

## Handout 3

### Scenarios of Ethical Dilemmas

1. The judge is speaking to a defendant. Having interpreted for the same defendant in the past, you know for a fact that the defendant has very limited education. The judge is using very sophisticated language. Defense attorney asks you if you are sure the defendant understands your interpretation.
2. You are doing team interpretation during the testimony of a key witness in a felony trial. While your partner is interpreting, it seems to you that he has made a mistake that could potentially lead to a great deal of confusion, if indeed a mistake has been made.
3. At a sentencing hearing, the attorney is putting on the record the names of the prescription medications her client is currently taking and what they are for. The interpreter happens to have a background in pharmacology. The attorney names a medication but is not sure what it is for.
4. The judge asks the interpreter who is about to interpret for a witness on the witness stand to abstain from interpreting the objections and to limit himself to just interpreting the questions asked of the witness and her answers.
5. You interpret the conversation between an 18 year-old-defendant in custody and his attorney. They are discussing a possible plea agreement. The defendant's mother approaches you as you leave the courtroom. She doesn't speak English and she wants you to tell her what is happening with her son's case.
6. You have interpreted for many defendants facing the misdemeanor charge of driving without a valid driver's license. You know that most attorneys advice people to enter a "no contest" plea to get the case over with, instead of guilty. Right before the judge calls the cases of the non-English speakers, a lady who needs interpreting services asks you which plea you think is better to enter.
7. You are interpreting simultaneously the testimony of a police officer who is on the witness stand and he speaks extremely fast. In the beginning, although you are having trouble keeping up, you know that he is just being asked the usual questions regarding his training and experience with law enforcement but nothing relevant to the facts of the case.
8. At the conclusion of a domestic violence hearing, the petitioner (plaintiff) is granted a restraining order against the respondent (defendant). As all of you are walking out of the courtroom, the respondent threatens to kill the petitioner. You are the only person who hears and understands this statement.
9. You are the interpreter for a rape victim who gives the court explicit details on the rape incident using the most vulgar language you could possibly imagine while on the witness stand.
10. You are interpreting for a witness on the witness stand, one of the attorneys objects to a question from opposing counsel. The judge then asks for the basis for the objection, while judge and attorneys discuss said objection, you: