

Working with interpreters: A multicultural experience

Date: Fri., Oct. 2, 2009
Time: 8:30 a.m. to 12:40 p.m.
Location: Minnesota Room, Department of Labor and Industry

Confirmed presenters

Ingrid Christensen

Founder and president of INGCO International language service provider
www.ingcointernational.com

Graciela González, JD

Federally and state certified Spanish/English interpreter;
adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota

David Hunt, JD

National expert on diversity-related matters in law, business and medicine
www.criticalmeasures.net/aboutus/hunt_david.htm

Melissa Williams

Qualified rehabilitation consultant, O'Hara & Associates, Inc.
www.oharaassociates.com/about.htm

John Stiffin

Community liaison/outreach, Department of Labor and Industry, Labor Standards
www.dli.mn.gov/LaborLaw.asp

Randall Lane

Insurance defense attorney in workers' compensation
www.hhmkcj.com/profiles/lane.htm

Norbert Cuellar

Plaintiff's attorney in workers' compensation
www.cuellarlawoffice.com

Kazoua Yang

Minnesota court certified Hmong interpreter

Ifrah Mohamed

Somali interpreter

Luz María Frías

Director, City of St. Paul, Human Rights and Economic Opportunity
www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=2728

Program

- 8 to 8:30 a.m. Check-in and continental breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. Introduction: "I Love Lucy" video clip from "Paris at Last" episode (1956)
- Interpreters as professional communication facilitators***
Stakeholders in workers' compensation should be able to participate fully and understand what is being spoken. This section will discuss: modes of interpretation – simultaneous, consecutive and translation; optimal interpreter qualifications – certified, abides by professional code of ethics and standards; and pitfalls to avoid – interpreters acting as advocates, using unqualified friends or family members to translate during a proceeding.
- Questions from the audience taken from 9 to 9:10 a.m.
- Presenter: Ingrid Christensen*
- 9:10 a.m. ***Ethical and practical considerations in working with interpreters***
Discussion of the ethical considerations involved for all parties interacting with limited-English-speaking participants of administrative procedures, focusing on an attorney's duties under the rules of professional responsibility to present factually accurate information to the tribunal (Rules 3.3 and 3.4), maintain adequate communication with a client (Rule 1.4) and safeguard client confidentiality (Rule 1.6). Also exploring what to expect from a professional interpreter, courtesy and common sense tips about how to manage time and allow the interpreter to effectively translate conversation for the benefit of all participants during a mediation or administrative procedure.
- Questions from the audience taken from 10 to 10:15 a.m.
- Presenters: Graciela Gonzalez and David Hunt*
- 10:15 to 10:30 a.m. ***Break***
- 10:30 a.m. ***Dealing with cultural bias in workers' compensation legal proceedings***
An individual's cultural background may shape how they interact with others and how they are perceived by others. Bilingual and bicultural interpreters can help parties understand and transmit nonverbal communications and cultural nuances, and provide effective strategies to overcome any barriers to effective communication. Presenters will provide examples and guidance about practices and traditions of specific immigrant communities (such as when it is appropriate to shake hands, male-female interaction, deference to elders, etc.) that attorneys and other stakeholders must take into account to avoid bias.
- Questions from the audience taken from 11 to 11:30 a.m.
- Presenters: John Stiffin, Ifrah Mohamed, Kazoua Yang*
- 11:30 to 11:40 p.m. ***Break***
- 11:40 a.m. ***Experiences with interpreters and limited-English stakeholders***
Panel discussion with invited attorneys (petitioners and defense), mediator and qualified rehabilitation consultant
- Panelists: Melissa Williams, QRC; Norbert Cuellar, JD; Randy Lane, JD; Luz Maria Frias, JD*
- 12:40 p.m. ***Closing remarks***