

# **Guide *for* Using CART/Realtime *in the* Virtual Courtroom**



**New York State Unified Court System**

Office of Record Production

Office of the ADA Coordinator

# **Guide *for* Using CART/Realtime *in the* Virtual Courtroom**

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## 1. WHAT IS CART?

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Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) – also known as realtime reporting – is a court reporting service in which a court reporter, using a stenotype machine, computer, and special software, converts spoken words instantly into text displayable on a screen.

The CART reporter has a separate role from that of the official court reporter. The CART reporter's role is to aid communication with a Deaf or hard of hearing ("HoH") person, while the official court reporter's job is to report the official court record. The two functions should not be combined.

## 2. WHEN MIGHT CART BE NEEDED IN THE VIRTUAL COURTROOM?

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When court proceedings are taking place in a virtual courtroom, it is vital that we provide people with hearing disabilities a way to participate on an equal basis.

Some people who are Deaf or HoH do not use sign language, so providing a sign language interpreter won't be of any help. CART may be an appropriate accommodation to offer Deaf/HoH people who don't use sign language but who can read English **and** verbally communicate.

As described below, CART reporting can also be used on the Teams platform the court system uses for virtual proceedings. CART provides a real time transcription, enabling a Deaf/HoH participant to both see the speaker and simultaneously read the speaker's words.

**Note:** although Teams can provide a voice-activated closed-captioned feature, that feature is not suitable for interpretation purposes in a court proceeding.

### 3. HOW DOES THE COURT ARRANGE TO USE CART IN THE VIRTUAL COURTROOM?

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- In NYC courts, contact the Principal Court Reporter in your county (for the superior courts), or the Supervising Court Reporter-Citywide (for the family, criminal and civil courts).
- In courts outside NYC, contact your District Administrative office, or the Principal Court Reporter, or your Chief Clerk in counties where there is not a Principal Court Reporter.

The Court should make arrangements for CART reporting as far in advance as possible – lead time is essential – by sending an e-mail containing the case information, including:

- title of the action
- index/case number
- name and e-mail contact information of the Deaf/HoH participant
- date and time the proceeding will take place
- the general nature of the proceeding

The court reporter supervisor will acknowledge receipt of the Court's request, find a CART reporter, and send the Court an e-mail with the assigned CART reporter's name, e-mail address, and phone number.

In accordance with its general Virtual Courtroom practice, the Court should send the assigned CART reporter a Teams meeting invitation to join the proceeding. Ideally – and where practicable – the Court should arrange for a test connection between the participants on a day before the scheduled appearance, because providing CART may add more technical complexity.

For the same reason, at the start of the proceeding the Court should allow the CART reporter some time to deal with any unforeseen technical glitches that may arise. When the Teams meeting begins, the Court should confirm with the CART reporter and the Deaf/HoH person that CART is working properly and enables the Deaf/HoH person to fully participate.

## 4. COURT REPORTER SUPERVISORS – WHAT DO THEY NEED TO DO?

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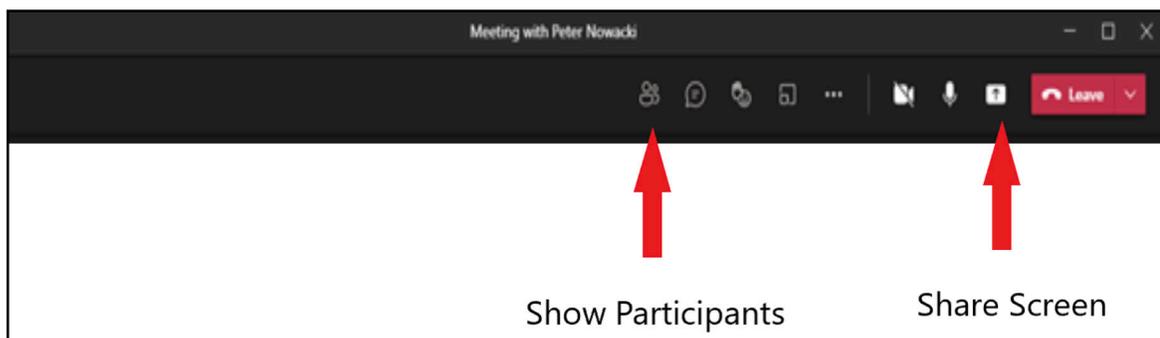
After you receive an e-mail from the Court requesting a CART reporter, you should take these steps:

- Reply to acknowledge the request, and confirm the date, time, and name and e-mail of the Deaf/HoH participant
- Find and assign an available CART reporter to the case; provide that reporter with the case information.
- Send the Court an e-mail with the assigned CART reporter’s name, e-mail address, and phone number.

