

DO I NEED A COURT INTERPRETER?

If you have to go to court and do not speak or understand English very well, you may need the help of a court interpreter.



WHY DO I NEED A COURT INTERPRETER?

Even if you speak English well for everyday situations, the legal language used in court cases can be very difficult to understand. A court interpreter helps you communicate with the court in the language you are comfortable speaking.

WHO ARE COURT INTERPRETERS?

Court interpreters are specially trained to help you in court. A court interpreter:

- speaks English and your language extremely well
- knows legal terms in both languages
- understands the legal process



WHAT WILL A COURT INTERPRETER DO?



A court interpreter **WILL** interpret everything that is said in court. They will interpret what the judge and court staff say into your language and will interpret everything you say into English.



A court interpreter **WILL NOT** give you legal advice. They cannot answer your questions or explain what is happening in court. They can only interpret your questions so that the judge or others can answer them.

WHERE CAN I GET A COURT INTERPRETER?

Tell the clerk—as soon as possible—that you need an interpreter. The court may provide one for free. In some cases, you might need to bring your own interpreter. Go to <https://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-interpreter.htm> for more information on finding a trained, qualified interpreter.



CAN I GET A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER TO INTERPRET FOR ME?



- A friend or family member can help you *outside* of the courtroom.
- *In the courtroom*, in many cases, the court will be able to provide you an interpreter for free. In some cases, the court may ask you to bring your own interpreter. If that happens, find someone who is trained and qualified. Do not bring someone under 18 years old to interpret for you.

Visit <https://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-interpreter.htm> for more tips and information on court interpreters.



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