

COURT INTERPRETER

JOB PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The Court Interpreter is considered a “language expert” for a specified language, and performs simultaneous and consecutive interpreting and sight translating to assure access to the court system to defendants, witnesses, litigants, and others with little or no ability to speak English.

Incumbents may be assigned to any department at any time as needed, and receive direction from interpreter coordinator or manager.

KEY OR TYPICAL TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties below are not inclusive but characteristic of the type and level of work associated with this class. Incumbents may do all or some combination of the duties listed below as well as other related duties.

- Interprets in court proceedings, trials, omnibus hearings, arraignments, traffic court, motions hearings, civil hearings, juvenile and civil commitment hearings as allowed under Washington law for non-English speaking parties according to Washington law and adhering to the Code of Conduct for Court Interpreters as established by the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts.
- Interprets for Corrections Counselors conducting release interviews for in-custody defendants. Interprets for Corrections Program Associate for applicants in indigence verification interviews. Interprets for court staff who provide nonlegal general information to the non-English speaking public. Directly answers and assists in nonlegal inquiries from the non-English speaking public regarding court matters, forms, dates, etc. Provides telephone interpreting.
- Interprets during pre-trial interviews with attorneys, post conviction interviews with probation counselors.
- Provides translations of forms in working language, input into policies and procedures affecting interpreters.
- Travels to other locations to provide interpreter service for court ordered programs.
- Maintains statistics as to the number of interpreting contacts.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Experience and Education:

- Bachelor's degree in linguistics, intra cultural communications, English, the Interpreter's working language, or a related field.
- Five years of experience interpreting in a court, legal or similar setting requiring interpretation of technical terms.
- Washington Certified Court Interpreter credential is required for the specified language, including ongoing compliance requirements as set forth by Washington Courts.

Knowledge of: Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Washington Courts; knowledge of legal terminology, court proceedings, evidentiary rules, Washington rules of court, local trial court rules, and personal computers; relevant technological applications and resources; specialized language of judges and attorneys; street slang of witnesses; technical jargon of criminologists, police officers, and expert witnesses; modern office practices; business correspondence standards including English, grammar, formatting, spelling and punctuation.

Ability to: work with minimum supervision while independently coordinating multiple tasks to accomplish workload and meet unexpected demands; make consequential work decisions in accordance with laws, regulations, court policies and procedures; follow, understand and apply prescribed procedures, policies, laws and regulations to assigned tasks; develop and maintain effective working relationships with management, employees, elected officials, and the general public; communicate effectively, both orally and in writing; demonstrate resourcefulness and tact in public contacts; utilize necessary computer applications; handle sensitive and confidential matters and situations, including testimony subject matter, without becoming emotionally involved; exercise good judgment under stressful circumstances.

Additionally, must be able to independently deliver interpreting services, adjusting to differing voices, accents, and speed of speech; listen, comprehend, and abstract the message from the words and word order, store the idea, search for the conceptual and semantic matches in the target language, reconstruct the message in the target language while speaking and listening for the next phrase of language to process and monitor his or her own output. The interpreter must remain neutral and refrain from providing advocacy or advice, even though the interpreter may be the only person with whom the non-English speaking person can communicate.

WORK ENVIRONMENT & PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Work is primarily performed in a courtroom or office environment. Incumbents may be exposed to airborne or blood borne diseases through exposure to the public; may be exposed to exhibits; and testimony and/or photographs dealing with graphic examples and details of crimes such as murders, assaults (sexual, abuse, etc.) and trauma. Essential tasks involve reading and review of written documents and the use of personal computer software applications; oral communications both in person and via telephone.

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