpreters of the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch can be found on the back of this form.

Please contact the Interpreter and Translator Services Unit for any feedback and/or questions at 860-706-5042.

ADA NOTICE

The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA, contact the Centralized ADA Office at **860-706-5310** or go to: www.jud.ct.gov/ADA/

Code of Professional Responsibility for Court Interpreters of the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch

Canon 1.   Court interpreters shall act strictly in the interest of the court they serve.

Canon 2.   Court interpreters shall reflect proper decorum and behave with dignity and respect toward court officers and personnel.

Canon 3.   Court interpreters shall avoid professional or personal conduct which could discredit the court.

Canon 4.   Court interpreters shall not disclose any information of a confidential nature about court cases they obtain while performing interpreting duties.

Canon 5.   Court interpreter shall respect the need for confidentiality and secrecy as protected under applicable state and federal law. Interpreters shall disclose to the court, and to the parties in a case, any prior involvement with the case, or involvement with the parties or others significantly involved in the case.

Canon 6.   Court interpreters shall work unobtrusively, with full awareness of the nature of the proceedings.

Canon 7.   Court interpreters shall interpret accurately and faithfully without indicating any personal bias, avoiding even the appearance of partiality.

Canon 8.   Court interpreters shall maintain impartiality by avoiding undue contact with witnesses, attorneys, defendants and their families, and any contact with jurors. This should not limit, however, those appropriate contacts necessary to prepare adequately for their assignment.

Canon 9.   Court interpreters shall refrain from giving advice of any kind to any party or individual concerning court procedures and legal matters, and shall not express personal opinions concerning any matter before the court.

Canon 10.   Court interpreters shall perform to the best of their ability to assure due process to the parties, shall accurately state their professional qualifications, and shall refuse any assignment for which they are not qualified or which is given to them under conditions which substantially impair their effectiveness. They shall preserve the level of language used, and the ambiguities and nuances of the speaker, without editing. Implicit in the knowledge of their limitations is the duty to correct any error of interpretation by requesting clarification of ambiguous statements or unfamiliar vocabulary, and the duty to analyze objectively any challenge to their performance. Interpreters have the duty to call to the attention of the court any factors or conditions which adversely affect their ability to perform adequately.

Canon 11.   Court interpreters shall accept no remuneration, gifts, gratuities, or valuable consideration in excess of their authorized compensation in the performance of their official interpreting duties. Additionally, they shall avoid any conflict of interest or even the appearance thereof.

Canon 12.   Court interpreters shall maintain accurate and detailed time records of services they render.

Canon 13.   Court interpreters shall support other court interpreters by sharing knowledge and expertise with them to the extent practicable in the interest of the court and by never taking advantage of knowledge obtained in the performance of official duties, or by their access to court records, facilities, or privileges, for their own or another's personal gain.

Canon 14.   Court interpreters shall inform the court of any impediment to adherence to this code, or of any effort by another to cause this code to be violated.