

A PARALEGAL'S GUIDE *to Working with Court Reporters*

BROWN & JONES
reporting, inc.



By Jane Jones

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About Jane Jones



JANE JONES, CRR, RMR
Co-Founder/Owner

Jane Jones has over 30 years of personal experience in the deposition reporting profession. Having obtained her certifications as an RMR and CRR, she is at the top of her profession.

Jane has received the Distinguished Service Award for her role as Chief Examiner for the State of Wisconsin, for which she conducts yearly certification testing of court reporters for the National Court Reporting Association.

Jane also enjoys training and mentoring court reporters, so that they can reach their maximum potential in their chosen field.

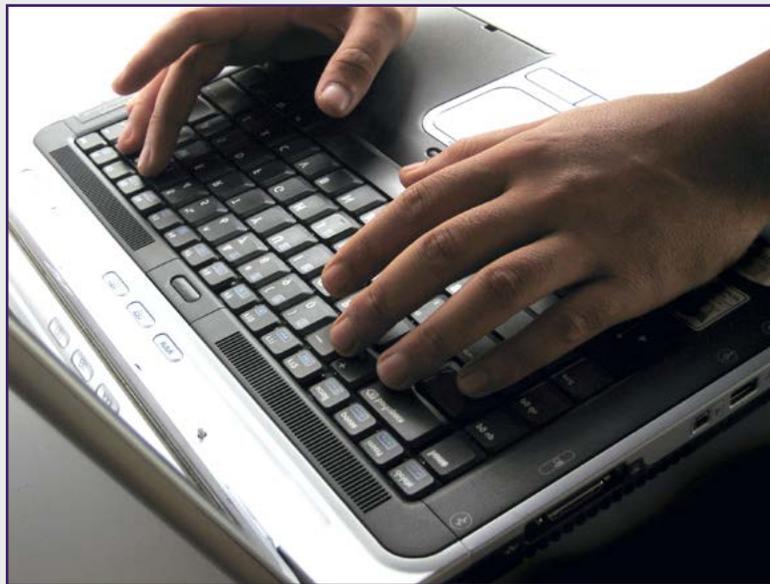
About Brown & Jones Reporting, Inc.

Brown & Jones Reporting, established in 1987, provides certified court reporters and certified legal videographers for the State of Wisconsin. Clients rely on us for our commitment to excellence and the personal attention that distinguishes our court reporting services. The professionalism that distinguishes Brown & Jones extends to our complimentary conference facilities, which are available to clients at our downtown Milwaukee office. The light-filled spaces accommodate from 6 to 20 with state-of-the-art technology. Clients are welcome to reserve these rooms for meetings, depositions and videoconferences in conjunction with our court reporting services. Supported by our full-service office and personalized hospitality, Brown & Jones' conference center is ready to be your Wisconsin Deposition Headquarters.

Introduction

As a paralegal, you have a wide variety of responsibilities. One of those responsibilities may be to hire and schedule court reporters for depositions, hearings and other legal proceedings. When first asked to schedule a court reporter, new paralegals are often in the dark about how to make that happen. If this request has been made of you, we want to give you answers to the questions you are likely to have. Here are the questions we will answer:

- What services do court reporters offer?
- How do I schedule a court reporter?
- What do I do if I need to schedule a court reporter in a different city?
- When will I get the transcript?



What Services Do Court Reporters Offer?

When you are searching for a court reporter, the first information you will need to know is what services you will require. Besides furnishing transcripts, there are a lot of other variables in services that set court reporting firms apart. By knowing what services are available, you will better be able to ask the right questions when you call a court reporting firm. Here are some of the services and technologies court reporters may offer.

Electronic Transcripts

An electronic transcript is a transcript format that includes a hyperlinked word index enabling you to scan the word index and click to the selected place in the transcript. An electronic transcript is easily delivered by email or FTP download. An electronic transcript imports seamlessly into almost all word processing and case management programs.

Transcript Repositories

A repository is a secure, web-based, password-protected online access of stored depositions and exhibits in electronic form. A repository is a virtual warehouse where digitized case records are maintained behind a password so that only those who are authorized can have access.

Condensed Transcripts

A condensed transcript is a miniaturized copy of the original transcript printed placing four pages of transcript on a single side. Specialized software programs create condensed transcripts. These condensed transcripts take less volume and are convenient if storage space is limited, and are easy to carry when traveling.

Linked Indexes

With linked indexes, each index word is hyperlinked to the corresponding occurrence within the transcript. Clicking on the page/line entry immediately takes the reader to that page within the transcript. These hyperlinked page/line entries make the transcript easier to use and eliminates time-consuming flipping through pages trying to find blocks of testimony.

Linked Exhibits

With linked exhibit files, each reference to an exhibit is hyperlinked to the exhibit document and opens with a click. Each exhibit is also back-linked to each page the exhibit is referenced upon. This means, not only is the transcript hyperlinked to the exhibit files, but also the exhibit files are hyperlinked back to all the transcript references. This makes it easy to move between transcript pages and exhibits.