## 5. CART REPORTERS – WHAT DO THEY NEED TO DO TO PROVIDE CART TRANSCRIPTION?

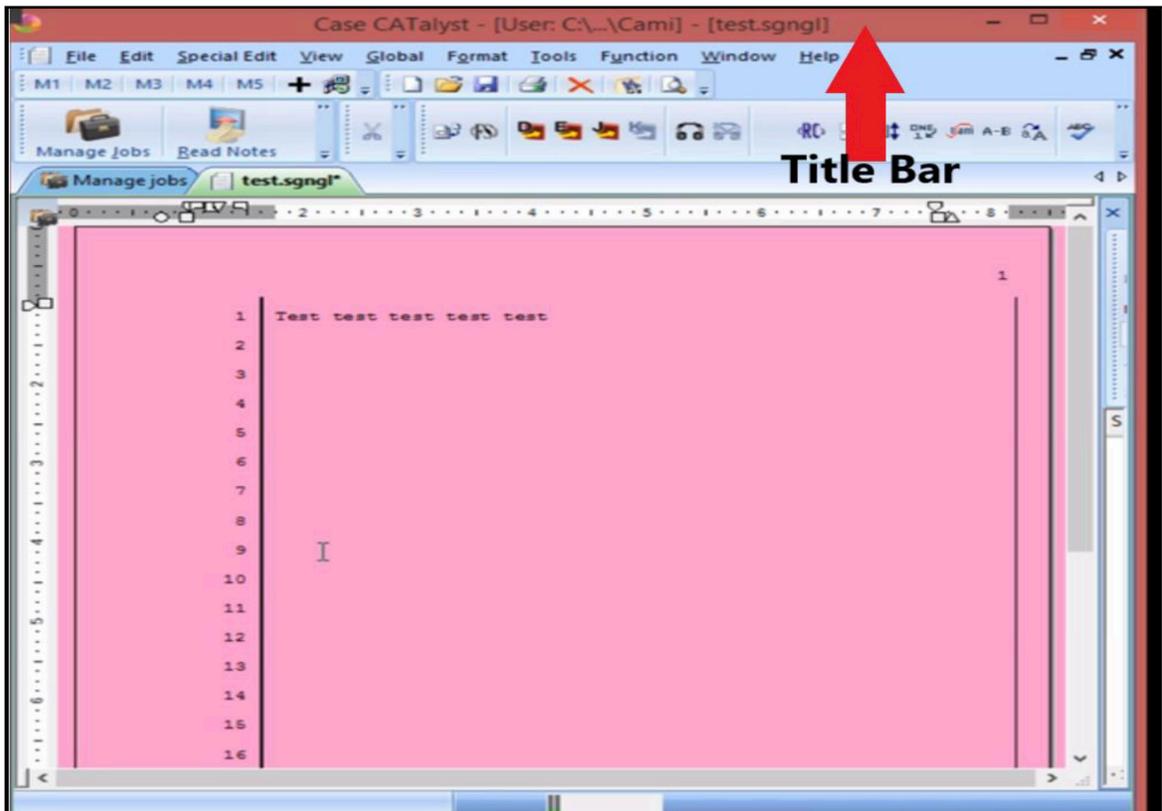
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1. Make sure that the software application that you use for realtime reporting is open on your computer.
2. When you join the Teams meeting, use the Meeting Controls Bar to help you manage your participation in the meeting.



3. Confirm that you have “presenter” status in the Teams meeting. Click on the “Show Participants” icon and a list of participants will be shown on the right. If you are listed under “In the meeting” you have presenter status. If you are listed as an “Attendee” you don’t have presenter status, and you need to ask the Court to make you a presenter.
4. Use the “Share Content” function to let other participants see the CART transcription. Click on the Share Content icon and, under the heading of “Window,” select the particular thumbnail that has your realtime reporting software (for example, Catalyst).  
**Note:** Do **NOT** select any of the thumbnails, labeled as screens, that appear under the heading of “Desktop.”

5. Once you have started to share your reporting app window, all the other participants will see that realtime reporting app window as their main screen, with thumbnails of other participants appearing in a ribbon across the bottom of their screens. As described in (a) and (b) below, make sure that **only** the Deaf/HoH court user keeps the reporting app window as their main screen.



- a. **All participants other than the Deaf/HoH court user should be instructed to right click on any of the people displayed in the ribbon** – this will restore a gallery view of participants to the main screen, and move the realtime app screen to a thumbnail in the bottom ribbon. Note that, as of this date, the gallery view will portray up to the last nine people to speak, with additional participants, if any, also displayed as thumbnails in the ribbon at the bottom.
  - b. **The Deaf/HoH court user should be instructed to keep the reporting app window as his or her main screen.** The other participants will be displayed in thumbnails in the ribbon at the bottom of the screen. This will allow Deaf/HoH court user to view the CART transcription on the main screen and still see who is speaking.
6. Use the Snap function to arrange the windows on your computer into a split screen, showing both your transcription and the gallery view of the participants. You can do this with your mouse or with your keyboard.

