

The following are suggested questions for determining whether an interpreter is qualified to interpret at a given hearing. These questions are found in the Best Practices Manual On Interpreters.

Communication Needs

1. Have you communicated with the party/witness/defendant in need of your services?
2. Can you communicate clearly with one another?
3. Are you able to interpret simultaneously without leaving out or changing anything that is said?

Sign Language Interpreter

- What communication mode does this person prefer? (i.e. American Sign Language, Tactile Communication, Signed English)
- Does this person require the use of a deaf relay interpreter?
- Does this person require the court to provide any special equipment to aid in the understanding of this proceeding? (Amplification, Real Time Captioning)

Foreign Language Interpreter

- Are you familiar with any dialect or idiomatic peculiarities of the language used by the person in this case?
- Are you able to communicate despite these idiosyncrasies?

Interpreter Qualifications

1. Are you court certified by the Minnesota Court Interpreter Program in the _____ language? *(If yes, skip to “Conflicts of Interest.”)*
2. Are you on the Statewide Roster of Court Interpreters?
3. How long have you been communicating in English and _____?
4. What formal language training have you received in these two languages?
5. Do you possess interpreter certification status from a group or organization other than the Minnesota Court Interpreter Program?
6. In what settings have you interpreted?

Conflicts of Interest

1. Have you ever interpreted for any of the parties or witnesses in this case?
2. Have you interpreted in any incident related to this case?
3. Are you able to remain fair and impartial in relationship to the parties and witnesses in this case?
4. Will you remain objective based upon the subject matter of this case?

Ethics

1. Have you read the *Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Minnesota State Court System*?
2. Do you understand your duties with respect to the Code of Professional Responsibility?
3. Do you promise to adhere to the Code of Professional Responsibility during these proceedings?

Other

1. Have you ever been disqualified from interpreting in any court or administrative proceeding? Why?
2. ***To the Parties:*** Does either party have any questions for the interpreter?
3. ***To the Client/Witness/Defendant:*** Can you effectively communicate through this interpreter?