



# SUPREME COURT BENCH CARD FOR NEVADA

Administrative Office of the Courts  
Credentialed Court Interpreters Program

A GUIDE FOR JUDGES  
AND COURT STAFF  
JUNE 2022

## ROLE OF THE COURT INTERPRETER

It is important that the individual who needs an interpreter understands the role of the interpreter. Here are some basic points which may help ensure this understanding. You may instruct the individual, through the interpreter, as follows:

- An interpreter's role is to listen to what is said in the courtroom in English and subsequently to interpret it accurately and completely into the target language, and vice versa.
- The interpreter cannot give advice, make suggestions, or engage in private conversation with the person needing the interpreter.
- The person should raise a hand if he/she has a question or does not understand something during the proceeding.
- The interpreter can only interpret for one person at a time, please do not speak or interrupt while someone is testifying or speaking.
- The interpreter can only interpret testimony that is spoken, so all responses **must be verbal**.
- Judges are reminded to speak at a slow but steady pace, and make eye contact occasionally with the interpreter to gauge whether your pace is appropriate. A slower pace is especially important when stating dates, numbers, figures, or highly technical vocabulary.

**Interpreters should have breaks every 30 minutes or consider utilizing Team Interpreting for lengthy legal proceedings.**

## INTRODUCTION

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act mandate interpreter services for Limited English Proficient speakers (LEP) to protect their due process rights and provide meaningful access to justice..

This bench card does not constitute legal advice and information contained should not be relied upon as providing any specific authority, requirement, or authorization. A wide variety of resources authored by the National Center for State Court, National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, Council of Language Access Coordinators and its member states and judicial branches have been consulted and used.

The Nevada Supreme Court and its officers, employees, or agents shall not be liable for any damages whatsoever arising from or due to the use, misuse, interpretation, application, or reliance upon this publication.

## NEVADA CREDENTIALLED INTERPRETER ROSTER

Judges and court staff may locate the regularly updated list of all Nevada credentialed court interpreters (certified and registered) on the [Supreme Court's web page](#).

ASL and CART Interpreters is managed through [Aging and Disability Services](#).

### The difference between Certified and Registered:

A Registered Interpreter meets all the same requirements as a certified interpreter but, is an interpreter for whom either no oral examination has been developed by the Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) or no oral examination has been offered in his/her language.

## DETERMINATION OF THE LANGUAGE SPOKEN

A court official should presume a need for an interpreter when an attorney or litigant indicates that a party or a witness requests one. If a request is not made for an interpreter, but it appears that a party or witness has limited English proficiency, a judge may ask questions of the individual on the record to assess the need for an interpreter.

### Sample Questions:

- Please tell the court your name.
- How did you get to court today?
- What is your address?
- What kind of work do you do?
- What is the highest grade you completed in school?
- How comfortable are you understanding and speaking English?

["I Speak..." Cards](#)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Courtroom Resources](#)
- [Become a Court Interpreter](#)
- [State Court Administrator Guidelines for the Court Interpreter Program](#)

**MODES OF INTERPRETATION**

**Simultaneous:** Rendering interpretation continuously at the same time someone is speaking. (e.g., advisement)

**Consecutive:** Rendering statements from the source language into the target language after a pause between each statement. (e.g., witness testimony)

**Sight Translation:** Reading a document written in one language while translating it orally into the target language. (e.g., pleadings)

**CLARIFYING THE INTERPRETER'S ROLE TO THE JURY**

This court seeks a fair trial for all regardless of the language they speak and regardless of how well they may or may not speak English. Bias against or for persons who have little or no proficiency in English is not allowed. Therefore, do not allow the fact that the party requires an interpreter to in any way influence you.

**NEVADA CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COURT INTERPRETERS**

- Accuracy and Completeness
- Representation of Qualifications
- Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest
- Professional Demeanor
- Confidentiality
- Restriction of Public Comment
- Scope of Practice
- Assessing and Reporting Impediments to Performance
- Duty to Report Ethical Violations
- Professional Development

**INTERPRETER'S OATH*****Credentialed Interpreter***

Certified/Registered Interpreters have been sworn in before a Judge or Chief Judge. **They will state their Supreme Court certification number on the record.** They do not need to be sworn in before each case.

***Non-Credentialed Interpreter***

"Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will interpret accurately and completely from English to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to English to the best of your ability for all matters requiring your services before this court today?"

***All Interpreters: Witness Testimony***

Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will well and truly interpret to the witness the questions asked him/her and that you will well and truly interpret to the Court the answers given by the witness to the respective questions, to the best of your ability?"

**VOIR DIRE FOR NON-CREDENTIALLED INTERPRETER****Ethical Considerations:**

- Are you a potential witness in this case?
- Do you know or work for any of the attorneys, parties or witnesses in this case?
- Have you read and understand the Code of Professional Responsibility (Code)?
- Have you ever been disciplined for conduct that violates the Code in another state or by any professional association?
- Have you ever convicted of a felony/gross misdemeanor/crime against a child / sex offense?

**Communicative Compatibility:**

- Have you had an opportunity to speak with the person for whom you will be interpreting?
- Did you have any difficulty understanding everything that the person said?
- Do you speak the same language?
- Does that person have any dialectal or idiomatic issues that you do not understand or which you cannot interpret into English?

**Knowledge of the Languages and General Education:**

- How did you learn English?
- Have you formally studied English in school or college?
- How did you learn (the other language)?
- What is the highest grade or degree you completed?

**Interpreting and Translating Skills:**

- Have you passed any accreditation or certification exams for interpreter or translation? If yes, describe.
- Are you a member in good standing of professional associations of interpreter or translators? If yes, describe.
- Do you attend meetings/conferences/other gatherings of professional interpreters? If yes, describe.
- Have you ever interpreter in Nevada or any other state? If yes, describe.
- Have you ever been disqualified or removed from interpreting in a court?