The Pennsylvania courts provide interpreters for all court hearings and proceedings, as well as for certain court-administered or managed services, programs and activities. Interpreters are provided at no cost to any party, witness or victim in civil and criminal proceedings.

Have feedback or concerns about language services in Pennsylvania courts?

- Download a comment or complaint form at Languageaccess.pacourts.us and submit to the local language access coordinator.

For more information regarding court services:

- Language access coordinator for each judicial district in Pennsylvania: Languageaccess.pacourts.us
- Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, coordinator for court access: 215-560-6300

Do you need a court interpreter?

AOPC

How do you request a court interpreter?

- The language access coordinator for the court where you have a proceeding can arrange for an interpreter for you.
- If you have received a hearing notice or a subpoena, a “Notice of Language Rights” was included. The contact information for your language access coordinator is located on that notice.
- Contact your language access coordinator as soon as possible regarding the date, time and location of your hearing or proceeding, as well as the language you speak.

What can you expect?

- The interpreter may speak with you before the hearing begins to make sure that you understand each other.
- Interpreters sometimes use special equipment in the courtroom and will explain how it all works.
- If there is anything that you do not understand during the court proceeding, inform your interpreter immediately.
- When the judge or attorneys ask you questions, the interpreter will interpret everything you say into English.
- The interpreter will use the first person during interpretation. He or she will say “I” when interpreting what you are saying, and will refer to him/herself as the “interpreter.”
- If the interpreter does not understand something you say, he or she will ask the judge’s permission to ask you to repeat or clarify what you meant.
- If you speak fast or give long answers, the interpreter may ask you to pause to allow for interpretation.

Do you need an interpreter to communicate with court staff outside the courtroom?

The Pennsylvania courts offer telephone interpretation services throughout the courthouse at no cost. “I Speak” cards and “Your Right to Interpreter” posters are located in public places.

To ask for the assistance of an interpreter, you can either pick up an “I Speak” card in your language, say the name of your language or point to your language on one of the posters. A court employee will arrange for an interpreter to assist you by phone.

Who is qualified to be a court interpreter?

Only interpreters, both certified and otherwise qualified, listed on the Administrative Office of PA Courts (AOPC) roster are qualified to interpret in court.

Interpreters on the AOPC roster have received training and passed examinations.

“Otherwise qualified” interpreters must: meet requirements under state law and be listed on AOPC’s roster, answer questions at the beginning of the court proceeding about their interpreting experience and ability, and show they understand and agree to follow rules of professional conduct for interpreters.

Please visit **Languageaccess.pacourts.us** to find a language access coordinator.

Important: It is your responsibility to notify Court Administration if you no longer need an interpreter.