



GUIDELINES FOR NORTH CAROLINA COURT INTERPRETERS

- (1) After accepting a case assignment, contact the requestor regarding the nature of the hearing and relay that information back to OLAS if different from the assignment sheet issued by OLAS.
- (2) Appear at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time and check in with the bailiff, Clerk, District Attorney, or attorney. Do not sit with the LEP party; you may, however, speak briefly with the LEP party to ensure there are no dialectal or language concerns.
- (3) Dress appropriately for court and always carry a notepad and pencil, your Daily Log (AOC-A-216) and Interpreter Invoice (AOC-A-215). You may also wish to carry a copy of your Assignment of Interpreter. Court staff cannot provide you with duplicate logs or invoices for your assignment.
- (4) Try to get as much information about the case for which you will be interpreting in order to assess any specialized vocabulary you may need to know.
- (5) When the case to which you are assigned is called, you may be asked to come forward to swear or affirm the interpreter's oath.
- (6) When interpreting for an **LEP party at counsel table or before the court**, sit or stand next to him / her, facing the judge, and interpret **simultaneously** all testimony and verbal proceedings during the hearing. The LEP party is entitled to hear everything that is said during the proceedings by all speakers, but in his language through the interpreter.
- (7) When interpreting for an **LEP witness**, sit or stand next to him / her and interpret **consecutively** all questions and answers.
- (8) When interpreting from the witness stand, speak in a loud, clear voice so the court can hear you and always interpret in the first person using direct speech. If you are addressed by the court or need to address the court, refer to yourself in the third person, such as "The interpreter requests. . . ."
- (9) When interpreting at counsel table, speak only loudly enough to be heard by the LEP party. The use of interpreting equipment is preferred.
- (10) When the proceeding has concluded, do not leave the courtroom until you are excused by the judge or Clerk, or until court has adjourned. When released by the court, contact Monica Guzman at (919) 890-1212 to report the status of the case and give continuance date, if any.
- (11) You must submit a signed and dated Assignment of Interpreter, an **original** signed AOC-A-216, Daily Log and an **original** signed AOC-A-215, Interpreter Invoice to NCAOC Office of Language Access Services in order to receive payment for services rendered. Processing time varies depending on approval and release of funds.



TERMS FREQUENTLY USED IN THE PROFESSION:

LEP: Limited English Proficient

First appearance: Judge informs the criminal defendant of the charges against him/her, reviews defendant's eligibility to be released from jail prior to trial, advises him/her of rights and determines whether defendant is eligible for an attorney (and interpreter for out of court counsel-client meetings) if the party's English proficiency is limited) at State expense.

Simultaneous interpretation: Mode of interpretation used in the courtroom in which interpreter interprets statements into a target language at the same time as the English (source) language communication is being rendered. This mode is used whenever the LEP is not a party to the communication and is playing a passive role in that communication.

Consecutive interpretation: Mode of interpretation used in interrogations, interviews, and victim/witness testimony. Interpreter waits for speaker to finish a question or answer in one language and then interprets the complete utterance into another language. Note taking is extremely important when employing this mode of interpretation.

Sight translation: Mode of interpretation used when an interpreter reads a document in one language and immediately renders the content aloud in another language.

Direct speech: The **mandatory** method of speech used in court interpreting. The rendering of a statement in the first-person, e.g. "My name is..."

Indirect speech: This method should **NEVER** be used by court interpreters. The rendering of a statement in the third-person, e.g. "He says his name is..."