

# State Requirements for Court Interpreter Certification

as of April 2019

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## Alabama

Certification as a foreign language interpreter requires compliance with all rules and involves procedures established by the AOC, including the following: • Complete an Interpreter Application and submit to a criminal background check; • Pass all written vocabulary, translation and interpreter examinations administered by the AOC; • Submit four letters of recommendation from a judge, clerk, district attorney, public defender or magistrate, or other person, regarding the candidate’s interpreting abilities and services; • Pass all sections of the court interpreter verbal certification examination developed by the State Court Interpreter Certification Consortium or by the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination Program • Sign the Oath of Interpretation; • Agree to be listed in the AOC FLS Registry; • Agree to abide by these policies and best practices, including all rules regarding ethical conduct and professional responsibility. • Pay any and all interpreter registration, certification, and other fees established by the AOC; and • Participate in any required orientation sessions, continuing education courses, evaluations and certification renewal procedures as required by the AOC.

The following information outlines the steps necessary in becoming a certified interpreter for Alabama’s courts:

### 1. REGISTRATION and BACKGROUND CHECK

- An interpreter must register with the Administrative Office of Courts by completing and returning (1) the registration form and (2) the criminal background check form. (A Registered Interpreter is paid \$25/hour). (See Exhibit 1).

### 2. WRITTEN EXAM and ORIENTATION SEMINAR

- After registration, a registered interpreter must pass the written exam and attend an interpreter orientation seminar. After passing the written exam and attending the interpreter orientation seminar, the interpreter is recognized by the AOC as a Conditionally Approved Interpreter and is paid \$30/hour.

3. ORAL CERTIFICATION EXAM Upon passing the written exam, attending an interpreter orientation seminar and taking and passing the oral certification exam, an interpreter will be recognized by the AOC as having achieved one of the following interpreter certification levels:

- Journeyman Interpreter A Journeyman Interpreter has scored 60% or higher on the oral exam and 55% or higher on the sight translation portion of the exam. (A Journeyman Interpreter is paid by the State at the rate of \$35/hour).
- Certified Interpreter A Certified Interpreter has scored 70% or higher on the oral exam and 65% or higher on the sight translation portion of the exam. (A Certified Interpreter is paid by the State at the rate of \$40/hour).

- Certified – Master Level Interpreter A Certified – Master Level Interpreter has scored 80% or higher on the oral exam and 80% or higher on the sight translation portion of the exam. (A Certified – Master Level Interpreter is paid by the State at the rate of \$45/hour).

## Alaska

Prior to the following steps, interpreter candidates must complete a general orientation to interpreting conducted by an entity approved by the Interpreter Services Coordinator.

Step 1: Complete the Alaska Court System’s Orientation Program (online) and an ALTA Oral Proficiency Inventory (OPI) Listening and Speaking Test scheduled by the Alaska Court System.

(Note: In some instances the Alaska Court System will accept orientation programs from other state courts to meet this requirement.)

The interpreter can choose to complete the orientation program first and then take the OPI or take the OPI first and then complete the orientation program. The OPI tests the oral proficiency skills of the candidate in English and the non-English language. A candidate must score a “Superior” (level 12) to be considered for courtroom interpreting. The candidate is charged a fee for OPI grading.

Step 2: Successfully pass the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) Written Exam at a score of 80% or higher.

Step 3: Pass a criminal background check.

## Arizona

### Tier 1

The Tier 1 credential covers basic ethics, court knowledge and language abilities in both English and the non-English language. In order to receive a Tier 1 credential, the candidate must complete the following:

- [Court Overview Class](#)
- [Interpreter Ethics Class](#)
- Pass the English [Written Exam](#) with a score of 80% or better
- Score at an advanced level or higher on the [Oral Proficiency Interview](#)

### Tiers 2 through 4

Tiers 2 through 4 are awarded based on [Oral Court Interpreter Exam](#) performance. The oral court interpreter exam tests interpreting skills. A candidate may only take the oral court interpreter exam after he or she has satisfied the requirements for Tier 1.

- Tier 2: A candidate who receives a score of 60-69% \*on each component of the oral court interpreter exam
- Tier 3: A candidate who receives a score of 70-79% \*on each component of the oral court interpreter exam
- Tier 4: A candidate who receives a score of 80% or higher \*on each component of the oral court interpreter exam

\* Neither section of the Sight Translation may be more than five (5) percentage points below the minimum score for a particular tier.

Oral court interpreter exams are available for the following languages:

- Arabic\*
- Bosnian/  
Croatian/  
Serbian\*\*
- Cantonese
- French
- Haitian Creole
- Hmon
- Ilocano
- Khmer
- Korean
- Laotian
- Mandarin
- Marshallese\*\*
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Turkish\*\*
- Vietnamese

\*The oral court interpreter exam in Arabic uses Modern Standard Arabic for the Sight Translation and Simultaneous portions of the exam and offers a choice of either Arabic Egyptian Colloquial OR Arabic Levantine Colloquial for the Consecutive portion.

\*\*This language uses an abbreviated oral court interpreter exam. The abbreviated exam contains a simultaneous exercise (English into the target language) and a test of English proficiency.

### Tier A

The [Tier A](#) credential is only available for languages in which there is no Oral Court Interpreter Exam. Tier A does not include a test of interpreting skills, but requires superior language skills in the non-English language. Tier A candidates must:

- Meet all of the requirements of Tier 1
- Score at the highest level on the Oral Proficiency Interview

It is important to note that all communication from the Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program will be done through email. It is imperative that you maintain an up-to-date email address in the Arizona Court Interpreter Registry.

## Arkansas

### Application for Spoken & Sign Language

An applicant must be at least 21 years old and have the legal right to live and work in the United States.

Spoken Language Requirements - An applicant is required to complete the following.

- Personal Information Form;
- a recent passport photo; and,
- proof of education (copy of G.E.D., high school diploma, or post-secondary transcript).

Sign Language Requirements - Sign Language interpreters who want to be listed on the Arkansas Registry of Certified Court Interpreters must be able to work and provide interpreting services to Arkansas state courts and are required to complete the following requirements before being eligible to interpret in any Arkansas court proceeding.

- An applicant must hold one of the following certifications from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID): SC:L, NIC, NIC-A, NIC-M CI, CT, NAD V, CDI, and/or Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Court Interpreter Certification and/or Level V Intermediary, and provide documentation of at least 30 hours of formal legal interpreter training;
- Personal Information Form;
- a recent passport photo;
- current Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) membership and/or Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) annual certificate renewal; and,
- Arkansas license as pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §20-14-801.

Orientation

Upon completing application process requirements, an applicant must register for the Orientation. Each applicant must successfully complete an orientation training. The Orientation is designed to familiarize the applicant with the Arkansas court system and provide instruction on the role of the interpreter and the skills and ethics required of an interpreter in the courtroom. The Orientation is one of several steps involved in the initial training of a court interpreter.

Participants will attend the Orientation at their own expense and must pay a non-refundable registration fee of \$200.00 to cover materials and the processing costs for the exams. Dates and locations will be announced in advance.

#### English Language Assessment Exam

Before coming to the Orientation, each applicant will receive a copy of [Administrative Order No. 11, Arkansas Code of Professional Responsibility for Foreign Language Interpreters in the Judiciary](#) and the [Overview of the English Language Assessment Exam](#). These documents should be studied in preparation for taking the English Language Assessment Exam. The Code is an important component of the test. On the final day of the Orientation, the applicant must take the English Language Assessment Exam (ELA), which is an objective, multiple choice test developed under the auspices of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC).

- Part I - English Proficiency
- Part II- Court-Related Terms & Usage, and Ethics and Professional Conduct.

A passing score is a combined score of 80% on Parts I and II of the English Language Assessment Exam. Scores will remain valid for two (2) years from the date an applicant is notified that he/she achieved a passing score. Any applicant who does not achieve a passing score shall be notified.

#### Oral Proficiency Interview - (Foreign Language Assessment)

Applicants who achieve a passing score on the English Language Assessment Exam will be eligible to take the Oral Proficiency Interview-computerized (OPIc) in the foreign language that they will interpret. The OPIc is a valid and reliable testing method that measures how well a person speaks a language. The OPIc is administered remotely by a private testing provider contracted by the AOC. Applicants are required to score a minimum of "Advanced High" on the proficiency scale established by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Testing dates and locations will be announced well in advance.

#### Sight Translation Foreign Language Assessment

In the event the OPIc is not offered for the applicant's foreign language by a testing provider approved by the AOC, the applicant will be given a Sight Translation Language Assessment. This assessment consists of 10 sentences written in English. The applicant will be recorded reading the English sentences and then providing a sight translation of each sentence into the foreign language. This assessment is not a translation test but is used to evaluate the applicant's proficiency in the foreign language. The recorded test will be sent either to raters of that particular language provided by the National Center for State Courts to a language expert approved by the AOC. The raters will evaluate the applicant's performance on the Sight Translation Language Assessment on syntax, false cognates, general grammar, idioms and vocabulary and provide the AOC a pass/no pass score based on the applicant's proficiency in the language.

#### Validity of Exam Scores

Scores of the Oral Proficiency Interview-computerized (foreign language) or Sight Translation Language Assessment exam will remain valid for two (2) years from the date an applicant is notified that he/she achieved a passing score. Any applicant who does not achieve a passing score shall be notified.

#### Languages for Certification

Testing is available for the following languages: Arabic, Bosnian /Serbian/ Croatian, Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Khmer, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Marshallese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Vietnamese.

Oral Proficiency Exam for Court Certification

An applicant who successfully completes an Orientation, achieves a passing score on the English Language Assessment Exam, the OPIc (foreign language) or the Sight Translation Foreign Language Assessment and passes the background check will be eligible to take the Oral Proficiency Exam for Court Certification (OPECC).

The OPECC is an objective test developed under the auspices of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The OPECC measures language knowledge and fluency in both languages and ability to successfully render meaning from target to source language in each of the three modes of interpreting that are required of court interpreters. The three modes of interpreting are:

- simultaneous interpreting, from English to the applicable foreign language;
- consecutive interpreting, English to the applicable foreign language and applicable foreign language to English; and;
- sight translation of documents, (two parts) (1) an English document into the applicable foreign language and (2) a document in the applicable foreign language into English.

In order to qualify to interpret in Arkansas courts a person must successfully complete Section I, step 8 by demonstrating proficiency in the three modes of interpretation.

An applicant must score at least 70% in each mode to qualify as an Arkansas Certified Court Interpreter. For Arkansas scoring purposes, parts one and two of the sight translation mode are combined for one score; however, if one part of the sight translation is below 65%, even if the combined score is more than 70%, the section will not be considered as passing. To achieve a passing score, an applicant must successfully complete all three sections of the exam in one sitting

## California

- **STEP 1: PREPARE**

**Is Court Interpreting for you? Candidates assessing their skills before testing.**

[Court Interpreter Self-Assessment Questionnaire](#)

[Court interpreter Self-Assessment Practice Exercises](#)

**Information packet on becoming a California Court Interpreter**

**Qualifications for Court Interpreting and Self-Assessment**

**Knowledge Skills and Abilities Essential for Court Interpreters**

Exam Preparation Resources

The first step in preparing to become a court interpreter is to determine what the exam requirements are for your language.

