

Suggested *Voir Dire* Questions for Interpreters

Skill-based questions:

- Do you have any training or credentials as an interpreter?
- What is your native language?
- What was the highest grade you completed in school?
- Have you spent any time in a country where this language is commonly spoken?
- Did you formally study the non-native language in school? To what extent?
- Do you know the words likely to be used, legal or otherwise, in both languages?
- Have you had an opportunity to speak with the non-English speaking person informally? (If not, consider providing an opportunity now.)
 - Based on your discussion with the non-English speaking person, were there any communication problems? (Note: Pay attention to the interaction, and each person's facial clues to gauge understanding.)
 - Are you familiar with the words used by, and speaking patterns of, all speakers at the hearing?
- Can you interpret simultaneously (i.e., listen to one language and orally interpret in the other language, even though the speaker has not paused – as in an opening statement)?
- Can you interpret consecutively (i.e., listen to one language and orally interpret in the other language during a speaker's pause – as in when an attorney questions a witness)?
- Have you interpreted in any noncourt settings?
- Have you ever had your interpreting skills evaluated?
- Has a judge ever allowed you to interpret in court?
- Have you had training in professional ethics for court interpreters?

Conflict of interest questions:

- Have you ever been disqualified from interpreting in any court or administrative hearing?
- Are you employed or otherwise compensated by a business owned or controlled by any party or a witness?
- Are you a friend, a family member, or a household member of any party or witness?
- Are you a potential witness in this matter?
- Are you a law enforcement officer? If so, in which jurisdiction?
- Do you have a pecuniary (financial) or other interest in the outcome of the case?
- Do you know of any reason why your appointment would create a conflict of interest, a perceived conflict of interest, or any appearance of impropriety?
- Are you aware of any reason your appointment would fail either to protect a party's rights or to ensure the integrity of the proceedings?