



MINNESOTA
JUDICIAL
BRANCH

COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM

Remote Interpreting Fact Sheet

What is Remote Interpreting?

Court interpretation is a legislatively mandated service provided by the Judicial Branch with the goal of placing the non-English speaker as closely as possible in the same position as an English speaker. Remote interpreting is an innovative approach to providing this service by utilizing technology (e.g., telephone and interactive television) to link the interpreter to the courtroom. Remote interpreting can be accomplished in two ways:

- 1) **On-site** occurs when the interpreter travels to a site designated by the court to conduct interpreting remotely. A qualified interpreter is expected to handle multiple cases remotely and/or in person.
- 2) **Off-site** occurs when the interpreter provides interpreting services from a location of his/her choosing. The interpreter is not required to travel to a court-designated site or to conduct in-person interpreting.

What types of cases can be handled by Remote Interpreting?

Remote interpreting is not expected to take the place of in-person interpreting, the preferred method of providing this service. Remote interpreting is a difficult and fatiguing method of interpretation, requiring highly-qualified and experienced court interpreters. Therefore, the Judicial Branch has given careful consideration to the types of cases in which remote interpreting will be utilized. Generally, remote interpreting will be used for urgent or unexpected situations where no in-person interpreter is available or in non-emergent matters when it is fiscally responsible to utilize remote versus in-person interpreting. These are hearings that are typically expected to take 30 minutes or less. Remote interpreting will generally not be used for complex cases or cases where lengthy testimony is expected.

Why do we need Remote Interpreting?

The Judicial Branch continues to seek approaches that are more efficient and cost effective. The courts, especially in greater Minnesota, often have difficulties in securing the services of an interpreter to provide in-person interpretation. Remote interpreting is a cost-efficient alternative that will allow these courts to have access to certified and rostered interpreters located elsewhere in the state while maintaining the integrity of the service. It also enables courts to efficiently schedule an interpreter for multiple assignments from one location, a benefit for the courts and interpreter.

What are the benefits of conducting Remote Interpreting?

- Reduction in cost
- Greater access to certified interpreters — the highest-qualified interpreter
- Potentially more assignments for interpreters
- Improved access to interpreters throughout the country for rare and exotic languages
- Greater flexibility in court calendaring
- Continue the high standard of interpreting in Minnesota using innovative methods