- **STEP 2: PASS**

**Spoken Language Court Interpreter Exam Administration**

Scheduling is now open for court interpreter Written Exams and Oral Proficiency Exams (OPE). Bilingual Interpreting Exams are administered twice a year.

Please visit [Prometric](#) for complete information on test dates, test site locations, and how to register for the exams.

**Computer-Based Written Exams**

Prometric is administering the written exams using a professional computer-based exam delivery network. The computer-based exams are offered at 20 different Prometric testing center locations throughout the state of California. Candidates can take the exam by appointment during normal

business hours. A hands-on tutorial is provided before the exam is administered so candidates can become familiar with the computerized exam delivery. For more information on the computer-based written exams and scheduling protocols, visit [Prometric](#).

### **Exam Retake Policy**

In accordance with Prometric scheduling protocols, candidates can take the written exam a total of two times in 12 months, with a minimum of 90 days between testing opportunities. Scheduling protocols for the OPEs are the same as for written exams.

There are 2 things that candidates have to do to retake the written exam:

Effective January 1, 2009, candidates who pass the written exam are allowed four attempts to take and pass the bilingual oral interpreting exam for certified languages or the English oral proficiency exam for registered languages.

As of January 1, 2018, all written exam previously taken or moving forward are valid for 4 years.

Candidates may take the oral exam in a particular language once during any exam cycle. Candidates who do not pass the oral exam within 4 attempts must restart the certification or registration process.

Visit [Prometric](#) for additional information on the following:

- Exam Schedule
- Registration Information and Forms
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Exam preparation material

### **American Sign Language**

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) is currently the only organization authorized by the Judicial Council to certify interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing. Detailed information on the steps to obtain the [Specialist Certification: Legal \(SC:L\)](#) is available on the [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf](#) website.

- **STEP 3: ENROLL**

### **Application Process**

#### **Consortium Test Reciprocity FAQ's**

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### **Spoken Languages**

To be certified or registered as a court interpreter with the Judicial Council of California, applicants must first pass **both** the written and oral components of the California court interpreter exam process. After passing the relevant exams, candidates will receive an application packet by mail to become certified or registered with the Judicial Council of California. The Judicial Council processes these applications on its own behalf.

#### **Application Requirements:**

Candidates applying to be either certified or registered interpreters must pay an annual fee of \$100.

Candidates must submit one passport-size photo with their application.

The application packet includes complete instructions for taking the online "Orientation to Working in the California Courts" course, submitting required documentation and paying fees.

Upon submission of the complete application, your name will be added to the *Master List of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters*, and your badge and certificate will be processed and sent to you.

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### **American Sign Language**

Once you have obtained your Specialist Certification: Legal (SC:L) issued by the RID please contact the Court Interpreters Program to request a registration application packet. The Judicial Council processes these applications on its own behalf.

**Application Requirements:**

- Candidates applying for certification in American Sign Language must pay a fee of \$100.
- Candidates must submit one passport-size photo with their application.

The application packet includes complete instructions for submitting required documentation and fees. Upon submission of the complete application, your name will be added to the *Master List of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters*, and your badge will be processed and sent to you.

## Colorado

Steps to becoming a Credentialed Interpreter

Step 1: [Orientation to Court Interpreting](#)

Step 2: [Oral Proficiency Interview \(OPI\)](#)

Step 3: [Written Exam](#)

\*Steps must be completed in order.

Step 1: Orientation to Court Interpreting

Court Interpreting Information

All applicants must attend Orientation to Court Interpreting, this is the first step in the process.

- Cost: \$100
- Where: Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center - 1300 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203

Step 2: Oral Proficiency Interview

Oral Proficiency Interview Information

All applicants for the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) must have attended Orientation to Court Interpreting.

- Cost: \$40 for English & \$60 per Non-English Languages
- Where: Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center, 1300 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203

Step 3: Written Exam

Written Exam Information

All applicants for the Written Exam must have first attended Orientation to Court Interpreting.

- Cost: \$50
- Where: Ralph L. Carr Judicial Center, 1300 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203

## Connecticut

How to Become a Certified Court Interpreter

To become a certified court interpreter for the Connecticut Judicial Branch, a candidate must pass an oral, entry-level certification examination administered by the Connecticut Judicial Branch or other accepted entity. The Connecticut Judicial Branch currently administers oral certification exams provided by the National Center for State Courts for the following languages: Spanish, Portuguese and Polish. The Connecticut Judicial Branch may administer oral certification exams in




other languages in the future, based on its needs and the availability of eligible candidates in those languages.


The Oral Examination provided by the NCSC typically consists of four sections:

1. Sight translation of an English document into the other language.
2. Sight translation of a document in the other language into English.
3. Consecutive interpretation, English into other language, and other language into English.
4. Simultaneous interpretation from English into the other language.

To pass the Certification examination, a candidate must have a minimum total average test score of 70% on each of the four individual test sections. The exam must be passed in its entirety in one sitting.

Reciprocity / Other Accepted Credentials

Any candidate who provides proof of Written and Oral Certification test results from any jurisdiction that is a member of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC)  will be awarded reciprocity and his or her test results will be applied toward full certification by the Connecticut Judicial Branch if the Interpreter and Translator Services Unit determines that the test results were obtained under conditions which meet or exceed interpreter testing and certification practices of the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch.

Any interpreter candidate who obtains written and oral certification from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts (AOUSC)  will be considered certified by the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch.

Any candidate who is awarded reciprocity or recognition of test results from another jurisdiction is required to follow the steps outlined in How to Qualify to become a Court-Appointed Interpreter, with the exception of taking the Written Examination and Oral Screening/Qualifying Examination, in order to qualify to work as an interpreter for the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch.

