



**METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

MPD Form 101

**General Order No. 05-16**

<b>UBJECT:</b>  <b>INTERPRETER SERVICES- CELL PHONE TRANSLATORS &amp; LANGUAGE LINE</b>	<b>AMENDS:</b>  	<b>RESCINDS:</b>  <b>G.O. 05-16 Dated August 1, 2005</b>
<b>REFERENCE:</b>  <b>CALEA 81.2.6 (f)</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>  <b>November 17, 2011</b>	<b>DISTRIBUTION CODE:</b>  <b>"C"</b>  <b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures for the utilization of Interpreter services when officers must communicate with persons who have limited or no English language speaking abilities.

**II. INTRODUCTION**

Generally, personnel should seek others at the scene, such as a neighbor, a friend, or the victim's children as the first avenue of interpretation on routine calls for service. If there is no one at the scene to assist in translating, the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPD) currently provides three (3) options for police personnel to utilize when communication is necessary with non-English speaking persons:

1. Utilization of on-duty bilingual personnel;
2. Volunteer Interpreters; or
3. The language Line

**III. FIELD PERSONNEL REQUIRING A TRANSLATION**

**A. On-Duty Bilingual Personnel**

Departmental personnel needing a translation will attempt to identify the language that is being spoken. Once the language is determined, officers shall utilize bilingual, on-duty personnel to interpret if available. Provided,

the on-duty personnel are able to assist within thirty (30) minutes of the request. If on-duty personnel can assist, they shall contact their supervisor for permission to respond to the requesting officer's location to provide the needed services.

B. Cellular Volunteer Interpreters (Spanish Only)

1. This service will be available to MNPD personnel requiring Spanish translation services twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. MNPD Personnel must adhere to the following when utilizing Cricket Volunteer Interpreters:
2. Volunteer Interpreter Provisions:
  - a. Cellular Volunteer Interpreters are only to be utilized for assistance with Spanish speaking subjects.
  - b. All calls to the on call Volunteer Interpreter will go through the ECC (Emergency Communications Division) for the purpose of recording each call.
  - c. Volunteer Interpreters will not be asked to come to the scene under any circumstances.
  - d. Personnel do not need supervisor approval to use the Interpreters.
3. This service is to be used on routine calls for service.

Examples are: traffic stops, traffic accidents, calls for reports, missing persons, etc.

**NOTE:** At all major crime scenes and during protracted interviews and/or interrogations police personnel, who speak Spanish, shall be utilized for translation services.

4. Volunteer Interpreter Procedures:
  - a. Personnel will find the current volunteer list on the home page of PDWeb, left side under PDWeb News.
  - b. This will bring up the display that contains:
    1. The initial phone number,
    2. The security code, and
    3. The primary and secondary interpreters, along with the corresponding phone numbers.
  - c. Personnel will follow the instructions provided on the volunteer call list.

- d. If a MNPd report is completed in relation to the use of the interpreter service, the reporting officer shall document the interpreter's name and the information translated either on the report or on a Supplement Report, MPD form 104.

### C. Language Line

1. When translation services are needed under emergency conditions, personnel may utilize the Language Line Service, which is an independently maintained interpreter service. Due to the fees charged for use of this service, personnel must adhere to the following criteria before utilizing this service:
  - a. No on-duty bilingual personnel that can speak the required language are available.
  - b. The Language Line shall be used primarily for languages other than Spanish.
  - c. Personnel shall obtain prior approval by their immediate supervisor.
  - d. Personnel shall use the Language Line service only during an emergency incident or urgent situation, and not for protracted interviews or interrogations.
2. The following are generally allowable uses of the Language Line:
  - a. Obtaining information from victims of crimes,
  - b. Descriptions of missing persons,
  - c. Brief interviews of witnesses, etc.
3. The following are generally prohibited uses of the Language Line:
  - a. Detailed interviews of witness,
  - b. Interrogations of suspects,
  - c. Working non-serious traffic accidents, etc
4. Language Line Procedures:
  - a. Personnel shall contact their immediate supervisor for approval and to acquire the Language Line account number necessary to make the call to the Language Line Service.
  - b. When calling the Language Line the following information must be provided to obtain service:

1. The language to be translated.
2. Client identification number. The employee's supervisor can provide his number after the supervisor approves use of the service. Employees shall ensure the security of this number to prevent unauthorized use.
3. The organization name, which is listed as the Metropolitan Police Department of Nashville.
4. The personal code, which is the requesting employee's employee number.

Anytime the Language Line is used, MPD Form 054, Language Line interpreter Service Request, shall be completed by the requesting officer, inspected by the employee's supervisor, and the original sent to records. Copies shall also be forwarded to the Fiscal Affairs Division and the officer's case file, where appropriate.

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STEVE ANDERSON, CHIEF OF POLICE

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DATE