Interpreting for the Community

In order to avoid potential mishaps, or miscommunication, an interpreter must adhere to a set of working principles.

The following list provides basic guidelines for interpreting:

Please remember that you should not accept any interpreting assignment if you know that you are not qualified to perform such a task.

- Remember that you are a language bridge between two parties. Your duty is to relay messages back and forth, not to add your own message or opinion, no matter how strongly compelled you feel to do this.

- Remain completely loyal to the each speaker's comments. Make sure to interpret the full meaning of a statement rather than simply interpreting word by word, or expression by expression.

- Do not speak with either party without interpreting everything to the other party.

- Always pay full attention to everything that you hear and everything that you say - this helps to eliminate interpretation errors.

**Golden rule:** DO NOT attempt to interpret something that you have not clearly heard. If you are unclear as to what was said, ask specific questions or ask the person to repeat him/herself.

- Be sure to maintain the same register (formal, colloquial, slang, etc.) and speech style as the speaker.

- Before you begin, ask if there is any technical terminology or wording of which you should be aware.

- Make sure that you are in an area that is conducive to clear communication (no loud noises, interruptions, etc.).

- *Everything* that is said during a session is completely confidential. You must neither repeat information to others (family, friends, etc.) or use information for your personal gain.