

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH OREGON COURT INTERPRETERS

1. Ask the interpreter if they are an Oregon Certified or Registered Court Interpreter. If the answer is YES, insure the interpreter's name is given for the record.
 - If the answer is **NO**, ask questions to qualify and then swear in the interpreter.
2. Allow interpreters to ask for repetitions and to place themselves in the courtroom where they can best hear and see the speakers.
3. Use the first person when directing comments or questions to the LEP or Deaf person. This preserves clarity regarding who is speaking to whom.
4. Interpreters interpret exactly what is spoken or signed. Interpreters interpret all communications accurately without adding or omitting. Interpreters do not interpret verbatim; instead they retain the same meaning and formality of the speaker. Interpreters do not explain or "dummy down" what is said.
5. Control overlapping speakers/parties during court proceedings. Remember that the speed of speech and reading in the court can affect the interpreter's ability to understand, retain and interpret information.
6. If only one interpreter is assigned to a hearing/trial over 1 hour, provide breaks (about every 30 minutes); errors/omissions increase after continual interpretation beyond 30 minutes.
7. Interpreters may ask for copies of documents/motions/pleadings/names before the hearing. Interpreters will interpret more accurately when they have background context and specific information such as names, dates, statutes, rule numbers or jury instructions.
8. Written and recorded evidence should be transcribed and translated prior to the hearing/trial.
9. If there is a challenge of an interpretation in a hearing/trial with a jury, hold any discussions outside the presence of the jury. For further assistance see Chapter 19 of Oregon Judges Criminal Benchbook.
10. For detailed information which guides appointment and procedures of interpreters please see Court Interpreting Services web site "Policies, Law and Rules".