



# NICEM CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INTERPRETERS

## PREAMBLE

Interpreters strive to maintain high professional standards in compliance with the Code of Conduct

Interpreters adhere to the standards of the profession whenever they are providing paid or unpaid services.

Interpreters represent the profession honourably and work to enhance the professional image of the interpreting field

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the sole purpose of this document, the following terms are used:

**Conflict of Interest:** A conflict of interest is a situation that could be construed as adversely influencing an interpreter's objectivity and ability to render services impartially.

**Privileged Communications:** Privileged communications are confidential communications between a person and a licensed or ordained professional for the purpose of obtaining the professional's advice. These communications are protected from compelled disclosure by statute or common law unless waived the person who holds the privilege. Some examples of privileged communication include: doctor/patient, lawyer/client, clergy/ penitent or parishioner.

# Code of Conduct

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Interpreters bear a unique responsibility to clients and service provider because of their role as language and cultural mediators, bridging the communication divide. Maintaining confidentiality is essential to protect all those involved in interpreted exchanges.

1.1 Interpreters keep all assignment-related information strictly confidential, except when

- a. required by law;
- b. complying with a court order;
- c. complying with subpoena; or
- d. testifying in a civil, criminal, or disciplinary action arising from the interpreted situation {in which case client confidences can only be disclosed in the of that action}
- e. the subject matter being interpreted was seen by at large {such as play, televised political event, or public event}.

1.2 Interpreters may disclose confidential information to team interpreters, supervisors, and medical and mental health personnel to ensure consistent quality of service, and share only information that is essential to do so.

1.3 Interpreters keep abreast of applicable laws, policies, and rules that may affect confidentiality. They determine their ability to maintain confidentiality and may inform clients of any possible exceptions to confidentiality, as outlined in this Code of Conduct, before providing services.

1.4 Interpreters take reasonable steps to ensure that client records, data or information are preserved or transferred to the next service provider in a confidential manner consistent with this Code of Conduct, and arrange for the confidentiality of these records to be protected in the event of the interpreter's death, incapacity or withdrawn from the position or practice.

## PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY

2.1 Interpreters maintain high standards of professional competence and integrity.

2.2 Interpreters shall request compensation for services in a professional and judicious manner.

2.3 Interpreters conduct themselves professionally in a manner appropriate to the setting, devote their full attention to the assignment, and refrain from conduct that can lead to substandard performance. Interpreters recognise that their appearance is important to ensure effective delivery of services and use good judgement with regard to attire, body jewellery, hygiene and appropriate behaviour.

- 2.4 Before accepting assignments, interpreters should determine whether they are qualified, assessing their current skill level, ability to remain impartial, knowledge of the subject and the clients involved.
- 2.5 Interpreters decline or withdraw from an assignment when they are unable to provide the requisite level of professional services.
- 2.6 When Interpreters accept an assignment, they are to provide quality services regardless of clients' education, ethnicity, religion, age, sex, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status.
- 2.7 Interpreters take responsibility for their performance on the job and, when appropriate, repair interpreting errors promptly and discreetly.
- 2.8 Interpreters remain neutral while providing interpreting services and refrain from providing counsel, advice, or personal opinions or promoting a religious or spiritual faith while performing professional duties.
- 2.9 Interpreters remain impartial and unbiased and refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias. Interpreters also disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest.
- 2.10 Interpreters refrain from engaging in inappropriate sexual contact with, sexually exploiting, or committing any type of harassment of individuals encountered in connection with interpreting, including but not limited to children, clients, and parties involved in an interpreting situation.

## **PUNCTUALITY**

Punctuality is the most important aspect of our business. Everything is on hold until you arrive. Time is money and we will monitor your attendance and punctuality record. Our clients expect us to be on time all the time.

- 1 Be at your assignment 10-15 minutes before your given time
- 2 If you expect to be late by more than five minutes for any reason, call your destination and then call us
- 3 Call us as soon as you know that you cannot attend an assignment

## **ACCURACY**

Interpreters must transmit the message in a thorough and faithful manner, giving consideration to linguistic variations in both languages and conveying and conveying the tone and spirit of the original message. A word for word interpretation may not convey the intended idea. The interpreter must determine the relevant concept and say it in language that is readily understandable and culturally appropriate to the listener. In addition the interpreter will make every effort to assure that the client has understood questions, instructions and other information transmitted by the service provider.

**COMPLETENESS: Conveying everything that is said**

Interpreters must interpret everything that is said by all people in the interaction, without omitting, adding, condensing or changing anything. If the content to be interpreted might be perceived as offensive, insensitive or otherwise harmful to the dignity and well-being of the patient, the interpreter should advise the health professional of this before interpreting.

**Compensation**

The fee agreed upon by the agency and the interpreter is the only compensation that the interpreter may accept. Interpreter will not accept additional money, considerations or favours for services reimbursed by the contracting agency.