

# **CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR COURT INTERPRETERS**

**27.03.2001**

## **Introduction**

The term *court interpreter* in this code of ethics refers to professional interpreters working in courts of law, including sign language interpreters. The function of the court interpreter in the court session is to render the proceedings accurately and reliably.

The court interpreter has a crucial role in ensuring a fair trial. Through the practice of his/her profession, he/she contributes to the upholding of basic rights and in particular to the principle of equal treatment in front of the law. His/her work may affect the lives and rights of others. Therefore he/she shall adhere to this code of ethics in his/her work.

## **Article 1**

### **General principles**

- 1.1 This code of ethics shall be adhered to unless the law or statutes stipulate otherwise.
- 1.2 The court interpreter shall prepare for his/her assignment as well as possible and carry it out assiduously and to the best of his/her abilities.
- 1.3 The court interpreter shall liaise with the chairman or other representative of the court to ensure that the working conditions are appropriate.

## **Article 2**

### **Disqualification**

The court interpreter shall be deemed disqualified and shall not accept an assignment if performance of it were to place him/her in a conflict of interest that might endanger the objectivity of the interpretation.

## **Article 3**

### **Confidentiality**

The court interpreter shall not reveal to any person confidential information that he/she has obtained in the performance of his/her assignment.

## **Article 4**

### **Improper use of information**

The court interpreter shall not use information that he/she has obtained in the performance of his/her assignment for his/her own benefit, nor shall he/she help others to derive benefit from such information.

## **Article 5**

### **Impartiality and neutrality**

The court interpreter shall at all times be impartial and neutral. He/she shall not allow his/her personal attitudes or opinions to influence the performance of his/her assignment.

## **Article 6**

### **Professional skill**

The court interpreter shall only accept assignments for which he/she possesses the requisite knowledge and skill. The court interpreter shall be responsible for the correctness of his/her interpretation and shall correct any mistakes that he/she makes.

## **Article 7**

### **Professional development**

The court interpreter shall interact with his/her colleagues, develop his/her professional skills and act in a way that stands the profession in good stead.

## **Article 8**

### **Breach of the code of ethics**

This code of professional ethics has been drawn up by the Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters, the Finnish Union of Translators, the Finnish Association of the Deaf and the Association of Finnish Sign Language Interpreters. Should there be reasonable grounds to suspect that the court interpreter has intentionally breached this code of ethics, he/she shall be granted the opportunity to be heard by the association or professional organisation to which he/she belongs with a view to establishing the possible reasons. Should the court interpreter be found to have acted in contravention of this code of professional ethics, each organisation shall take measures in accordance with the rules applying to its members.