- a. To Snap with a mouse, hold your cursor down on the title bar (see *graphic above*) of the window you want to snap, and drag it to the left or right edge of your screen. An outline will indicate where the window will snap to once you release the cursor. Do this for the transcript window, and for the window with the gallery view of participants.
- b. To Snap with the keyboard, select the window you want to snap and press, at the same time, the Windows logo key (near lower left corner of the keyboard) and either the right or left arrow key (or the up or down arrow key). Do this for the transcript window, and for the window with the gallery view of participants.

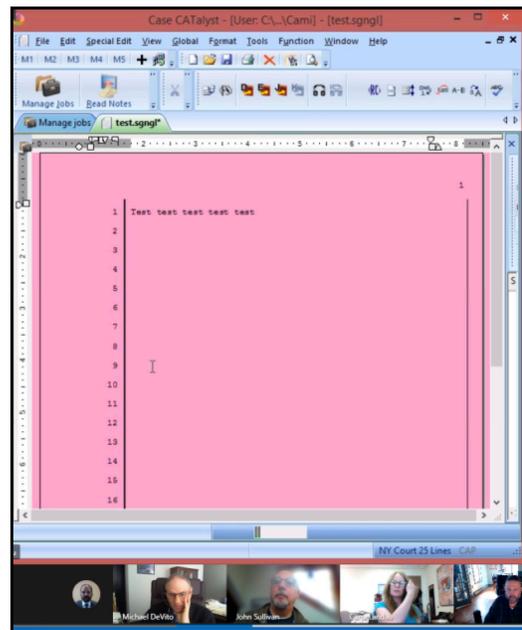
To resize the respective windows, hover on a margin until a two-direction arrow appears, then click and drag that margin to expand or contract the window.

## 6. DEAF/HOH COURT USERS – WHAT DO THEY NEED TO HAVE, KNOW AND DO?

As a participant in a virtual court proceeding, you will need to use a computer with hardware that can support Teams. (To be able to see both the CART transcription and the people speaking, use of a phone is not recommended). You will also need to download the Teams app. For more information on how to participate in court proceedings via Teams, please visit: <https://portal.nycourts.gov/>.

Once the CART reporter begins transcribing, you should see the CART transcription in the large main window, and thumbnail views of the other participants in the ribbon at the bottom of the screen (see *graphic right*). Let the Court and/or your attorney know immediately if you do not see the transcript in the main window, or if it is not readable.

**Always keep the CART transcript in the main window.** **Note:** if you click on any participant shown in the ribbon, all of the participants will then move to the main screen in a gallery format. The transcript will move down to the ribbon, where it will be too small to read. Click back on the transcript thumbnail and it will be restored to the main screen, and the participants will return to the ribbon.



Keeping the CART transcription in the main window, with the other meeting participants in the ribbon at the bottom of the screen, will allow the CART transcription to be readable, and you can still see who is speaking.

## 7. CAVEATS AND TIPS

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- The Court should, at the outset of the proceeding, make sure that itself and all participants other than the Deaf/HoH court user have the gallery view as their main screen – the transcript screen should be the main screen only for the Deaf/HoH court user. See section 5.5, above.
- The Court should, at the outset of the proceeding, urge the Deaf/HoH court user and CART reporter to notify the Court right away if they are having any trouble with the transcription process.
- The Court should check in with the Deaf/HoH court user and CART reporter periodically during the proceeding to make sure there are no problems with the transcription process.
- In almost all cases, the CART reporter will not also be acting as the official court reporter responsible for creating the record. Except in the rare case when the CART reporter is also the official court reporter, the CART reporter does not need to transcribe what the Deaf/HoH court user is saying.
- To protect attorney-client privilege, the attorney and Deaf/HoH court user should plan – in advance – to communicate via text messaging on a separate device. If this is not a viable option, the attorney or the client should enquire with the Court about its ability to arrange another way for confidential conversations to take place. Remember to avoid using the Teams Chat function – those messages will not be private.
- At present, sharing documents while CART transcription is being provided is not possible – doing so will prevent the CART reporter from sharing the real-time reporting app. If documents need to be considered during the proceeding, they can be scanned and attached to e-mails sent to the participants before, during or after the proceeding. Alternatively, documents might be accessed via the New York Courts Electronic Filing (NYSCEF) system, or via the Electronic Document Delivery System (EDDS) in courts where NYSCEF is unavailable. Please visit <https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/nyscef/HomePage> and <https://iappscontent.courts.state.ny.us/NYSCEF/live/edds.htm> for more information.