



OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
Court Language Access Services

COURT OBSERVATION HELPFUL HINTS

Suggested types of hearings to observe:

Community Court	Arraignments
Diversion	Traffic
Small Claims	STOP Court
Drug Call	Restraining Orders
Domestic Dissolutions	Status Checks
Show Cause	Mental Health
Trial Readiness Hearings	Pleas
Probation Violations	

While it may be tempting to observe only when there is an interpreter present, it is highly suggested that you observe hearings where there is not an interpreter as well. This will allow you to focus on what is happening in the courtroom, who the players are, and vocabulary in English that may not be familiar to you. Also, a note of caution about trials: while they can be fascinating to watch, for the most part trials are done simultaneously with a headset so unless you catch witness testimony, you won't see the interpreters "in action" (just the backs of their heads!). Plus, it's probably more helpful to you as an interpreter if you watch the hearings that you will interpret and trials account for a very minute volume of interpreting. Not that you shouldn't see at least one, but keep in mind that you want to be practicing / getting the vocabulary for the hearings you will cover.

Contact Information:

If you are interested in observing an interpreted hearing, please contact court.interpreter.program@ojd.state.or.us and provide the following information:

- *County you are interested in observing in*
- *Dates and times you are interested in observing*
- *Languages you would like to observe*

Courts around the state are open to the public, Monday through Friday. For some juvenile cases, you may be asked to leave due to heightened confidentiality measures.

Dressing for Court:

In keeping with the serious and professional nature of court business, please come to your assignment dressed conservatively. Jeans, shorts, short skirts and flip flops are not appropriate attire for a courtroom.

What to bring:

You should bring a notebook and pens to practice note-taking and copying down vocabulary to add to a legal glossary you create.