



SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
Interpreter Services Division
TEAM INTERPRETING PILOT PROGRAM

Article 20, Section 1 of the Memorandum of Understanding between The California Federation of Interpreters - Communication Workers of America states,

“The Court recognizes that interpreter assignments can vary in the demands made upon the physical and mental stamina of interpreters and that an interpreter may need to advise the Judicial Officer that he/she is fatigued and needs a break. Team interpreting may be ordered within the discretion of the Court.

The parties agree that team interpreting will be a topic discussed by the Joint Labor/Management Committee instituted by this MOU.”

As a result of meetings held by the Labor/Management local subcommittee, the following pilot program has been agreed upon. This pilot program shall be in effect for six months beginning _____. At the end of this period the program shall be evaluated and a determination made by the Court as to whether the program shall be continued.

This program, the guidelines and procedures are not subject to the grievance process. No part of this program diminishes the Courts rights and obligations as stated in the MOU.

PILOT PROGRAM
TEAM INTERPRETING GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURE

Procedures Already in Place

- ✓ Trials are assigned to employees on a rotating basis.
- ✓ Other long matters (preliminary hearings, long motions) are assigned based on available resources (for example, a preliminary hearing sent from a VCD department to be heard in another department may be followed by the interpreter assigned to that VCD department if caseload permits, or it may be assigned to another available interpreter).
- ✓ Generally, long matters are pre-scheduled, especially when they are expected to last either a half-day or full-day. In these cases, when able interpreters are pre-assigned.
- ✓ Efforts are made to maintain consistency of assigned interpreters in long matters and trials.

Procedure

For purposes of the pilot, it is assumed that the “Active” interpreter is the one due to be assigned to the next trial; the second interpreter is the “Support” interpreter to the trial. The Support interpreter will be eligible for their turn as Active interpreter in future assignments. Unless the next trial/assignment is back to back, then the interpreter would have the option to exercise one pass. This procedure may also be used for half- or full-day matters.

1. Trial is sent out, and requires an interpreter. The interpreter assigned to this trial becomes the Active interpreter assigned to the case.
2. The Coordinator will review the case to determine if a support interpreter is needed based on the following factors, which include but are not limited to: type of hearing, complexity and/or gravity, length, number of witnesses and stage in the case.
3. If it is determined that a Support interpreter is needed, the Coordinator will inform a second interpreter that he/she is the Support interpreter for the case. The coordinator will also inform the Active Interpreter that help is on the way.
4. As able and necessary, both the Active interpreter and the Support interpreter are to take customary steps to become familiar with the case.
5. The Coordinator may assign the Support interpreter to a different case/courtroom. The Coordinator will make every effort to ensure that the Support interpreter is assigned to a department/assignment where he/she will most likely become available to assist the Active interpreter in the trial.
6. The Support interpreter is to take appropriate steps to evaluate the caseload where they are assigned to determine whether cases can be handled in a manner that would allow him/her to complete the assignment and be released to assist the Active interpreter. The Support interpreter is to communicate with courtroom staff and attorneys as necessary and provide updates that assist the Coordinator in determining whether she may release the Support interpreter to proceed to the trial.
7. Other interpreters who become available or who could handle the caseload in more than one courtroom are expected to communicate this fact to the Coordinator. In this scenario, an available or multiple-assignment interpreter can be sent to relieve the Support interpreter.
8. As soon as they are available, other interpreters not assigned to a particular trial should communicate their availability to the Coordinator so that the Support interpreter may be relieved and then placed to assist the Active interpreter.

Requirements

1. The Active interpreter is to make the Coordinator aware of the following:
 - Sessions when more or less effort could be made to provide assistance. For example, if the interpreter knows that the afternoon session of a trial will be unusually brief or start later than usual, the Coordinator might be able to utilize the Support interpreter elsewhere for a longer period of time. Similarly, if it is jury instructions day, the Active interpreter must make the Coordinator aware of this greater need to coordinate staff in order for the Support interpreter to be released to assist. However, if the coordinator determines that resources are available to cover elsewhere, both interpreters should be assigned despite how heavy or light the session will be in trial since the goal is for the Active interpreter and the Support interpreter to be present for the trial as much as possible so they can readily assist each other interchangeably.
 - Trial anticipated schedule (e.g., beginning times for the trial; break and lunch times accommodation for witnesses, early afternoon start (1:15 p.m.) to accommodate juror or witness, ending time.
2. Once both interpreters are present for trial, the Active interpreter and the Support interpreter are both expected to remain in the courtroom unless there is an emergency or the court is not in session. This avoids disruptions. Should there be a need to utilize the Support interpreter elsewhere after he/she has already been placed in the trial; the Coordinator is to make efforts to ensure that the Support interpreter is the only reasonable option before pulling them. Care should be taken to ensure that the Support interpreter is pulled at breaks, if possible, again, to avoid disruption.
3. Efforts should be made by the Coordinator to ensure that the Active interpreter and the Support interpreter are not always the same two staff members working together on trials, to avoid perceptions of specific teams having been created.
4. If possible, efforts should be made by the Coordinator to ensure that in the Active interpreter's next trial, he/she is not assigned as the primary interpreter, but rather the Support interpreter.
5. The Support interpreter shall be designated on the daily schedule with an asterisk (*) so that other staff members are aware and can assist in relieving the Support interpreter as soon as possible.

This program was agreed upon by the local Labor/Management Sub-Committee on December 23, 2010.

Labor/Management Sub-Committee Members:

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