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South Carolina Coalition Against
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

to Work with an Interpreter

To ensure a trauma-informed approach when working with an interpreter:

- 1** **Be sure the interpreter is fluent;** has the ability to be accurate; neutral; unbiased (personally, culturally, and between genders); and does not try to explain the culture of the person they are interpreting for based on their personal experiences.
- 2** **Be sure the interpreter is briefed** on the sensitivity of the information they will be interpreting and make sure the interpreter is okay with the subject matter before services are rendered.
- 3** **Debrief with the interpreter** for any clarification and to check on how they feel after relaying difficult information (i.e. look for signs of vicarious trauma or discomfort they might have experienced).
- 4** **Encourage the interpreter to continuously check for understanding** between the client and advocate; they should speak up if they are having trouble with the interpretation in any capacity.
- 5** **Be sure the interpreter maintains confidentiality at all times,** ensure that policies are in place to protect confidentiality (i.e. have signed confidentiality agreements, include language regarding confidentiality practices in language contracts).

** <https://www.api-gbv.org/culturally-specific-advocacy/language-access/> Asian Pacific Institute on Gender Based Violence, Working with Interpreters Tipsheet (2015)

** MUSC National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, Working with Interpreters Training