Positive certification status with the Judicial Branch is not a guarantee of employment.

## Delaware

1. The orientation seminar is the first step in the certification process. It is a full-day event and attendance requires a fee of \$65 for DE residents and \$120 for out-of-state residents. The orientation seminars will be offered in all three counties. Please read our [qualification and registration process](#)
2. Written Exam The written exam is the second step in the credentialing process. It consists of 135 multiple choice questions in English. The written test measures candidate's knowledge of: a) the English language; b) court-related terms and usage; and c) court interpreter ethics and professional conduct. The test will be administered several times a year, following the orientation seminar. Only Candidates who have attended an orientation seminar may take this test. Candidates must score at least 80% on the written test in order to proceed with the next step in the qualification process.

3. Criminal Background Check Upon receipt of application, the AOC will submit candidate's information to DELJIS for a criminal background check. Only those candidates that pass the criminal check will be allowed to interpret in the Delaware Courts. The AOC will notify candidates only if there is a negative result.
4. Oral Performance Exam The National Center of State Courts' oral performance exam is "designed to determine whether candidates possess the minimum levels of language knowledge and interpreting skills required to perform competently during court proceedings." The test measures candidate's command of his/her language pair as well as interpreting skills in the three modes of interpretation: simultaneous, consecutive and sight translation. Candidates may be tested in any of the languages available through the National Center of State Courts. Languages for which there is a full exam are: Arabic, Cantonese, French, Haitian-Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Italian, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Languages for which there is an abbreviated exam are: Arabic (Egyptian Colloquial), Bosnian, Croatian, German, Serbian, and Turkish. For more information on the test, visit <http://www.ncsc.org/Services-and-Experts/Areas-of-expertise/Language-access/Written-and-Oral-ExamResources.aspx> The full proficiency exam consists of four separate sections: Sight translation of a document written in English into the oral foreign language. Sight translation of a document written in the foreign language into oral English. Consecutive interpretation of oral testimony from English into foreign language and from foreign language into English. Simultaneous interpreting from English into foreign language. Minimum qualification for Certification is a score of 70% overall and on each of the four sections of the exam, independently. The AOC may consider a Candidate's request for a rescoring of his/her oral performance exam under these circumstances: The candidate requests rescoring within 30 days from the date when AOC mailed test scores. The candidate scored a minimum of 68% on each portion of the exam. The candidate covers all costs associated with the rescore. (Note: rescoring is costly.)
5. 1. Court Interpreter Qualifications There are three foreign spoken language interpreter categories in Delaware as they appear in the Court Interpreter Registry:
  - a. 1) Certified Interpreter;
  - b. 2) Conditionally-Approved Interpreter; and
  - c. 3) Registered Candidate

All interpreters in these three categories have:

1. Attended a one or two-day Orientation seminar.
2. Successfully completed a criterion-based, English-only written exam. Passed a criminal background check as required by the Judicial Branch.
3. Submitted the AOC application with a copy of their most recent CV.
4. Submitted copies of a W-9 form and Delaware business license for Professional Services (and renew said license on a yearly basis).
5. Additionally, interpreters in the Registry are required to:
  - a. Comply with the Continuing Education Credit requirements described in the AOC's Continuing Education Policy of March 2006.
  - b. Comply with the Court Interpreter Code of Professional Ethics.
  - c. Sign acknowledgement of receipt and agreement with Court Interpreter Policies and Procedures Sheet.
6. A Certified Interpreter is that candidate who passed a 3-part oral performance exam in his/her particular language combination with a minimum score of 70% overall and in each

of the 3 sections independently. Certified Interpreters from other jurisdictions that have attained certification through another Consortium member state or the Administrative Office of the United States and who wish to work in Delaware may apply for reciprocity. In order to be accepted and included in the Court Interpreter Registry, Interpreter must submit a letter, on State letterhead, from the Program Manager of the state in which he/she obtained certification verifying that interpreter attended an orientation and has completed the state's credentialing or qualifying process as well as, include copies of the written and oral proficiency exam scores. The scores must fall into the qualifying scores for Delaware for reciprocity to be granted. The applicant interpreter must then attend a Delaware Orientation, agree to the Uniform Payment Rate and comply with Delaware Court Interpreter Program policies.

7. Continuing Education Requirements Effective July 2006, ALL spoken language Delaware interpreters who are registered with the Administrative Office of the Courts must complete 12 hours of continuing education every two years. Of these 12 credits, at least 3 must be on Ethics and 3 others on skills building on modes of interpretation. CE credits may be obtained through programs approved by the Administrative Office of the Courts such as, and among others, the Consortium for State Court Interpreters Certification Skills Building Workshops, NAJIT/ATA conferences, educational programs offered by colleges or universities, or training programs offered by other Consortium member states. Interpreter must submit course information for approval from the Coordinator of the Certified Interpreter Program 30 days prior to attending in order to ensure proposed course meets CE requirements. Some of the educational areas in which an interpreter may obtain CE credits are: modes of interpretation (language specific or language neutral); language development- specialized/technical vocabulary; professional ethics; courtroom protocol; law and judicial procedure. Interpreters for the Deaf and hard of hearing must complete the RID required 8.0 CEUs (80 hours) in a cycle (4-years). These eight CEUs are divided into two Content Areas: Professional Studies and General Studies. Participants must work with an RID-Approved or Sponsored workshops to earn CEU credits. The Interpreter must report all continuing education credits earned to the Coordinator of the Delaware Court Interpreter Program within 60 days of completion of the course. The Coordinator will, in turn, keep track of the continuing education credits for each interpreter and send an annual report in January of each year. CE credits may not carryover after the two-year period ends (4 year for RID certified ASL interpreters). Failure to complete the required CE credits in the prescribed period (two years for language interpreters and four for deaf/hard of hearing) may result in the removal of the interpreter's name from the active Court Interpreter Registry maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

## Florida

PART II. INTERPRETER REGISTRATION AND DESIGNATIONS Rule 14.200. Registration (a) Registration. Court interpreters shall, prior to providing interpreter services, become registered with the Office of the State Courts Administrator.

