

Code of Practice for Interpreters

Duty to treat all people equally

AA Global are firmly committed to a policy of Equal Opportunity for all staff. We shall not discriminate on the grounds of gender, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, faith, or any other factor irrelevant to a person's work. We encourage diversity and aim to engage project teams in working relationships where they are valued and respected, and where discrimination, bullying and harassment are not tolerated. We expect all team members and our sub-contractors to play their part in supporting this aim.

You will be expected to be polite, professional and show respect at all times to your colleagues and fellow interpreters who all come from a variety of different backgrounds and cultures.

Impartiality

You have a duty to be impartial and to be seen by others to be impartial at all times. Even though you may not feel that you have bias or partiality, if other people perceive that you are biased or partial your role as an interpreter is compromised. Therefore, you must strive to avoid any situation in which it might appear that you have favoured one side or another in a case.

Interpreters should not:

- offer opinion, comment or declare any personal observations on truthfulness or ethnic veracity of an applicant even if requested to do so. You must decline the request and state that it is outside your remit as a professional interpreter.
- indulge in general conversation with an applicant before (other than to establish you both speak the same language and/or dialect), during or after an assignment. A seemingly innocent conversation can lead to a perception of bias. If you are approached outside the assignment, you must explain that you cannot discuss the case and not get involved in any conversation. You must also report any such approaches to the client and AA Global.
- be acquainted with or related to the interviewee or anyone associated with their case. If this circumstance arises you **must not accept** the assignment and must explain why. To accept would call into question your professionalism and that of AA Global. If after you have accepted an assignment you become aware of a conflict of interest you **must immediately** inform the Client Support Team of the circumstances.

Confidentiality

This means that you must not disclose to any person outside any information gained during your assignment. (This means any information, document or article which you have had in your possession by virtue of your position) that becomes known to you during the course of your assignment. You should treat everything heard or seen, whilst on an assignment as confidential. You should not disclose any communications discussed between parties (any individual present during an interview) outside the interview.

Accurate and Precise Interpretation

Interpreters have a duty to:

- ensure that what was stated in another language, by a non-English speaker, is precisely and accurately interpreted.
- place non-English speaking applicants on an equal footing with those who understand English.

It is important to remember that the client will be relying entirely on the interpreted version of the account given by the interviewee and may draw conclusions about the interviewee's credibility.

You must:

- retain every single element of information that was contained in the original message, and interpret in as close verbatim form as English style, syntax and grammar will allow.
- be in a fit state to interpret effectively throughout the interview.
- speak slowly and clearly.
- spell out any foreign name or place used by the client member of staff and/or interviewee/patient.
- inform the client immediately if you have any difficulty in interpreting.
- remain calm, especially if you hear unpleasant or controversial information. Your duty is to remain detached from the information you are interpreting.
- use direct speech when interpreting. You should not say, "he said he....." this should be interpreted as, "I....."
- interpret language which may be offensive. For cultural reasons, obscenities may be difficult to translate. In this case you should look for the closest equivalent.

You must not:

- interrupt the progress of the interview other than to make a correction to the interpretation, request clarification, to resolve a misunderstanding or to draw attention to any distractions.
- embellish what is being said. Your function is to interpret accurately.
- omit any part of the interviewee's account. It is not within your role to determine what information, is or is not, relevant. Your role is to interpret **everything** that is said.
- ask the interviewee what they mean by a particular answer. If you are unable to interpret a statement, you must ask the client interviewer if the information may be repeated by the party concerned.
- try to anticipate what the interviewer or interviewee is trying to say or give an answer other than what is being said.
- let your own experience or views get in the way of how you interpret the evidence.
- show your emotions. The only reactions you should express are those of the interviewee. This may be difficult at times if the account given by the interviewee is upsetting.

Professional Conduct

You should not:

- engage in any behaviour likely to discredit AA Global or the client, including impairment through drugs, alcohol, sexual misconduct, violence, intimidation, political activity or abusive behaviour.

When attending the assignment you should:

- arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the interview for which you are providing a service.
- If you are unavoidably delayed you should telephone AA Global Head Office as soon as you know you will be late and give an approximate time of arrival, so that AA Global can keep the client informed.

Dress Code

Interpreters are expected to dress appropriately for their assignment. For example, dressing smartly will reflect the professionalism of AA Global and the client. For interviews being conducted with individuals from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and female interpreters in particular should dress so as not to offend the interviewee.

Interpreters should not chew gum, or any other substance, or smoke at any time, whilst on an assignment.

Mobile Telephones

Interpreters **must** turn off all mobile phones, beepers, watches etc which may otherwise cause a distraction in the interview whilst in interview rooms.