

A Maryland Judiciary Production
My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland
Need A Court Interpreter?

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Intro:

Welcome to Part 2 of our video series on interpreter services in the Maryland Courts. In Part 1, we explained how to request an interpreter. In this video, we will discuss what services court interpreters can provide. We will also discuss how to work with a court interpreter.

Who Are Court Interpreters?

The court chooses who can act as an approved court interpreter. Only the court approved interpreter can provide interpretation services at a court hearing. You may not use a friend or family member as your court interpreter.

How to Work with the Interpreter

The interpreter will meet you at your scheduled courtroom before the hearing begins. The interpreter will speak to you first to make sure you are able to understand each other. In the courtroom, do not address the interpreter. Speak in your language to the judge and other people in the courtroom. The interpreter will interpret everything you say into English. The interpreter

will interpret what others say in English into your language. When interpreting your words, the interpreter will speak in the first person. This means that they will use the word “I” when referring to you. The interpreter will refer to themselves only as, “the interpreter.”

Sometimes, the interpreter may ask the judge’s permission to speak to you. They may then ask you to repeat or clarify your statement. There may be times when you speak too fast or give long answers. The interpreter may ask you to slow down or pause to allow for interpretation. Court hearings may go fast. If you do not understand what is being said, tell the judge. The interpreter can help you let the judge know that you need clarification.

What the Interpreter Cannot Do

Interpreters must follow court rules which require them to remain neutral. This means that the interpreter cannot give you legal advice or explain court proceedings. Do not ask the interpreter questions about your case. Do not ask about what will happen in court. Court interpreters cannot answer these questions. In addition, Court interpreters are not permitted to have private conversations with you or your family. This ensures that they always follow the rules and remain neutral.

Technology the Interpreter May Use

Some interpreters will use a head set or microphone to assist them. If the interpreter uses such a device, they will instruct you in its use before the hearing begins.

In some cases, the court may provide an interpreter using video remote interpreting. If this is the case, the courtroom will have video remote interpreting equipment. The court staff will call the interpreter when your hearing begins. You will then speak to the interpreter through a

video display. The speakers on the device will allow for the judge and others to hear the interpretations. You may be given a headset to hear the interpreter if the interpreter provides simultaneous interpretation or if you need the interpreter's help to have a private conversation with your lawyer.

Let's Review

Let's review what you have learned. The Court will provide an interpreter for all court hearings and proceedings. The interpreter will assist you by interpreting what you say to the court into English. They will interpret what others say in the court into your language. Speak slowly and clearly so that the interpreter has time to interpret your words. The interpreter is there to provide interpretation services only. They cannot help you in any other way.

This has been part two of our two-part video series on interpreters in the courts. On behalf of the Maryland courts, thank you for watching.