

EXPECTATIONS OF VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETERS INTERPRETING FOR THE ALASKA COURT SYSTEM

The Alaska Court System uses video remote (VR) interpreting when appropriate. As a credentialed interpreter, you know that the quality of the interpretation is of paramount importance and must never be compromised. Therefore, VR interpreters hired by the Alaska Court System must adhere to the standards described below.

Performance of Interpreter Duties

- Abide by the *Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Judiciary*:
 - Accuracy and Completeness
 - Representation of Qualifications
 - Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest
 - Professional Demeanor
 - Confidentiality
 - Restriction of Public Comment
 - Scope of Practice including not Providing Legal Advice
 - Assessing and Reporting Impediments to Performance
 - Duty to Report Ethical Violations
 - Professional Development

Professional Interpreting Environment in the Space Designated for Interpreting

- Check your environment for:
 - Background noises from traffic, radios, or other technology, etc.
 - Distractions from people, animals, radio, TV, squeaky chairs, etc.
- Dress professionally as if you were in-person.
- Check for adequate lighting so that you are visible to all parties in the courtroom.
- Secure your personnel computer (PC)/laptop/tablet on a desk or table so it does not move during the interpreting event.

Preparation of Technology Equipment

- Ensure that your PC or device is secure.
- Check that your high-speed broadband Internet connection is working adequately.
- Close all tabs, Internet sites, and software programs during the entire courtroom event.
- Telephone
 - If at all possible, use a landline. Cell phone service is generally not recommended because of the potential for dropped calls or lost signals.
 - The landline must support a headphone.
 - If a cell phone is used, check that:
 - Internet sites are closed
 - ringer and notifications are in the **off** position

Pre-Event Preparation

- ❑ Interpreter equipment is turned on and operational before the scheduled event as directed by the Alaska Court System’s Interpreter Services Coordinator.
- ❑ Answer immediately when the court initiates the equipment test prior to the courtroom event.
- ❑ Notify the court as to how you will let the judge know that a break is needed.
- ❑ Using your phone connection, immediately report any computer connectivity issues (loss of visual capacity, background noises, etc.) to the court tester.
- ❑ Check that you have the correct time for the interpreting event. Remember that the entire State of Alaska (regardless of the court location) is four hours behind the east coast. For example, 10:00 a.m. Alaska Standard Time is 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

Team Interpreting During the Event

For longer courtroom proceedings and to reduce mental fatigue, the VR interpreter may be paired with another interpreter appearing in-person or video remotely. When team interpreting is used and you are the “resting” interpreter, you are required to adhere to the same professional standards as an in-person interpreter. These standards include but are not limited to:

- ❑ Listening to the rendition provided by the working interpreter in order to correct interpreting errors or to assist with vocabulary or concepts unfamiliar to the working interpreter. Under no circumstances, is the “resting” interpreter to read a book, surf the Internet, or perform other duties unrelated to the work of the Alaska Court System and the interpreting event for which the interpreter is hired.
- ❑ Remaining connected to both the video remote feed and audio feed, unless instructed otherwise.
- ❑ Refraining from using the Internet, writing or responding to emails, using other technology or personal device, or performing any other function not related to the court interpreting event. Note: The resting interpreter is permitted to look up legal terms in a legal glossary if necessary for clarification of interpretation.
- ❑ Informing the judge that a bathroom break is needed just as you would if you were in-person. Under no circumstance, is the resting interpreter to leave the room without notifying the judge.
- ❑ Informing the court immediately, using your phone, that the video connectivity is disconnected. In most cases, the judge may recess to allow the interpreter to reconnect the video feed. If the technology issue cannot be corrected in a timely manner, the judge will continue the proceedings and the interpreter will provide telephonic interpreting. (Note: The interpreter should never disconnect the phone connection even when the Internet goes down.)