

The Role of the Court Interpreter

Professional court interpreters are individuals who possess an educated, native-like mastery of both English and a second language. They have general knowledge in a wide range of fields and perform the three main types of court interpreting: sight translation, consecutive interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting.

A Court Interpreter's sole responsibility is to bridge the communication barriers so as to provide limited English proficient court users with equal access to justice.

While performing his or her duties, the court interpreter:

- **Will** need to hear you speak in your native language, and may ask you questions such as where you are from or if you have ever used an interpreter before.
- **Will** assist you in communicating with persons in the courtroom, including your lawyer, court staff and the judge, and may assist you elsewhere in the courthouse if they are available.
- **Will** interpret everything you say into English.
- **Will** interpret everything said in court into your native language.
- **Will** interpret everything that is said, without adding, omitting, or changing anything.
- **Is** bound by the rules of confidentiality and will not repeat to anyone what you say privately to your lawyer.
- **Cannot** give you legal advice.
- **Cannot** talk to you about your case.
- **Cannot** explain what certain words or terms mean.
- **Cannot** answer questions about what will happen in court.
- **Cannot** have private conversations with you, your family or friends.