

INTERPRETING DURING A ZOOM HEARING

Instructions for Interpreters

- At least 3 business days before your confirmed assignment, review the request from court staff to confirm the hearing will be via video. If you have any questions, contact the court right away.
- Prepare for the remote hearing the same way you would for an in-person hearing.
- Create a professional office-like space that allows you to work without distractions.
- Use a headset and a microphone and have a pen and paper ready to take notes.
- Be available to the court 10 - 15 minutes before the hearing.
- Test your audio and video before the hearing.




How to Connect to Zoom

- You will receive a non-reply email invitation from Zoom with a link from the court. You are not required to have a paid Zoom account to join a court hearing.
- You may have to wait in a virtual waiting room before you are allowed to enter the virtual hearing room.
- If the host activates the Interpretation function in the hearing, you will see the following message: **“WELCOME. You have been assigned [as] an Interpreter.”**
- You may be asked to click **“OK”** to accept, but newer Zoom versions will start automatically. If possible, rename yourself on screen to include your language, title and name (Example: Spanish Interp. Joe Smith).
- If the hearing requires simultaneous interpreting, ask the judicial officer or host to activate the interpretation function at the start of the hearing. Before they do that, ask the court’s permission to instruct the LEP participant to select the language channel immediately once the feature is activated.
- Once the Interpretation function is activated, everyone will need to select the English channel so that the interpreter can interpret consecutively when needed.

How to Communicate with the Judicial Officer/Zoom Host

- If the function is on, you (the interpreter) and the LEP participant should remain on the English channel from the beginning of the hearing so that you can interpret consecutively.
- State your name, language, and registry status (Certified, Conditionally Approved or Registered).
- Ask the court’s permission to explain the Interpretation function to the LEP (*see instructions below*). Make sure the LEP participant understands the use of the channels. Inform the court when you and the LEP participant are ready to proceed.
- Depending on the nature of the hearing, you can recommend that the interpreter and LEP participant switch to the foreign-language channel so you can interpret simultaneously.
- If you are on the foreign language channel interpreting simultaneously and need to address the court, remember to switch to the English channel. The LEP participant may or may not need to switch to the English channel. Don’t forget to switch back to the foreign-language channel to continue interpreting for the LEP simultaneously.
- Keep the judicial officer updated on any impediments you or the LEP may encounter during the video hearing (loss of audio or video connection; can’t hear the parties, etc.)
- Do not disconnect from the video-call until the judge dismisses you.

How to Give Instructions to the LEP

- Ask permission from the court to instruct the LEP. Then use the recommended script or:
- Ask the LEP: What device are you using?
- Once the host enables the Interpretation function, the participants, including the LEP, will see the Interpretation function and available channels.
- Instruct the LEP how to find the language channel depending on the device used:
 - Computer – Click on the globe on the bottom right 
 - Phone – Click on 3 dots found on the bottom right side  then, select “Language Interpretation”
 - Tablet - Click on 3 dots found on the top right side  then, select “Language Interpretation”
- Instruct the LEP to select the foreign language channel. Inform the court once you are ready.

Code of Ethics

Your ethical duties remain the same when you serve as a remote interpreter. You must provide accurate interpretation, be impartial, avoid conflicts of interest, preserve confidentiality, understand the limitations of your practice, and maintain a professional demeanor. Also remember to complete and email to court staff your RFP for their signature as soon as the hearing ends.

Team Interpreting on Zoom

- You will receive your team interpreting assignment via the court scheduler with the name of your teammate OR ask you the other interpreter will be.
- Contact your team interpreter before the hearing and establish a protocol for how you will work together during the hearing:
 - Team interpreters will not have a separate channel on Zoom to communicate with each other privately. You will need to establish a separate connection, outside of Zoom, to communicate with each other (Example: texting each other via cell phone, creating a meeting using Facetime, etc.). Do not rely on the Zoom Chat feature to communicate with your team interpreter. Also, it is not private and the host can see your texts. You should establish a rotation schedule before the hearing begins. It is recommended to switch every 30 minutes. You should also agree on a hand signal to indicate you need to switch. Agree also on how you will support and correct each other.
 - If necessary and when appropriate, you may announce to his/her honor that the interpreters need 10 seconds to switch. The active interpreter should announce when ready.
 - When you switch from passive to active interpreter:
 - The active interpreter selects the foreign language and his/her video camera and microphone should be on.
 - The passive interpreter selects English and turns his/her video camera and microphone off.
 - The passive interpreter will provide ongoing support to the active interpreter while the hearing is in progress.
 - Interpreters should always maintain audio contact with the hearing.

Breakout Rooms

After leaving a breakout room, participants may need to re-select their language. If not prompted to do so, open the 'More' option under the three dots (...). This option may be at the top or bottom of the screen depending on the device. Then, select "Language Interpretation" and then your language.

Troubleshooting

- What to do if the interpreter loses internet connection?
 - Try for 2 minutes to reconnect
 - Have a cell phone with the Zoom mobile App at hand. Try to connect to the hearing using the mobile App. (TIP: Copy and paste the link to the hearing on your alternate device before the hearing begins.)
 - If all else fails, dial-in by phone (the phone number is on the Zoom invitation).

- What to do if the LEP individual cannot connect to the foreign language channel?
 - Ask the LEP to switch to the English channel. Interpret consecutively from the English channel.
 - If the LEP litigant cannot hear the interpreter at all, ask the host to end the interpretation function.