

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FOURTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR BAY COUNTY, FLORIDA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NUMBER 99-10

IN RE: Court Interpreters

WHEREAS, the Chief Judge has the administrative responsibility over all courts within the judicial circuit and accordingly finds it necessary and appropriate to establish responsibilities and guidelines related to court interpreting services; and

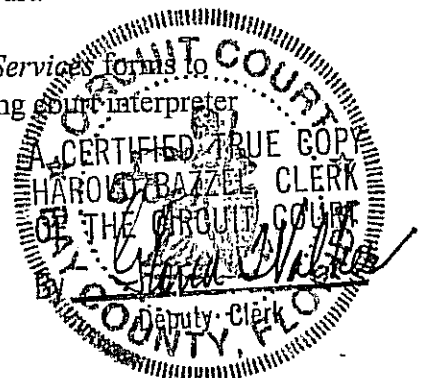
WHEREAS, presiding judges must determine the ability of all parties, including victims, defendants, petitioners and respondents, as well as witnesses and jurors, to hear or understand the English language; express themselves in English sufficiently to be understood and must determine whether children, or other persons who have a mental or development disability, can reasonably understand or be understood; and

WHEREAS, when a presiding judge determines that a person before the court cannot hear or understand the English language or cannot express him or herself in English sufficiently to be understood, due to a language barrier or to a mental or developmental disability, then the judge must seek the aid of a qualified court interpreter to assist this individual;

THEREFORE, it is ORDERED AND ADJUDGED as follows:

I. Responsibilities of the Office of the Court Administrator

- A. The Office of the Court Administrator (OCA) shall maintain an adequate pool of qualified interpreters to provide court interpreting services to all parties, including victims, defendants, petitioners and respondents, as well as, witnesses and jurors. The OCA shall request and maintain resumes and credentials of court interpreters interested in providing such services to the circuit.
- B. The OCA shall identify for the court those court interpreters who, based on a review of their resumes and credentials, appear to be qualified. The court, pursuant to Florida Statutes, shall determine whether an interpreter is "qualified" to provide interpretive services for the court.
- C. The OCA shall provide *Request for Court Interpreter Services* forms to persons, representatives, or entities interested in securing court interpreter services.



- D. The OCA shall review all request forms for court interpreter services and make every effort to arrange for a qualified court interpreter for the scheduled hearing or proceeding.
- E. When an interpreter has been secured, the OCA shall forward a confirmation to the requesting party. If a court interpreter cannot be located, the OCA will contact the requesting party and advise them to seek a continuation of the hearing and/or scheduled proceedings until a qualified interpreter can be secured.
- F. When contacted by a requesting party that a court proceeding and/or hearing has been canceled or continued, the OCA shall contact the scheduled court interpreter and inform him or her of the cancellation/continuance.
- G. The presiding judge shall approve all court interpreter invoices. The OCA shall audit and process all invoices for court interpreter services.

II Requesting Party Responsibilities

- A. The "requesting party" is a person or entity who makes a formal request for a court interpreter on behalf of another individual involved in a court proceeding or hearing. The request is submitted to the OCA.
- B. A requesting party shall submit a *Request for Court Interpreter Services* form by mail, facsimile, or electronic mail to the OCA no later than five working days prior to the scheduled proceeding. If the requesting party has less than five days advance notice of the need of a court interpreter due to an emergency, then that party should contact the OCA immediately with the request. Following this immediate request, the requesting party should submit the *Request for Court Interpreter Services* form to provide written documentation of the request. An emergency is defined as a situation whereby the inability of an individual to effectively communicate with the court, legal counsel, or other critical personnel was not known in advance of a court proceeding.
- C. After the scheduled hearing or proceeding, the requesting party shall sign and date the court interpreter's invoice and initial the actual time the interpreter spent providing interpreter services.
- D. Upon receiving notice of a cancellation of any scheduled hearing and/or court proceeding, or if the applicant informs the requesting party that he or she will not be able to attend the scheduled hearing or proceeding, the

requesting party shall immediately contact the OCA of said cancellation. Failure to provide the OCA with advance notice of a cancellation may subject the requesting party to payment of all fees and costs for the court interpreter's services.

III. Responsibilities of Qualified Court Interpreters

- A. Any person interested in becoming recognized as a qualified court interpreter shall submit his or her resume and language interpreting credentials to the OCA. Court interpreters are encouraged to attend the Florida State Courts System's *Orientation Course for Court Interpreters* and, if available, take the court system's court interpreter language examination.
- B. Court interpreters who have agreed to provide interpreter services are expected to arrive on time at all scheduled hearings and court proceedings and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner.
- C. Court interpreters shall provide professional court interpreter services and ensure that the individual needing interpreter services is communicating effectively.
- D. After completing the scheduled court interpreting services, the court interpreter shall submit an invoice to the requesting party for signature and confirmation of times spent interpreting. Then, the court interpreter shall submit this invoice to OCA for payment. The invoice must include the court interpreter's name, address, social security number, case number for which interpreter services were rendered, signature of requesting party, date and actual interpreting time (beginning time and ending time) services were provided. If the court interpreter services is provided by a firm or company, the invoice must include the company's name and FEID number.

