AIIC best practices for interpreters during the Covid-19 crisis

Joint guidelines from AIIC's Technical and Health Committee & Taskforce on Distance Interpreting

If requested by an employer to interpret at the employer's premises in areas affected by Covid-19:

- Social distancing also applies to booths, including sign language teams. Reduce the number of interpreters in a given booth at any time as far as possible, for example by exiting the booth when not on mike if possible;[1]
- When working in mobile booths, larger booths should be preferred to allow for greater social distancing possibilities; sign language teams should position themselves at least 2 metres away from others;
- Disinfect contact surfaces (desk, console, keyboard, computer, mouse etc.) with manufacturer-approved wipes[2] prior to and after usage;
- Operate console with disposable gloves if available and ensure you dispose of them in appropriate fashion following usage:
- Bring your own headset covers (alcohol-based cleaners may damage them);
- Although it is preferable to use your own headset, please note that the impedance of different headsets varies and not all consoles include hearing protection features (which may put you at risk of acoustic shocks);
- Do not touch the microphone cover, replace it if possible;
- If you need to cough or sneeze, please exit the booth and ensure you are at least 1.8m away from other people;
- Insist on always having proper ventilation in the booth but avoid draughts;
- If asked to work for an employer in a remote hub configuration, please refer to the AIIC Guidelines for Distance Interpreting.

Tips for remote speakers using remote platforms:

- Turn off all sound notifications (skype, whatsapp, emails, etc.) while attending virtual meetings;
- Eliminate background noise and interference (participate from indoors, in a room with closed door and windows to avoid extraneous noise);
- Replicate eye contact by looking into the camera;
- Use directional microphones to avoid extraneous noise;
- Preferably, use individual headsets with high quality microphones and echo cancelling;
- Use microphones that can reproduce both high and low tones typical of natural speech and suitable for simultaneous interpretation e.g. those suitable for speech recognition (see the section "Technical Requirements" in the AIIC Guidelines for Distance Interpreting);
- Avoid moving the microphone during the videoconference;
- When speaking, talk directly into the microphone from a distance of 30cm to 50cm, without turning your head away;
- Mute the microphone when not speaking.

See also: Covid-19: Advice on performing interpreting assignments from home *in extremis*(members only - login required)

Notes

[1] Some institutions are now applying a rule of a maximum of two interpreters per booth sitting at the far ends of a 3-4 workstation booth.
[2] Please contact us for further manufacturer information.