Realtime Reporting

Realtime stenography is a computer-aided transcription system capable of translating a digital shorthand record and producing an unedited written document even as the record is being made. This unedited text can be viewed immediately and later corrected by the stenographer. The speed and quality of this type of system, known as realtime stenography, is very similar to the closed-captioned text of a live television program.

Video Deposition

A video deposition is a video recording of a deposition or sworn statement that is useful to view demeanor and body language of a witness while testifying. This is useful for playback in court. Another popular application is to give the video to expert witnesses to review, rather than just a paper transcript.



Streaming Video

Streaming video in court reporting terms means transcription by court reporters to deliver computer text of speech over the Internet within seconds of the words being spoken. Users can see the text and video from any computer with Internet access as the witness answers questions. Streaming video can be viewed from any computer, whether in the same room as the proceedings or viewed remotely from another location.

Technology can save you time and money, but first it is necessary to be aware of what is available. Before scheduling a deposition, it is best to know what service and technologies you will require. Then when you begin calling court reporters, you will have a list of questions ready to ask to ensure you hire a court reporter that meets your needs.

How Do I Schedule a Court Reporter?

When it is time to schedule a court reporter, there are some important pieces of information that will be helpful to your court reporting firm scheduler. Here are a few important pieces of information you will want to gather before calling to schedule a court reporter.

The Scheduling Attorney

If you are not the scheduling attorney, you will need to be prepared to give details about the scheduling attorney.

- His or her name
- Name of the firm
- Address
- Best phone number
- Fax number
- Email address

Having this contact information is important in case the court reporting firm needs to reach the attorney in the event there is news or more information that needs to be shared.

Proceedings Details

When scheduling the proceedings, you will need to provide the following information:

- Name of the person being deposed
- Location that has been chosen for the proceedings
- Date and time the proceedings will begin
- Whether you need to schedule a conference room

Case Details

You will likely be asked for the caption of the case. If you have a notice of deposition, you should send this in to the court reporting office. If you do not have a caption, then at least know the name of the parties involved and case number if possible.

If you have prepared a notice of deposition, the information above will be already included in the notice. Be sure to provide the court reporting firm with the notice of deposition. If you do not have one prepared at the time of scheduling, be sure to send the notice as soon as you have one prepared.

Estimated Length of Proceedings



Many firms will ask you to provide an approximate time you think it will take for the proceedings. This helps the court reporting firm to schedule the many other depositions it handles in a day. If your deposition is going to take all day, the court reporting firm will want to know that so they can be sure to send you a reporter who is available for the full day.

Special Requests

There are several special services many court reporters offer that you may want to take advantage of. Before calling to schedule a deposition, consider whether you will need any of the following services:

- Videographer
- Realtime reporter
- Conference room reservation
- Expedited transcription
- Interpreter

Schedule Your Deposition Online to Save Time

Scheduling a deposition can be a lot of work. To provide convenience in the scheduling process, many court reporters now offer the ability to schedule depositions right from their websites.

An online deposition scheduling form allows you to simply go to the court reporter's website and put in the pertinent details. A message will be sent to the court reporting firm, who then sets up the deposition for you. Because you can schedule at any time of the day, any day of the week, this service can be extremely convenient and can save you time. Online deposition scheduling can be a true time-saver, especially if you have all of the important details in front of you at the time you schedule.

At Brown & Jones, we want you to be able to schedule your depositions when it's convenient for you. That's why we offer an online scheduling page on our website. Go to the [Brown & Jones Reporting website](http://www.brownjones.com) and fill out the form to schedule your next deposition. We will contact you to confirm the details to make sure your deposition is scheduled successfully.

How Do I Find a Court Reporter in a Different City?

Have you ever found yourself searching for a court reporter for your out-of-town deposition, and didn't know where to start? Or did you make several calls, only to come up empty handed?

There is nothing more frustrating than having to schedule a deposition out of town when you don't know a single source at your destination. If you begin to cold call around, you may find it takes you a long time to find a court reporter who is available.



Ask Your Local Court Reporter

Many court reporting firms have cultivated networks of court reporters around the country. A good place to start is to call your favorite local reporter and ask if they know a court reporter in the area your deposition is to be scheduled. For instance, at Brown & Jones Reporting, we have spent considerable time over the years building relationships with court reporting firms across the county. We do this because we want to be able to refer you to a good reputable firm for your out-of-town deposition. We make sure you are going to receive top quality court reporting service.

There may be times when you also need to schedule a conference room for your out-of-town deposition. Sometimes the reporters you speak to will have a conference room available. If they do not, they can often have a list of places they use to schedule depositions and will share that contact information with you.

