



Remote Interpreting Toolkit

Court Language Access Services
Oregon Judicial Department

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Introduction

A Court may decide to proceed with a hearing remotely for a variety of reasons. For example:

- One or more parties may not be able to attend in-person.
- There may be a limited number, if any, qualified interpreters available locally.
- It may be too cost prohibitive to hire an interpreter to appear in-person.
- A Court may decide a remote hearing is the best way to prevent the spread of an infectious disease (i.e. COVID – 19).

Procedures and protocols for conducting a remote or semi-remote hearing may vary from county to county and courtroom to courtroom. The interpreter must evaluate the interpreting needs of each hearing and be prepared to advise the court on appropriate interpreting technology and procedures. At all times, the interpreter must obey the orders of the court and adhere to their duty under the [Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in Oregon Courts](#).

Interpreting remote hearings

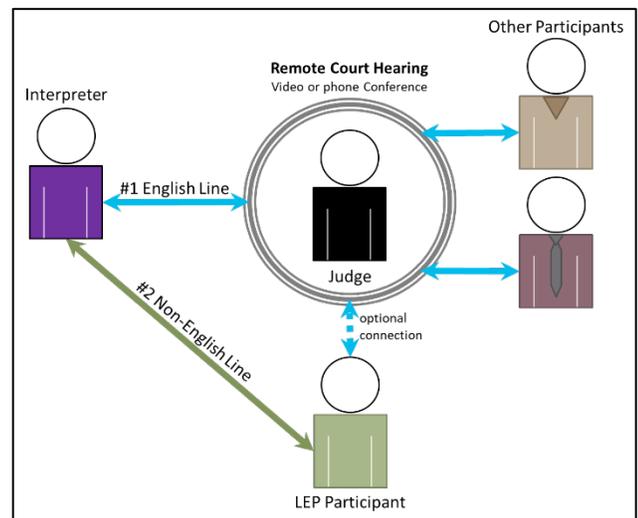
CLAS strongly recommends that interpreters use a headset or ear buds with a microphone (not the computer’s built-in microphone) for all remote interpreting. Headset/ear buds often improve the audio quality for both listeners and the interpreter and leaves the interpreter’s hands free to take notes.

Simultaneous remote interpreting

If a LEP participant needs an interpreter to participate in a trial or longer hearing, the following techniques better support longer more involved matters (e.g. contested protective order hearings, complex motions hearings, CRB reviews) because they allow the interpreter to simultaneously interpret into the non-English language without being heard by other participants or confusing the record. This type of connection requires more preparation and a complex setup and **should be tested in advance of the hearing**.

How the interpreter connects to the hearing:

- From the **interpreter’s personal equipment** (see illustration):
 - The interpreter connects to the court conference call or video conference via a telephone or a computer app (line #1) then mutes that line (also called the English line).
 - Via a 2nd telephone or a computer app (line #2), connect to the LEP participant's personal phone (the non-English line). Note: The interpreter should enter code *67 before the LEP participant’s phone number (e.g. *67-503-986-1234). This hides the interpreter’s phone # from the receiver.
 - The interpreter must use separate earbuds (or headsets) for each line with the English line earbud and mic in one ear and the non-English earbud and mic in the other ear.
 - Keep the English line (#1) muted while simultaneously interpreting into the non-English language.



- Through OJD’s **Voxolom console** (2 units in the Washington office, 1 unit in the Salem office, 1 unit in the Multnomah courthouse, 1 unit in the Umatilla courthouse)
- Through OJD’s **VRI RIG station** (2 units in the Washington office)

When the LEP participant speaks:

