

Zoom Interpretation

BEST PRACTICES

NOTICE

All involved in a hearing (e.g. attorneys, judges, court staff, witnesses, defendants, etc.) during which an interpreter will use the Zoom Interpretation Function (ZIF) should be notified that a limited English proficiency participant (LEP) will be interacting with an interpreter virtually through the Zoom platform.

Interpreters may work in person or virtually when the LEP is appearing virtually. Either way, provide the interpreter with adequate notice so that they are prepared to use ZIF technology during the hearing.

As early as possible, provide interpreter(s) with the following information:

1. How many individuals need interpretation services
2. How long the entire proceeding is expected to last
3. How long each LEP is expected to need interpretation services

BACKGROUND

To the extent permissible, provide interpreters with pleadings to familiarize them with the case.

If pleadings cannot be provided, offer interpreters background information about the substantive issues, parties, and any relevant vocabulary.

Such background information may include:

- Case names/docket numbers
- Attorney and judge names
- Name of LEP(s)
- Copies of documents the LEP(s) may be questioned about
- Type of hearing (e.g. VOP, sentencing, plea, etc.)
- Basic courtroom protocol

TEAM INTERPRETATION

Certain situations call for more than one interpreter, especially when interpretation is conducted virtually.

Virtual interpretation using the ZIF can cause "Zoom fatigue" in interpreters. For lengthier proceedings, there should be multiple interpreters available to work in 30 to 45-minute intervals. This is called "team interpretation."

COLLOQUY

All LEPs must be colloquied. This gives LEPs the opportunity to show, on the record, that they understand that interpretation will occur virtually.

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ALTERNATE TECHNOLOGY

All participants should have alternate modes of communication available.

LEP Participant

- Exchange phone numbers with your courtroom/court staff.
- Have your telephone available next to you in case your interpreter has to interpret via telephone.

Interpreter

- Download the Zoom app onto your phone.
- Have your telephone available next to you in case you need to interpret via telephone.

Attorney

- Have all emails and phone numbers of interpreters and LEP participants in case you need to coordinate between LEPs and interpreters having technology issues.
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CONSECUTIVE VS. SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

Consecutive

Appropriate for short statements (e.g. witness examination) or when there are technology issues preventing the LEP from accessing language channels (*See* "Troubleshooting"). **ZIF not necessary for consecutive interpretation.**

Simultaneous

Appropriate for lengthy, detailed testimony and long proceedings (e.g. opening/closing arguments). Simultaneous interpretation is the ideal mode and is most similar to how an interpreter would work in person. **ZIF necessary.**

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TROUBLESHOOTING

INTERPRETER LOSES CONNECTION

If the interpreter loses internet connection:

- Option 1: Try to reconnect for two (2) minutes
- Option 2: Have a phone with Zoom installed nearby.
 - Go to the phone app.
 - Copy and paste the meeting link or enter the Meeting ID from your email invitation into the alternate device.
- Option 3: If all else fails, dial into the meeting using the phone number provided in your invitation email

LEP PARTICIPANT CANNOT CONNECT TO LANGUAGE CHANNEL

If the LEP participant cannot connect to alternate language channels:

- Option 1: Ask the LEP to switch back to the English channel and interpret consecutively from that channel until the LEP is able to switch channels.
- Option 2: Ask the LEP to toggle between the channels one more time. If they still cannot connect, disable language channels and interpret consecutively throughout the proceeding.
- Option 3: If simultaneous interpretation is necessary given the nature of the testimony, the interpreter may request that the Court call the LEP via telephone to provide interpretation that way.
 - Be sure that the LEP is muted on Zoom while this happens, but remains visible.