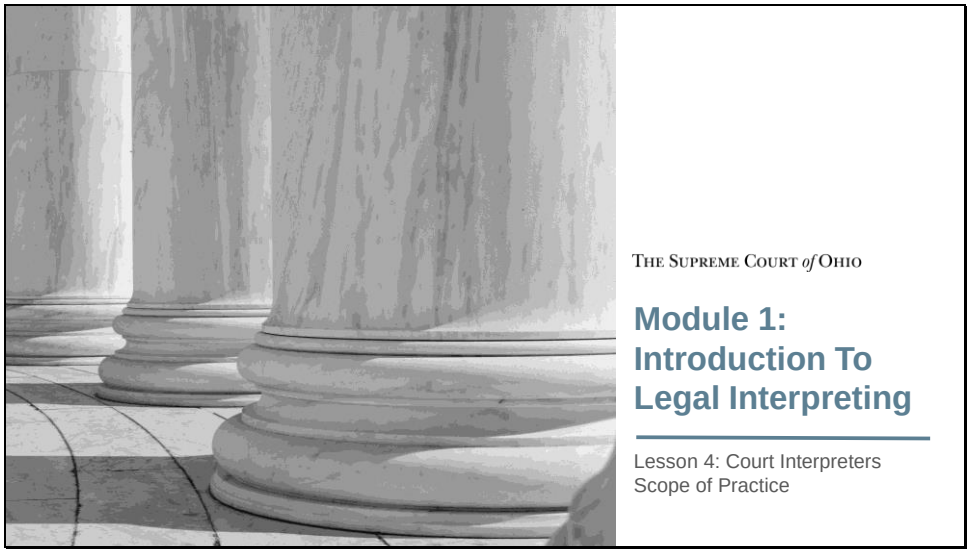
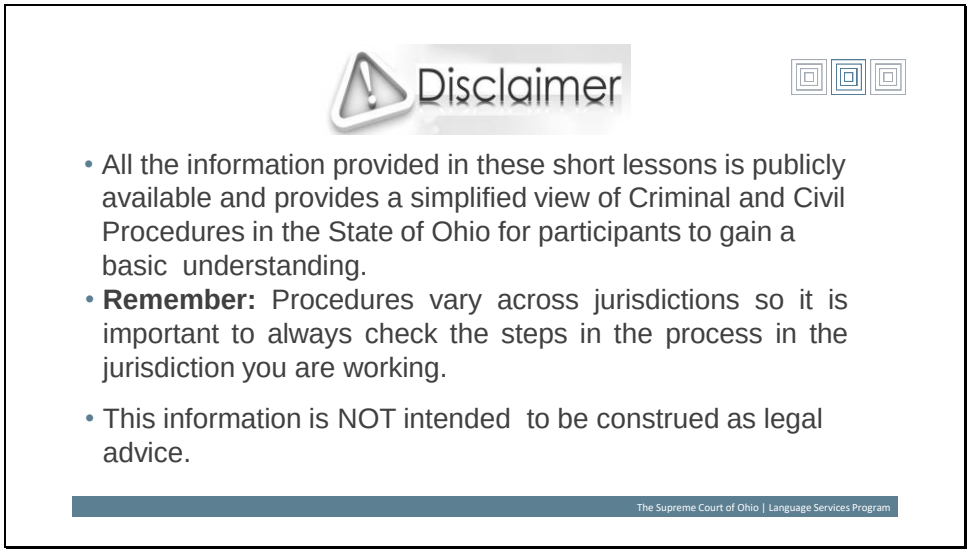
Slide 1


The Supreme Court of Ohio
Module 1:
Introduction To
Legal Interpreting
Lesson 4: Court Interpreters
Scope of Practice

Slide 2


Disclaimer
• All the information provided in these short lessons is publicly available and provides a simplified view of Criminal and Civil Procedures in the State of Ohio for participants to gain a basic understanding.
• **Remember:** Procedures vary across jurisdictions so it is important to always check the steps in the process in the jurisdiction you are working.
• This information is NOT intended to be construed as legal advice.
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Slide 3

Definition of a Court Interpreter

"An interpreter is a bilingual person who has the duty to act as the medium between the court and the limited- or non-English-speaking (LEP/NES) person." *(Gonzalez, Vasquez, Mikkelson, 2012)*

Slide 4

Role of The Court Interpreter

Main players in the court:

- The Judge
- The Jury
- Courtroom Clerk
- Court Reporter

Slide 5

Role of The Court Interpreter

Main players in the court:

- Bailiffs: Marshals, Sheriffs
- Attorneys: Defense and prosecution
- THE Interpreter

Slide 6

Role of The Court Interpreter

Legal Status of the Court Interpreter:

- **Officers of the Court**
- **Court's expert**

Court interpreter interpreting for a witness

Slide 7

Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

CANON 1

The Interpreter shall render a complete and accurate interpretation.

Slide 8

Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

CANON 1

The Interpreter shall render a ***complete*** and accurate interpretation.

Completeness

- Keep register used in the SL.
- Word choice: nuances
- Obscenities
- Repetitions
- Self-corrections

Slide 9

Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

CANON 1

The Interpreter shall render a complete and ***accurate*** interpretation.

