



## SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

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### FAMILY COURT SERVICES

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## INTERPRETER INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you for your assistance interpreting for one/both of the parties and for the mediator.

The responsibilities of an interpreter are very important. Please read and follow these instructions carefully.

**1. Interpret only the exact words spoken by the person**

Do not summarize or try to explain what you believe the speaker is trying to say. If you are unsure what the speaker is saying, stop interpreting and tell the mediator that you need clarification before continuing.

**2. Simply repeat everything that is said**

Simply repeat in English exactly what the speaker says, even if their language includes slang or curse words. Do not attempt to improve the level of language used by the speaker.

**3. Remain neutral**

Your role is solely to interpret everything that is being said as completely and accurately as possible. Do not take sides or try to help either of the parties.

**4. Maintain confidentiality**

Mediation is a confidential process, designed to assist parents in reaching a reasonable plan regarding custody and visitation, and to encourage cooperative parenting. Therefore, you must agree to keep what is discussed in mediation confidential.

**5. Do not give advice or opinions**

Do not give advice or your opinion to either party or to the mediator.

**6. If there is a problem, tell the mediator immediately**

Please tell the mediator immediately if any of these situations occur:

- You believe you have made a mistake.
- You do not understand, or you forgot, a part of what is being said.
- The person for whom you are interpreting does not understand you.
- You do not know how to say something in English or in the language that you are interpreting.
- The speaker is talking too fast or not pausing between sentences.