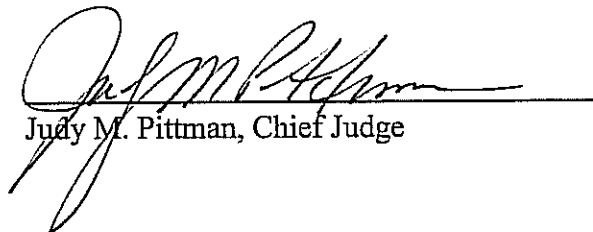
IV Compensation of Qualified Court Interpreters

- A. Qualified court interpreters located within the circuit shall be paid \$25 per hour and receive a one hour minimum for their services. Those interpreters who agree to be of service after regular business hours and on weekends shall be paid at time and a half (\$37.50 per hour).
- B. Qualified court interpreters who have completed the Florida State Courts System *Orientation Class for Interpreters* shall be paid an additional \$5 per hour for a total of \$30 per hour. These interpreters who agree to be of service after regular business hours and on weekends shall be paid at time and a half (\$45 per hour).

- C. Qualified court interpreters who have successfully completed both the Florida State Courts System *Orientation Class for Interpreters* and the written/oral language examination for their respective language shall receive \$40 per hour (\$60 per hour for after hours and weekend service).
- D. Compensation for exotic language interpreters or out-of-circuit interpreters shall be handled on a case by case basis.
- E. Each additional hour shall be paid in quarter hour increments based on the hourly rate established for the interpreter.
- F. Those court interpreters who are required to travel to a schedule proceeding or hearing, the interpreter will be reimbursed per diem expenses as provided in section 112.061, Florida Statutes. The interpreter must complete and submit a *State of Florida Reimbursement For Travel* expense form to the OCA.

This order does not authorize dual compensation in the event that a staff interpreter position is created in the future.

DONE AND ORDERED in chambers at Panama City, Bay County, Florida this 29
Day of September, 1999.


Judy M. Pittman, Chief Judge

Court Interpreter Request Form

The following is required information in order to secure a qualified court interpreter for a court hearing or proceeding. Please complete the first box and forward to:

The Office of the Court Administrator
Post Office Box 1089
Panama City, Florida 32402
Fax: (850) 747-5717; Phone (850) 747-5327

Request for Court Interpreter Services

Name/Entity: _____ Contact Person: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
_____ Fax: _____

Name of Person Service Is Requested: _____

Type of Court Interpreter Request:

Hearing-Impaired

Foreign Language

Language/Dialect: _____

Hearing/Proceeding Information:

Case #: _____ Type of Proceeding: _____

Judge: _____ Location: _____

Date: _____ Starting Time: _____ Est. Ending Time: _____

Requesting Party signature/approval: _____

Coordination of Court Interpreter Services Office of the Court Administrator

Request for Court Interpreter is:

Approved

Name of Interpreter: _____ Phone: _____

Pending

Additional information need: _____

Denied

Reason for denial: _____

Court Administration Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Note: If the need or circumstances for the assigned court interpreter changes for any reason, the requesting party is responsible for contacting the Office of the Court Administrator as soon as possible so that such changes can be communicated and confirmed with the scheduled interpreter. Failure to make such contact could result in the requesting party being responsible for the interpreter's charges.

Court Interpreter Request Form

The following is required information in order to secure a qualified court interpreter for a court hearing or proceeding. **Please complete the first box and forward to:**

The Office of the Court Administrator
by fax: (850)747-5717

by email: johnstona@jud14.flcourts.org

Questions, please call (850)747-5327

Request for Court Interpreter Services

Name/Entity: _____ Contact Person: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Fax: _____

Name of Person Service is Requested: _____

Type of Court Interpreter Requested:

Hearing-Impaired

Foreign Language

Language/Dialect: _____

Hearing/Proceeding Information:

Case #: _____ Type of Proceeding: _____

Judge: _____ Location: _____

Date: _____ Starting Time: _____ Est. Ending Time: _____

Requesting Party signature/approval: _____

Note: If the need or circumstances for the assigned court interpreter changes for any reason, the requesting party is responsible for contacting the Office of the Court Administrator as soon as possible so that such changes can be communicated and confirmed with the scheduled interpreter. Failure to make such contact could result in the requesting party being responsible for the interpreter's charges.

Coordination of Court Interpreter Services Office of the Court Administrator

Request for Court Interpreter is:

Approved

Name of Interpreter: _____ Phone: _____

Appearing by Video Appearing by Phone

Denied

Reason for denial: _____

Court Administration Contact: _____ Phone: _____