

Recommendations for a safe workplace for interpreters during the re-start after the critical phase of the COVID pandemic

General

- Always observe social distancing (1.5m).
- Disinfect contact surfaces (desk, console, keyboard, computer, mouse, etc.) with disinfectant wipes, both before and after use.
- Disinfection material should be available.
- The room in which the interpreters work should be adequately ventilated. The government and the events industry protocol prescribe an air quality guideline of 900ppm CO2 levels. The organiser should have an air quality action plan with air quality improvement and air purification measures in case 900ppm is exceeded. This rule applies to every separate area where the event is held and thus also to the interpreter's booth.

Working in the booth

- Always limit the number of interpreters per booth by providing one booth per interpreter. If that is not possible, the interpreter can leave the booth while their colleague is interpreting.
- Use adjacent booths allowing interpreters to see each other in order to ensure a smooth handover.
- When using mobile booths, choose larger booths (by adding one or two modules) in order to increase social distancing, or place individual booths next to each other and make sure that they are separated by a transparent module in order to facilitate handover.
- The booth should be well ventilated. The air quality standard of 900ppm CO₂ levels described above also applies in the interpreting booth. The organiser should therefore also ensure that the air quality in the booth is safe.
- It is recommended that interpreters bring their own headphones. Please note that impedance may vary between headphones and that not all consoles have a hearing protection function (which poses a risk of acoustic shock). Interpreters who do not have personal headphones are encouraged to bring their own headphone cushions (alcohol-based cleaning products may damage them).
- Do not touch the microphone guard and replace it if possible.

Working with an Infoport

- Provide one microphone per interpreter and disinfectant wipes.
- The workplace must be large enough to respect social distancing rules.
- The area in which the interpreters work must be sufficiently ventilated. An air quality guideline of 900ppm CO2 levels applies to all indoor spaces, including the booth.
- In order to avoid unnecessary movement around the room, use a separate channel for the floor and ensure that the interpreters also have headphones. If this is not possible, the amplification in the room should be excellent.
- Participants should take the headphones out of the case and put them back in themselves.
- Headphones and microphones should be disinfected properly after use.
- Sign language interpreters should keep a distance of at least 2 metres from each other.
- Whispered interpreting should still be avoided.
- It goes without saying that an interpreter showing symptoms of COVID-19 should isolate at home.

This recommendation was drafted by the bureau of the CBTI's Interpreters' Committee. The bureau based this recommendation on the following resources:

<https://werk.belgie.be/sites/default/files/content/news/Generiekegids.pdf>, consulted 5 October 2021

https://event-confederation.be/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/210730_Exitprotocol-Events_V26-nl.pdf, consulted 8 September 2021

[Aanbevelingen voor de praktische implementatie en bewaking van ventilatie en binnenluchtkwaliteit in het kader van COVID-19 \(PDF, 1.76 MB\)](#), consulted 5 October 2021

<https://aiic.org/document/4842/AIIC%20best%20practices%20voor%20tolken%20tijdens%20de%20COVID-19-crisis%20-%20NLD.pdf>, consulted 8 September 2021

<https://werk.belgie.be/sites/default/files/content/documents/Welzijn%20op%20het%20werk/Regelgeving/Codex%20boek%20III%20titel%201%20Basiseisen%20betreffende%20arbeidsplaatsen.pdf#page15>, consulted 8 September 2021