

Guidelines for Proper Interpretation Methods in Administrative Hearings

- Interpreters shall refer to themselves as “the interpreter” when speaking on the record in order to avoid confusion with the pronoun “I,” which shall refer to the witness.
- Interpreters should be unobtrusive during proceedings so that their presence facilitates an environment as close as is possible to one in which there is no language barrier.
- When interpreting in the consecutive mode, interpreters may need to periodically interrupt the testimony of a witness in order to review their notes. These interruptions should only create a pause during the testimony, and interpreters shall not delete or stop parts of that testimony. To facilitate this process, interpreters may arrange a system of signals with the witness before testimony begins.

EXAMPLES

- Witness says in Spanish, “I fell and hurt my back.”

Correct translation: “I fell and hurt my back.”

Incorrect translation: “He fell and hurt his back.”

- Witness says in Spanish, “I was walking on the road and I saw a bird. The bird scared me so I started to run. I ran so fast that I left the job and went to lunch. Then I slipped and I hurt my finger.”

Correct translation: “I was walking on the road and I saw a bird. The bird scared me so I started to run. I ran so fast that I left the job and went to lunch. Then I slipped and I hurt my finger.”

Incorrect translation: “A bird scared me so I started to run. Then I slipped and I hurt my finger...”

- Witness says in Spanish, “What does this guy want me to say? I hurt my finger and I am mad at him. Really what should I say?”

Correct translation: “What does this guy want me to say? I hurt my finger and I am mad at him. Really what should I say?”

Incorrect translation: “I hurt my finger...”