



**Court Interpreter Services
U.S. District Court, Central District of California**

**Orientation for Contract Court Interpreters
TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS**

Translations are considered legal documents and as such are to be delivered in a professional form suitable for presentation in court. They are to be submitted on white bond paper, typed, or computer-generated. They must be free of typographical and/or grammatical errors. The translation must reflect the source language content without omissions or additions. The level of the source language (register) should be maintained as much as possible. If the meaning of a word or phrase in the source language is unclear, that fact should be indicated by giving a literal translation followed by [sic]. The fact that a word or phrase is illegible or crossed out should also be indicated, either by a translator's note on the bottom of the page or enclosed in brackets following the text in question. Faulty grammar, spelling, and syntax in the source language are *not* to be reflected in the translation, but this fact may be indicated by means of a translator's note at the end. The translation should also include the wording of seals, stamps, and marginal notes, as well as an indication of the position of any photographs or other phenomena that appear in the original document. The word **TRANSLATION** should appear on top of the first page of the translation. All pages should be sequentially numbered, and the file name of the translation should be indicated on the bottom of each page as a footer.

All translation projects involve a due date for submission to the party requesting the translation service. Often these documents are to be presented as evidence in a pending matter or submitted to the court for any of a variety of reasons. The successful prosecution or defense in a case may hinge on the timely presentation of the document. The interpreter who accepts a translation project agrees to submit the completed work on or before the due date.

On occasion, the translator may be called at a later date to testify regarding the translation, and under certain circumstances the court may issue an order to produce additional copies of the work. The translator should keep either a hard copy of the translation, or maintain a file of translations on a disc. These file copies should be kept for a period of no less than one year from the date of submission of the work.

A personal declaration stating the translator's qualifications and other relevant information should be attached to the translation. The Declaration of Interpreter form on the court's letterhead is for the use of the court's staff or contract interpreters when certifying translations done in-house only, and should not be used for translations done privately for other persons or agencies.



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For per-word rates, and other billing information, please refer to the CJA orientation materials (Attachment # 10). If a translation project payable under the Criminal Justice Act is likely to exceed \$500.00, prior court approval is required. Counsel of record should file an ex-parte application with the court, and a copy of the order approving the expenditure should be given to the translator. Do not start work on a translation project that is likely to exceed the \$500.00 limit without a court order. The court order has to be attached to the completed CJA voucher for payment. If the translation was requested by the federal public defender, a pre-approved public defender voucher has to be obtained, irrespective of the amount of the final invoice.

If the translation was requested by the U.S. attorney's office, the interpreter/translator should request a DCN (Document Control Number) for billing purposes. The U.S. attorney's office is by law required to issue payments within 30 days of receipt of the voucher. Contact the U.S. attorney's fiscal section at 213 894-7304 if payment is delayed more than 30 days, and be prepared to furnish the name of the assistant U.S. attorney, the case reference, and the DCN number. For CJA billing inquiries, please refer to the CJA orientation materials (Attachment #10).