(b) General Prerequisites. Unless otherwise provided, all applicants completing prerequisites for registration must:

- (1) as an initial prerequisite, attend a two-day orientation program administered by the Office of the State Courts Administrator or board-approved training provider;
- (2) pass a written examination approved by the board, which shall include an ethics component;
- (3) submit an approved reporting form documenting completion of 20 hours of courtroom observation;
- (4) take an oath to uphold the Code of Professional Conduct adopted in these rules;
- (5) undergo and pass a background check according to standards prescribed by the board and published in board operating procedures;
- (6) agree to obtain 16 credits of continuing education from a continuing education program approved by the board; and 6
- (7) agree to diligently pursue designation as a certified, language skilled, or provisionally approved interpreter and, within the first year of any two-year registration or applicable renewal period, submit to: (i) at least 1 full oral performance examination approved by the board, or, in the event a full oral performance examination is unavailable, submit to a board-approved abbreviated oral examination and demonstrate functional speaking ability in English and a non-English language through oral proficiency interviews as a prerequisite to taking the abbreviated examination; (ii) at least 1 approved oral proficiency interview in English and a non-English language for which there is no state-certifying examination as an assessment of functional speaking ability; or (iii) at least 1 equivalent state-certifying examination in another state that is in accordance with board-approved prerequisites; and
- (8) submit an application for registration and enclose an initial application fee in an amount set by the supreme court.

Requirements. An applicant seeking designation as a certified court interpreter must:

- (1) register under provisions of rule 14.200, complying with subdivisions 14.200(a), (b)(1) through (b)(6), and (b)(8); 9
  - (2) pass a board-approved full oral performance examination upon attaining a minimum score in accordance with standards prescribed by the board and published in board operating procedures, unless qualifying for a waiver of the examination requirement under rule 14.220; and
  - (3) absent availability of a full oral performance examination, pass a board-approved abbreviated oral examination, attaining a minimum score in accordance with standards prescribed by the board and published in board operating procedures, and demonstrate functional speaking ability in English and a non-English language as prescribed by the board through oral proficiency interviews as a prerequisite to taking the abbreviated examination and qualifying for certification.
- (c) Court-Employed Interpreters. Applicants who are selected as employee interpreters in the state courts system for a language for which a state certifying examination is available, but who are not certified at the time of court employment, shall become certified within 1 year of being employed in a court interpreting position. The one-year requirement may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis, if necessary, only in exceptional circumstances.

## Georgia

Requirements for Licensure as a Court Interpreter

Georgia is a member of the National Center for State Courts, Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) and conforms to its testing standards for licensing of court interpreters. In

addition to fulfilling test requirements, all interpreters must be at least 18 years of age; of good moral character; and a legal U.S. resident.

**Certified Interpreters** - This is the highest certification for a court interpreter on the state level. The license application fee is \$125 and must be renewed annually.

- Orientation Workshop
- English Written Exam
- Court Observation Hours
- Oral Certification Exam - Candidates must pass each mode of interpretation (sight, consecutive and simultaneous) with a 70% or higher score in the same sitting. Currently an oral exam exists for the following languages: Arabic, Cantonese, French, Haitian-Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Khmer, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.
- Successful completion of criminal history background investigation

**Conditionally Approved Interpreters**- This is the latest licensing designation created by the Commission. The license application fee is \$125 and must be renewed annually.

- Orientation Workshop
- English Written Exam
- Court Observation Hours
- Oral Certification Exam- Candidates must receive an overall score of 60% on the exam, with no score in either mode of interpretation falling below 55%.
- Successful completion of criminal history background investigation

**Registered Interpreters\*** only available to those speaking languages where no Oral Certification Exam exists

A registered court interpreter license can only be sought or maintained in languages which do not have an oral certification exam. The oral certification exam is available for the following languages: Arabic, Cantonese, French, Haitian-Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Khmer, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Candidates for this designation must complete two Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI), one in English and one in the language the interpreter wants to become licensed. A score of Superior is required for each interview. The license application fee is \$125 and must be renewed annually.

- Orientation Workshop
- English Written Exam
- Court Observation Hours
- Two Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI)
- Successful completion of criminal history background investigation

#### Step 1: Orientation Training Session

As the first step in the certification process, prospective interpreters must attend the Commission's two-day Orientation Workshop. The cost of the orientation workshop is \$200. The session includes 16-hours of training on modes of interpreting, courtroom procedures, legal process, and interpreter's ethics. Federal or State Certified interpreters serve as facilitators at each session and provide candidates with additional resources for study and professional development. Interpreters are also provided with detailed information on the content and composition of the language proficiency examinations during the Orientation Training Session. Interpreters must attend the orientation prior to taking the Court Interpreter Written Exam which is offered by the Commission several times a year. Refer to the Training and Testing Schedule for information regarding dates, location, and registration. An applicant has two (2) years to complete the licensing and certification

process, after attending the 16-hr orientation workshop. If the applicant does not complete the program requirements within two (2) years, the applicant must re-start the certification process by retaking and passing the English written exam and fulfilling all subsequent requirements.

#### Step 2. Court Interpreter Written Exam

This exam is multiple-choice and includes sections on ethics, legal process, terminology, English grammar, idioms, synonyms, and antonyms. Interpreters must be well versed in the English language and must score 80% or higher in order to pass the exam. The orientation training session must be taken prior to taking the Court Interpreter Written Exam. The cost of the English written exam is \$50.

