



TENNESSEE BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION IN THE COURT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

Guidelines for Interpretation at Court Proceedings

Introduction: *Your words matter.* To ensure fairness, the Court of Workers' Compensation Claims has adopted these guidelines where a party is a limited English proficient person. *Before the hearing begins, all participants should review these guidelines.*

Qualifications: All interpreters must be state-certified or state-registered, unless the judge has waived this requirement. The judge will administer an oath that the interpreter will make a true and impartial interpretation.

Procedures:

For the Interpreter

- Interpret consecutively, not simultaneously.
- Interpret completely and accurately, and ask the meaning of any unknown word(s).
- Do not add, leave out, or change any statements. Do not summarize. Ask questions of the judge when appropriate, or if you need a break.
- Be impartial, and do not give advice.
- Disclose any conflicts of interest.

For the limited English proficient participant

- Speak slowly.
- Say one sentence; then stop, and allow the interpreter to interpret. Resume speaking when the interpreter has stopped.
- Speak in only one language.
- Ask the meaning of any unknown word(s) to ensure proper interpretation.
- Inform the judge of any cultural misunderstandings.
- Notify the judge immediately if something seems wrong with the interpretation, e.g. it is too fast, you do not understand and need clarification, or it is inaccurate.
- You may ask the judge to stop the interpretation at any time if you reasonably believe the interpretation is inaccurate.

For all parties and counsel

- Direct comments or questions to the limited English proficient participant instead of the interpreter.