

Appendix Q: Guidelines for Advocates Who Work with Interpreters

1) Before the Client Meeting:

- The advocate should have time to introduce herself/himself to the interpreter and explain her/his role within the organization.
- The advocate should explain to the interpreter the purpose of the meeting and the approximate length of time the meeting will last.
- The advocate should provide the interpreter with any necessary background information about the client and any sensitive information that might be discussed.
- The advocate and the interpreter should discuss specific terms that might be used so that the interpreter can review and share corresponding words and phrases and discuss variations in the languages.

2) During the Client Meeting:

- Seating should be arranged so that the advocate and the client will have the most direct communication. For example, the advocate can sit opposite the client with the interpreter at the client's side.
- The advocate should introduce herself/himself to the client and introduce the interpreter to the client. Both the advocate and the interpreter should explain to the client the role each will serve (for the client).
- The interpreter should inform the client and the advocate that anything said by one will be interpreted for the other.
- The advocate should speak and look at the client not the interpreter. This often does not come naturally.
- The advocate should use a positive tone of voice and facial expressions that sincerely convey respect and interest in the client.
- The advocate should use short sentences and avoid ambiguous or complex grammar. Speak slower than normal.
- The advocate should avoid using slang and jargon.
- The advocate should allow the interpreter to translate after every two to four sentences have been spoken.
- The advocate should take extra care in explaining procedures, regulations and reasons for asking for certain type of information.
- The advocate should frequently summarize and check on the client's understanding of what has been said. Ask the client to repeat what has been said in her/his own words (through the translator).
- Allow the client to ask follow-up questions or seek clarification.
- Allow the interpreter time to intervene when necessary.
- Be sensitive to the demands and pressures on the interpreter. Interpreting requires enormous concentration, especially when the interpreter has to constantly switch between languages. It is even more demanding when the circumstances are sensitive and stressful. Do not expect interpreters to keep going indefinitely; they

may need a break or may need to schedule a second appointment to finish the meeting.

After the Client Meeting:

- Thank the interpreter for her/his participation.
- Complete any paperwork that the interpreter requires for her/his employer.
- Provide feedback to the interpreter service coordinator if there have been any difficulties

There are many online resources for agencies to further expand their advocates' knowledge about working with interpreters.

Please see the following articles and the links:

1. *How to Work with Interpreters and Address Problems*, Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence: <http://www.apiidv.org/files/TipSheet.Work.with.Interpreters-APIIDV-2009.pdf>
2. *Finding, Qualifying and Working with Interpreters*, Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence: <http://www.apiidv.org/organizing/interpretation-finding-qualifying-working-with-interpreters.php>
3. *Somewhere to Turn: Making Domestic Violence Services Accessible to Battered Immigrant Women*, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence VAWnet.org: <http://www.vawnet.org>
4. *Language Access and Interpretation*, Interpretation Technical Assistance and Resource Center: www.apiidv.org/organizing/interpretation.php
5. Casa de Esperanza works within Latin communities to increase access for Latinas experiencing domestic violence. Casa provides culturally relevant linguistic trainings, technical assistance and tools that focus on expanding the domestic violence field's capacity to support Latinas around issues of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) www.lep.gov
6. Translated Materials: A list of translated materials produced by domestic violence programs around the country. The list includes over 500 items such as brochures, forms manuals, legal glossaries, in more than 32 different Asian and Pacific Islander languages. <http://www.apiidv.org/resources/our-publications.php>