#### Step 3. Court Observation

Prior to taking the oral certification exam prospective interpreters must obtain a sufficient number of court observation hours. Three (3) hours of court observation is required if a certified interpreter is present during the proceeding and six hours (6) of observation is required if a certified interpreter is not present. The observation must be logged onto the Court Observation Form provided by the Commission and then uploaded to the Georgia Courts Registrar.

#### \*Step 4. Oral Certification Exam or Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)

##### Oral Certification Exam

Candidates must pass all three parts of the exam in one sitting in order to meet the requirements for Certified licensure. The Commission recognizes federal certification and the oral certification exam offered in a state that is an active member of the National Center for State Courts, Language Access Coordinators if the issuing state administers the oral certification exam as prescribed by CLAC and the candidate passed the exam, at the certified level, in one sitting. The cost of the Oral Certification Exam is \$250.

##### Oral Proficiency Interview – OPI

Required only for languages without an oral certification exam

The Oral Proficiency Interview is only required if you wish to interpret in a language which does not have a certification exam. The OPI is a telephone interview, which generally takes place at the Administrative Office of the Courts. The interviews are conducted through a vendor and last approximately 25 minutes. Each candidate will be tested in both English and the language you wish to interpret. The exam is designed to evaluate the candidate's foreign language ability, level of knowledge and education. Candidates must achieve a language scale score of "Superior" in both English and the language for which one wants to interpret (target language). The cost of each OPI is \$143. Prior to registering and paying for the OPIs, please contact the Commission office to determine if you required to take this exam. Confirmed candidates will be notified of the date and exact location of the exam. Please keep in mind that Language Testing International conducts exams for various agencies and they have no information as to the purpose of or eligibility of those applying to test.

For further information please contact ACTFL-OPI at (800) 486-8444 or

<http://www.languagetesting.com>.

#### Step 5:

Upon receiving passing scores on the oral certification examination or oral proficiency interviews, candidates must apply for a license to become a certified, conditionally approved or registered interpreter. The license application is accessible through the Georgia Courts Registrar. The application process requires submitting a license application, fee, and criminal history authorization form. Prospective interpreters must pass the criminal background investigation outlined in Step 6.

#### Step 6:

Candidates must demonstrate good moral character by satisfying the Commission's fitness requirement. To determine if a candidate is fit to become a licensed interpreter, background investigations are evaluated against the fitness guidelines below.

An applicant has good moral character if one has not committed or been convicted of:

- a) Felony or misdemeanor crimes involving false statements, fraud or dishonesty; or
- b) Crimes punishable by one year or more; unless it has been more than ten years from confinement or conviction; and
- c) Crimes involving moral turpitude; unless it has been more than ten years from confinement or conviction.

All candidates must pass a criminal background history check. If it is determined that good character does not exist the Commission shall have the authority to: deny a license or certification; suspend or revoke a license or certification; or to impose discipline.

Step 7:

Candidates who successfully pass all licensing requirements will be issued a license and placed on our Court Interpreter Registry. Licenses must be renewed annually. Court interpreters must take the Interpreter's Oath and agree to abide by the Code of Professional Responsibility for Court Interpreters. If the applicant does not complete the program requirements within two (2) years, the applicant must re-start the certification process by retaking the English written exam and fulfilling subsequent requirements.

Any persons seeking reciprocity from another state must note:

Georgia is a member of the National Center for State Courts, Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC). Reciprocity may be extended to interpreters who are certified by states that are active CLAC members. Reciprocity may be granted to those persons who

- Have completed a 16-hour training course offered by the credentialing state.
- Have taken and passed the CLAC written exam with a score of 80% or more.
- Have taken and passed the CLAC oral exam with a score within our licensing categories (see licensing categories for more information)

Reciprocity will be extended to those who have started the process in another state only if the requirements of the state in which the candidate has started the process are similar to Georgia. For example: if the applicant attended an orientation workshop at the state where they started the licensing process, and that state requires a candidate to attend a training that is shorter than Georgia's, the candidate will be asked to attend the orientation workshop in Georgia.

Please note that the oral exam must have been taken in ONE seating, and not in different seatings. If you meet these requirements, please create a GCR account and e-mail staff asking for reciprocity and name the state from which you are seeking reciprocity.

Once the request has been received, staff will contact the state from which you are seeking reciprocity asking for verification of the three requirements above. You will be notified once the process has been completed so you may continue with the reciprocity process.

# Hawaii

## Becoming a Court Interpreter

### Application Form

Individuals who are interested in interpreting for the state courts must complete the Judiciary's Court Interpreter Certification Program Application Form to the [Office on Equality and Access to the Courts \(OEAC\)](#). The Application Form may also be obtained from the OEAC. Applicants must:

- be at least 18 years of age;
- be authorized to work in the United States; and
- speak English and another language(s).

### Mandatory Minimum Requirements

To be eligible to interpret for the state courts, applicants must meet the following mandatory requirements:

1. Attend the two-day [Basic Orientation Workshop](#);

The Basic Orientation Workshop (BOW) is the first of three mandatory minimum requirements to interpret in the Hawai'i state courts. The BOW is a two-day orientation seminar which provides an introduction to the requirements of the Hawai'i State Judiciary Court Interpreter Certification Program. BOW participants will be introduced to:

- the approval and registration process of the Hawai'i State Judiciary Court Interpreter Certification Program;
- the examinations administered to court interpreters and how to prepare for them;
- an overview of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that court interpreters must possess to perform as a court interpreter;
- the role and basic ethics of court interpreters;
- an overview of courtroom procedures and legal processes; and resources for the professional development of court interpreters.

