



National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators  
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## Statement regarding proper protocols for remote interpreting during the COVID-19 pandemic

As we have learned that severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) can be detected up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to three days on plastic and stainless steel (published on this [page](#) by the National Institute of Health), we recommend that all courts, offices and agencies, who are charged with providing language access, take all precautions to ensure the health and safety of interpreters throughout their own jurisdictions.

As you may know, video remote interpreting (VRI) and telephone interpreting are last-resort methods to be used in limited circumstances. As we navigate through the current corona virus crisis, these methods are playing a more important role while COVID-19 remains a threat to the health and lives of people across the United States. However, using VRI or telephone interpreting for emergency/essential court functions does not relieve the duty of the language access providers from using certified, licensed, registered or otherwise qualified interpreters. This would be analogous to using legal professionals, who are not licensed to practice law, to represent parties in court. Policies pertaining to the hiring of interpreters should be adhered to as per the administrative offices for each judicial jurisdiction. As a matter of transparency and in order to ensure all parties that hired interpreters have gone through the proper vetting process, interpreters should state their credentials on the record at the beginning of the VRI or telephone interpreting session. We urge you to not let the corona virus foil language access in our country.

Statement provided by the collaborative contributions of the NAJIT Advocacy and Bench & Bar Committees