Accuracy

- Embellishments
- Clarifications
- Editing

Slide 10

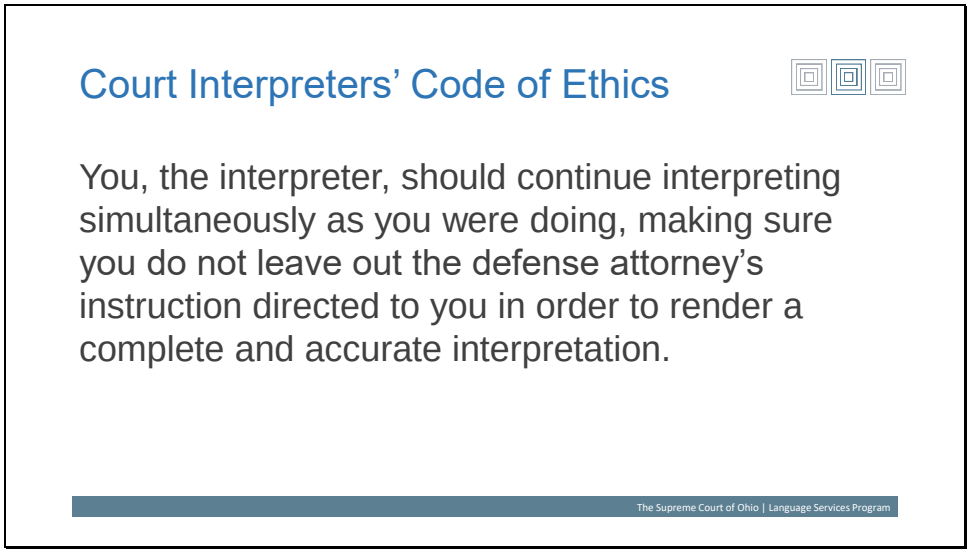
Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

CANON 1

While interpreting simultaneously during a trial, and the judge and the defense attorney are discussing an objection, the defense attorney tells you, the interpreter, "You do not need to interpret that".

What do you, as a court interpreter, should do?

Slide 11


Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics
You, the interpreter, should continue interpreting simultaneously as you were doing, making sure you do not leave out the defense attorney's instruction directed to you in order to render a complete and accurate interpretation.
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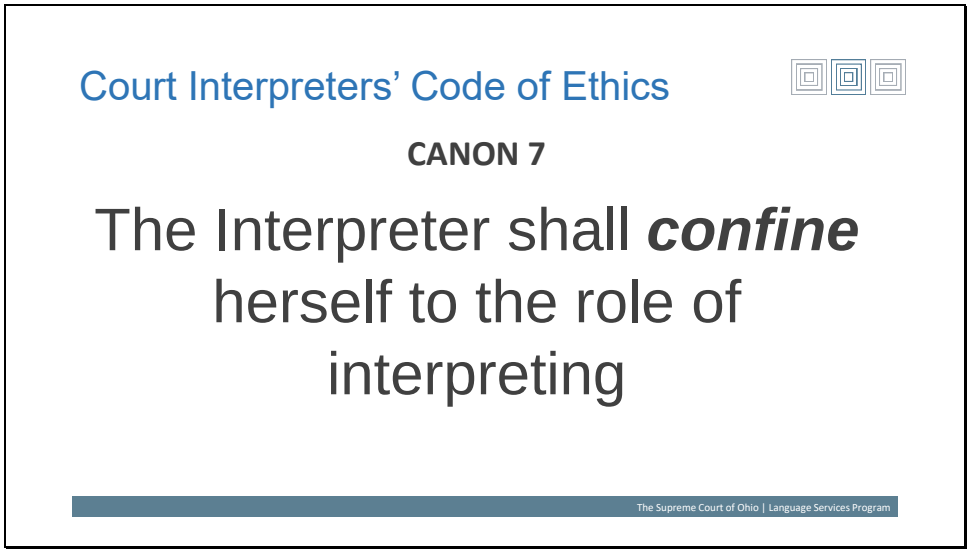
Slide 12


Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics
CANON 7
The Interpreter shall *confine* herself to the role of interpreting
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Slide 13

Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

CANON 7

The Interpreter shall ***confine*** herself to the role of interpreting

Confine

- Giving legal advise
- Doing clerical work
- Cultural expertise
- Instructions to parties

Slide 14

Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

The prosecutor and the defense attorney just negotiated a new plea agreement which you just interpreted for the LEP. During a recess the defense attorney hands you the written plea agreement and asks you to sight translate it for their client and make sure they understand it. Meanwhile, the defense attorney will go somewhere else to take care of another matter.

What should you do?

Slide 15

Court Interpreters' Code of Ethics

You, the Court Interpreter, should advise the defense attorney you are glad to sight translate the plea agreement for their LEP client. However, as per Canon 7 of the Court Interpreter's code of ethics, you may not take any additional actions to ensure LEP's understanding of the document since that would require you to go outside of your professional scope of practice. Additionally, you must advise the attorney it is best practice to have them present while you render your sight translation, especially for the purpose of them clarifying, explaining and answering LEP's questions regarding the document; things you are not allowed to do.