2. Pass the [Written English Proficiency Exam](#) and the [Hawai'i Basic Ethics Exam](#); and
  - a. The Hawai'i State Judiciary administers a Written English Proficiency exam ("Written English exam") developed by the National Consortium for Language Access in the Courts. The Written English exam, together with the [Hawai'i Basic Ethics exam](#), is the second of three mandatory minimum requirements to interpret in the Hawai'i state courts. Applicants must attend the Hawai'i State Judiciary's Basic Orientation Workshop prior to taking the Written English exam.
  - b. The Written English exam consists of 135 multiple-choice questions and includes sections on court interpreter ethics, legal process and terminology, English grammar, idioms, synonyms and antonyms. Interpreters must be well versed in the English language. Applicants are allowed two hours and fifteen minutes to complete the exam and must achieve a passing score of 70%. Information regarding the dates, location, registration and fee for the Written English exam may be obtained by contacting the [OEAC](#).
  - c. The Hawai'i State Judiciary administers the written Hawai'i Basic Ethics exam ("Basic Ethics exam") to test an interpreter's knowledge and understanding of the role and ethics of court interpreters. The Basic Ethics exam, together with the [Written English Proficiency exam](#), is the second of three mandatory minimum requirements to interpret in the Hawai'i state courts. Applicants must attend the



Hawai'i State Judiciary's Basic Orientation Workshop prior to taking the Basic Ethics exam. The Basic Ethics exam is based on the Professional Code of Conduct for Court Interpreters in the Policies for Interpreted ProceedCourt interpreters must understand spoken English at a conversational pace and speak English well enough for key individuals in a courtroom, such as judges, attorneys, parties, and court staff, to understand the interpreter's spoken English without undue difficulty. The Hawai'i State Judiciary administers oral interpreting exams in various languages to interpreters who have met the mandatory minimum requirements to interpret in the Hawai'i state courts. Oral exams do not exist in every language, and the testing instrument may differ based on the language an interpreter interprets in. To achieve certification in court interpreting, an interpreter must take and pass the Consortium Oral Certification Exam in their language, which is a three-part exam measuring an interpreter's skills in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, as well as sight translation. Information regarding the dates, location, registration and fee for the oral interpreting exams may be obtained by contacting the OEAC.ings in the Courts of the State of Hawai'i. This exam consists of 25 multiple-choice questions. Applicants are allowed one hour to complete the exam and must achieve a passing score of 80%. Information regarding the dates, location, registration and fee for the exam may be obtained by contacting the [OEAC](#).

- d. Clear a Criminal Background Check.

#### Opportunities for Advancement

Interpreters who have met the mandatory minimum requirements are eligible to take an [Oral Interpreting Exam](#) to qualify for a higher tier designation and higher pay rate.

Court interpreters must understand spoken English at a conversational pace and speak English well enough for key individuals in a courtroom, such as judges, attorneys, parties, and court staff, to understand the interpreter's spoken English without undue difficulty. The Hawai'i State Judiciary administers oral interpreting exams in various languages to interpreters who have met the mandatory minimum requirements to interpret in the Hawai'i state courts. Oral exams do not exist in every language, and the testing instrument may differ based on the language an interpreter interprets in. To achieve certification in court interpreting, an interpreter must take and pass the Consortium Oral Certification Exam in their language, which is a three-part exam measuring an interpreter's skills in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, as well as sight translation. Information regarding the dates, location, registration and fee for the oral interpreting exams may be obtained by contacting the [OEAC](#).

## Idaho

### Certified Interpreters

Currently, the Idaho Administrative Office of the Court offers certification for 16 different languages (see page 1). All other languages are covered by the Registered status. Individuals interested in becoming certified as court interpreters must successfully complete the steps listed below. Up to two yearly cycles are available.

#### **Step 1: Intro to Court Interpretation (Mandatory) January & June**

Online. Self-paced course designed to provide an orientation to the court interpreting profession. Language neutral. Mandatory.

#### **Step 2: Ethics Review & Written Exam Prep-Class (Mandatory) April & September**

One day, in person class. Enhance understanding of professional conduct and ethics. Test-taking strategies and exam preparation. Language neutral.

**Step 3: Written Exam Prep-Webinar (Optional) April & October**

60-minute webinar covering test-taking techniques, exam preparation exercises. Language neutral.

**Step 4: Written English Proficiency Exam (Mandatory) May & November**

Multiple-choice questions on general language proficiency, court-related terms, ethics and professional conduct. Constructed to measure entry-level knowledge of English that a competent person working in the court would need. Passing score of 80 percent is required.

**Step 5: Skill-Building Workshop (Optional) June & TBD**

Half-day in person workshop designed to provide participants one-on-one time with experienced faculty and intensive practice in the three modes of interpreting, in preparation for the oral certification exam. Language neutral workshop. All certification candidates are strongly encouraged to participate.

**Step 6: Oral Court Interpreter Exam Preparation Course (Optional) August**

8-week online course designed to improve an individual's chances of passing the oral certification exam. Training materials and study-plans are tailored to the needs of each individual. Highly interactive course that provides individualized feedback to the interpreter-candidate through the use of exercises and mock exams. All interpreter candidates are strongly encouraged to participate to be better prepared for the oral exam. Spanish-specific workshop.

**Step 7: Oral Certification Exam (Mandatory) March & October**

Oral exam on simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, and sight translation. A candidate must receive a score of 70 percent or higher on all three sections to pass the exam. A passing score on the sight translation section of the exam is a minimum of 65 percent on each part of the sight translations, with an average of 70 percent overall.