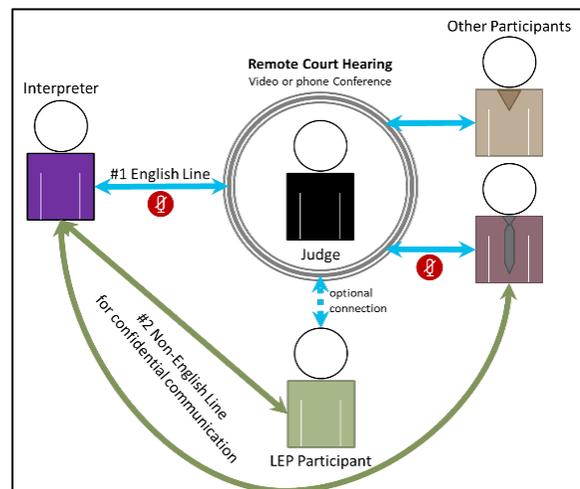
- **Voxolom console** or **VRI RIG**: follow equipment procedures
- From the **interpreter’s personal equipment**:
 - After hearing a non-English statement from the LEP participant, the interpreter unmutes line #1 (the English line) and interprets into English for the court conference call.:
 - If the interpreter continues to appropriately mute and unmute the English line (#1), the English side of the interaction can be interpreted simultaneously but the non-English statements made by the LEP participant would not be audible on the court conference call.

OR

- If the LEP participant has their own independent connection to the remote court hearing, the LEP participant’s non-English statements and the English interpretation would both be audible on the court conference call and the interaction would be interpreted consecutively.

Privileged communication:

- **Voxolom console, VRI RIG and the interpreter’s personal equipment**:
 - The interpreter calls the attorney's private phone on line #2, merges it to the non-English line and the interpretation is done consecutively (see illustration). Note: The interpreter should enter code *67 before the phone number (e.g. *67 503-986-1234). This hides the interpreter’s phone # from the receiver.



OR

- The court instructs other participants to disconnect, stops the FTR & clears the courtroom and the consultation is interpreted consecutively through the conference call.
- When the consultation is done, other participants rejoin the conference call and the FTR is restarted.

Consecutive remote interpreting

Hearings that are brief, relatively simple and non-evidentiary in nature can often be effectively and efficiently interpreted in the consecutive mode.

How the interpreter connects to the hearing:

- If the LEP participant is in the courtroom and the interpreter is remote.
 - The interpreter remains available for the courtroom to call. If the court has not called by 15 minutes after the scheduled start time, contact the scheduler for instructions.
 - When the connection is established, the hearing is interpreted consecutively.

- Please remind other participants to pause and give you time to interpret.
- The LEP participant and the interpreter are both remote.
 - The interpreter is called by or calls into the audio/video conference (check your confirmation for instructions).
 - The LEP participant independently connects to the conference.
 - After the connection is made, the hearing is interpreted consecutively.

When the LEP participant speaks:

- Identify that the LEP participant is speaking then interpret.

Privileged communication:

- For privileged attorney client communication, the interpreter, the attorney and the LEP participant must all disconnect from the conference call. Then the interpreter calls the attorney's private phone, places a call to the LEP participant's private phone and merges the calls. The consultation is interpreted consecutively through the 3-way call.
 - Note: If the interpreter has access to a 2nd phonenumber (via 2nd telephone or through a computer app), the interpreter can mute the conference call connection and establish the 3-way call through the 2nd phonenumber.
 - When the consultation is done, the interpreter, attorney and LEP participant rejoin the conference call.

OR

- The court instructs other participants to disconnect from the conference call, stops the FTR & clears the courtroom. The interpreter interprets consecutively through the conference call. When the consultation is done, the other participants rejoin the conference call and the FTR is restarted.

If the interpreter is hired for a Telephonic Standby Block

- The interpreter stays at home ready to answer the courtroom's phone call.
- When the courtroom is ready, they call the interpreter directly.
- The court has exclusive access to that interpreter during the block.
- The interpreter should expect to remain available for the entire Block.
- If the court dismisses the interpreter before the scheduled end of the Block, the interpreter must contact the CLAS scheduler immediately. The scheduler can release the interpreter early if there is no further need for their services.