

# Guidelines for Hosting Effective Multi-Lingual Meetings

Hosting a multi-lingual meeting takes some extra advance planning and preparation but this effort pays off when all participants can participate, understand and be heard! Here are some basic guidelines to help you access local resources available here on the North Coast.



## Before the meeting:

Task	Ideal lead time	Resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Find a skilled interpreter for your meeting and confirm availability and interpreter's expectations. If meeting will be long (1.5+ hours) a second interpreter may be needed to provide breaks.	2-3 weeks before	<a href="http://www.northcoasttranslate.org">www.northcoasttranslate.org</a> Standard rates for interpretation and translation are \$20-30 per hour. Some interpreters charge mileage for travel to meetings.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reserve interpretation equipment for large meetings (headsets and radio base unit). Test the equipment before using!	2-3 weeks before - contingent upon availability	Community Wellness Center 908 7th street, Eureka (707) 268-2132
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Have written materials translated – ideally by the same interpreter you will have at the meeting.	2-4 weeks before – expect translation to take about 1 hour for every page of dense text.	<a href="http://www.northcoasttranslate.org">www.northcoasttranslate.org</a>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meet with your interpreter and/ or send materials and agenda for the meeting so they understand what will happen.	3 - 7 days before	Let interpreter know if headsets will be available, anticipated number of attendees, length of meeting, and provide any materials to be presented.

**Did you know...?** *Interpretation* refers to spoken conversations. Some interpreters can interpret simultaneously, while others need the speaker to stop after each phrase so they can relay the message to speakers of another language. *Translation* refers to written information. Please note that illiteracy or learning disabilities can affect the ability to understand written text, so in some cases an interpreter would still be needed. Some interpreters and translators only provide one service or the other, not both.

## During the meeting:

	Recommendations	Notes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Have a greeter for speakers of the non-dominant language(s).	This is often the interpreter's role also.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If using headsets, greeter can distribute them and provide information about how to use the equipment.	Be sure to test the equipment before using!
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Introduce the interpreter and let attendees know that interpretation will be occurring throughout the meeting.	Hearing interpretation in the room can take some getting used to for people who haven't experienced it before!
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Remind speakers to speak clearly, avoid side conversations, and limit use of highly technical terms, "jargon" or slang when possible.	Most interpreters convey all the information as presented so participants can laugh at jokes and not miss information. Side conversations and unclear phrasing can make this difficult.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Let attendees know that interpreter may need clarification or to signal speakers to slow down.	Establish a signal that can be used by the interpreter when they need to ask a question, i.e. a raised hand or "time-out" sign.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	When questions are asked, wait to ensure that the interpreter has time to convey all the information before moving on.	Facilitator can do this by pausing and/ or stating that all will wait a few moments to allow interpreter enough time.



## After the meeting:

	Task
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ensure all headsets and equipment are collected and returned to the loaning organization.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ensure interpretation/ translation team is paid as quickly as possible.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	If there were unanswered questions or any other follow-up be sure this information is made available in all languages.



### Organizations with access to additional interpretation resources and information:

LatinoNet ([www.LatinoNet.org](http://www.LatinoNet.org))  
Humboldt Area Foundation ([www.HAFoundation.org](http://www.HAFoundation.org))  
Humboldt County Office of Education ([www.Humboldt.k12.ca.us](http://www.Humboldt.k12.ca.us))