



Video Remote Interpreter Expectations

A Reference Guide for Court Interpreters from the Alaska Court System

The Alaska Court System (ACS) uses video remote interpreting (VRI) when appropriate. Interpreters need to follow the guidelines below as they will assist them to maintain the highest ethical and professional standards.

Be Prepared

Follow the *Code of Professional Responsibilities for Interpreters in the Judiciary*, including the following Canons:

- Accuracy and Completeness
- Representation of Qualifications
- Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest
- Professional Demeanor
- Confidentiality
- Restriction of Public Comment
- Scope of Practice including not Providing Legal Advice
- Assessing and Reporting Impediments to Performance
- Duty to Report Ethical Violations
- Professional Development

Prepare your Interpreting Space

- Check your environment for:
 - Background noises (TV, radio, traffic, etc.)
 - Distractions from other people or animals
- Dress professionally.
- Check your lighting (avoid bright lights or windows directly behind you).
- Stabilize your computer/laptop/tablet on your desk or table.

Prepare your Equipment

- Ensure that your computer is protected from hacking.
- Check your internet connection and close all tabs, browsers, and programs during the courtroom event.
- Ideally, use a landline (must support headphones).
- If you use a cell phone, close all internet sites and turn off the ringer and notifications.
- Double check the time of the event (Alaska is four hours behind the East Coast, for example 10am Alaska Time is 2pm EST).

On the Day of

- Turn on and test your computer/ laptop/ tablet before the court assignment.
- Answer the court call immediately or call into the courtroom conference line a few minutes early to test the set-up.
- Inform the court if your video or audio feed is interrupted. If the issue cannot be corrected quickly, the judge may switch to telephonic interpreting.
- Let the court know how you will request breaks during the assignment.
- Do not disconnect from an assignment until you are excused.

Team Interpreting

For longer assignments, the ACS may hire two interpreters who switch roles between “active” and “resting” interpreters. As the “resting” interpreter, you are required to follow the same professional standards as the “active” interpreter:

- Remain connected to both audio and video feed, unless instructed otherwise.
- Listen to the other interpreter’s rendition and correct interpreting errors or assist with clarifications of vocabulary.
- Do not perform tasks unrelated to the interpreting assignment!
- Inform the judge if you need to leave the room (for example to use the restroom).



Alert

Acoustic Shock is becoming more common for remote interpreters. If you interpret remotely regularly, we advise you to learn about options to manage your risk, for example, by getting volume-limiting headphones to balance sudden, loud noises.