Here are two more ways to find conference rooms when you are out of town:

1. Call local courthouses.

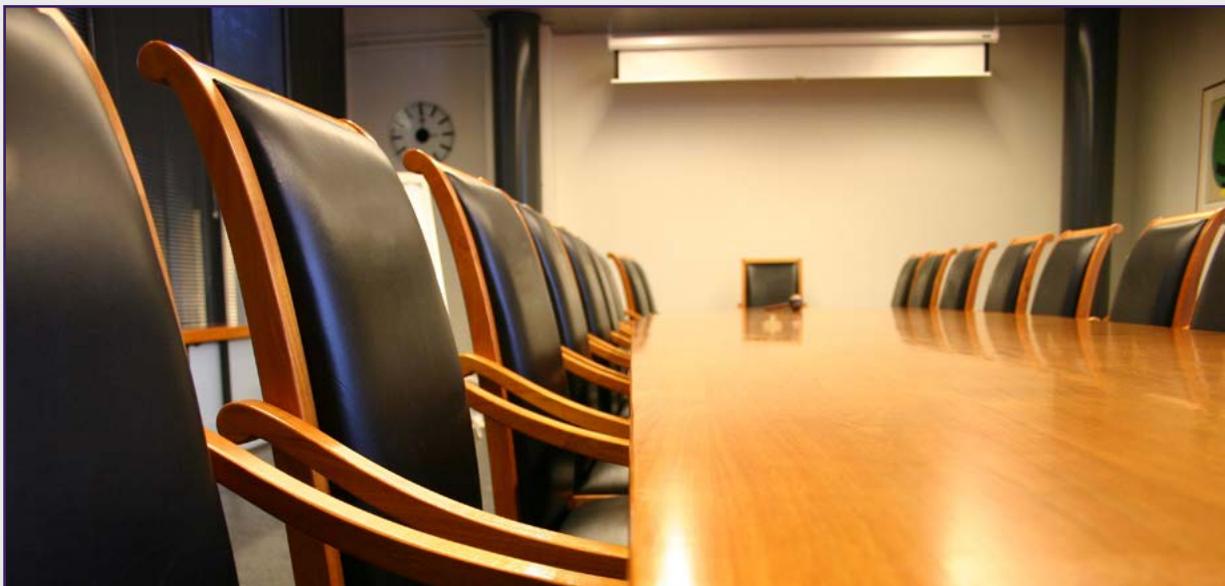
Many courthouses have extra office spaces that you can call and reserve for taking a deposition or for client conferences. Call ahead and see if they will allow you to reserve one in advance.

2. Ask another law firm if you can use their conference room.

If you refer clients, on occasion, to other law firms in the area, call and ask if you can use their conference room. Most law firms will be happy to oblige provided the room is not already reserved.

3. Check local hotels.

Most hotels have meeting rooms you can schedule for the day. If parties are traveling in from several directions, you can usually find a hotel that is geographically convenient for everyone.



When Will I Get My Transcript from the Court Reporter?

Once the proceeding has ended, you may be wondering when you will see the transcript that will result from the testimony just taken. When a proceeding has concluded, the average time it takes a court reporter to finish a transcript and deliver it to you can be seven days to two weeks.

Receive Your Transcript On Time

- Before leaving the deposition, request that a transcript be prepared. If this is not possible at the deposition, then as soon as you know you will need a transcript, call the court reporter to make the request.
- If there is a specific date or if you need a transcript sooner than the normal turn-around period, be sure to notify your court reporter as soon as possible.
- Follow up with the court reporter if you have any questions regarding the expected delivery date of your transcript.
- If you do not see your transcript within two weeks, you should contact your court reporter to inquire.

How a Transcript is Prepared:

Understanding the transcription process may help you understand the issues involved in creating a timely transcript.

When proceedings are over and a transcript is ordered, the court reporter returns to the office, accesses the digital file and reads through the entire proceedings to ensure accuracy. Any areas that did not translate correctly need to be edited. The reporter will compare steno shorthand notes to the translation to ensure accuracy.

Once finished editing, a court reporter then carefully reads through the transcript again to proofread for spelling or typographical errors.

Some reporters proofread the transcript a second time if the testimony involved is technically complex subject matter.

Because there are several steps involved in preparing an official transcript, a court reporter has several things to consider when a rush transcript is ordered. A reporter will often have other transcripts to finish before she or he can work on finalizing yours. Special arrangements need to be made to juggle transcript deadlines. That is why having advanced notice of a rush transcript order allows a reporter to make special arrangements to clear out his or her previous workload so your transcript can be finalized more quickly.

Receiving Your Transcript Before You Need It

Court reporters understand there are circumstances under which you may need a transcript faster than the normal turn-around time. If we know you have a need for your transcript by a certain date, every effort will be made to meet your request. We are dedicated to getting you the transcript when you need it.

Many paralegals are responsible for scheduling court reporters. An experienced paralegal will become familiar with local court reporting firms, and the different services and benefits they have to offer. Once armed with this information, then a decision can be made to choose a court reporter that suits your needs perfectly. Although there are many details to be taken care of, with a little experience, you can become very adept at working with court reporters.