Illinois

**Step One: ORIENTATION**

- To be placed on the AOIC Court Interpreter Registry, candidates must first attend a two-day orientation. The two-day orientation is open to any person at least 18 years of age with a native-like mastery of English and a second language. This orientation covers the interpreter's role and professional ethics, the modes of interpreting used in court, legal terminology and court protocol. Candidates are expected to continue self-study before taking the written and oral exams. To view a sample orientation agenda, please [click here](#).
- Sign language and deaf interpreters are only required to attend orientation and will not be tested by the AOIC. Candidates must submit proof of Advanced or Master's level licensure with the IDHHC to attend orientation.
- 2019 ORIENTATION DATES AND LOCATIONS
- FEE: \$200

**Step Two: Written Exam**

After completing the orientation, candidates may register to take the NCSC written exam. The 3-hour test covers English proficiency, legal terms, court protocol and ethical situations. Candidates must pass with a score of 80% or higher to be eligible to take an oral exam or oral proficiency interview.

- Candidates who have passed the written test may take the NCSC oral exam testing their skills in sight translation, consecutive, and simultaneous interpreting. The exam is offered in 22 languages. Candidates must pass with 70% or higher to be listed on the AOIC Court Interpreter Registry as "Certified." Candidates must pass with a 60% or higher to be listed as "Registered." Full oral exams are currently available in Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog and

Vietnamese. Abbreviated exams are available in Arabic (Modern Standard) and Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian, Marshallese and Turkish.

- If you speak a language that is not offered by the NCSC oral exam, you may be able to take an oral proficiency interview (OPI), if available in your language. You must receive the highest score to be listed as "Qualified." The company that administers the OPIs is called ALTA. To see the list of languages available for an OPI, please [click here](#).
- FEE: \$50

### Step Three: Enroll

After passing the relevant exams, candidates will receive an application packet to become certified, qualified or registered with the Supreme Court of Illinois. Certified, qualified and registered foreign language interpreters and eligible sign language interpreters will be included on a [statewide registry](#) that is made available to all circuit courts in Illinois. Interpreter assignments are arranged at the county level by the court administrator or other court personnel on an as-needed basis.

**Reciprocity requirements:** Foreign language interpreters that have completed portions of the foreign language certification process for other state courts, the federal courts, or have passed the NAJIT exam may be eligible for reciprocity. If you are eligible, please fill out the [Application form for reciprocity](#). Please email, fax or mail the application and any supporting documentation as an email attachment to Sophia Akbar, AOIC Language Access Services Specialist at [sakbar@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:sakbar@illinoiscourts.gov) or 312-793-1335 (fax). We will continue to accept reciprocity applications on a rolling basis.

## Indiana

### Steps to certification

Unless you are already certified federally or in another state and seek [certification by reciprocity](#), you'll need to complete the following steps within two years to become a certified court interpreter in Indiana.

1. [Register and be accepted to the program](#)
2. Complete the online English written exam prep course
3. Attend the two-day court interpreter orientation covering interpreter ethics, protocol, basic criminal procedure, and the three modes of interpretation used in the courtroom
4. Pass a [written exam](#) covering vocabulary, criminal procedure, and court interpreter ethics with a score of 80% or better
5. Attend the two-day skills building seminar that covers sight translation, consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation
6. Attend the one-day simultaneous workshop
7. Pass all three sections of the National Center for State Courts' approved interpreter certification [oral exam](#) with a score of 70% or better on each section: sight translation, consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation
8. For certification-eligible languages that have an abbreviated oral exam, pass an [English proficiency test](#)
9. Submit to a criminal background check
10. Sign a disclosure of contact information providing a valid phone number and email to be listed on the [Certified Interpreter Registry](#)

11. Sign an oath promising to comply with the Indiana Supreme Court [Interpreter Code of Conduct and Procedure](#)

### **Becoming a qualified interpreter**

If your language is not on the [list of certification-eligible languages](#), then we have no oral exam for you to take. You can instead become a qualified interpreter in your language by following the same ten steps above except #7 and #8. Instead of the oral exam, you must score Superior or the highest level in the Oral Proficiency Interview. The Oral Proficiency Interview may consist of a **Legal Interpretation Test** and **English Listening and Speaking Test** or **Listening and Speaking Test** in both English and the target language .

- The **Legal Interpretation Test** is administered via telephone and consists of a pre-scripted dialogue. The candidate would interpret after each segment of dialogue.
- The **Listening and Speaking Test** is administered via telephone and consists of 22 questions requiring the candidate to respond in the same language. This test takes approximately 15-20 minutes.

If you are seeking qualification in American Sign Language, your last training event is skills building where you must submit your RID certification.

## Iowa

### C. Minimum Qualifications to be a Court Interpreter in Iowa

When there are no certified court interpreters available, and no interpreters available who have completed at least sufficient training and testing to be on Iowa's roster of court interpreters (see section D, below), Iowa's courts seek interpreters who meet at least the following minimum qualifications established in Iowa Court Rule 47.2. "Unclassified" interpreters meet only these minimum qualifications:

1. **Age:** Be at least 21 years old.
2. **Education:** Have the equivalent of two years or 48 credit hours of college courses, or have completed the requirements to qualify for the Iowa Roster of Court Interpreters (see section D, below).
3. **Application form:** Have completed an official Application to be an Oral (or Sign) Language Court Interpreter - where interpreters provide information on their education and other qualifications to be court interpreters. (See the section B, above for an application form.)
4. **Oath:** Sign an oath to abide by the Code of Professional Conduct for Judicial Branch Interpreters (Chapter 48 of the Iowa Court Rules); the oath is included at the end of the application to be a court interpreter (available in section B, above).
5. **Background check:** Interpreters must complete a Release/Waiver" Form -- included with the interpreter application form -- to authorize the Office of Professional Regulation to conduct the criminal history search. NOTE: Persons convicted of a felony, or convicted of any less serious crime that involves dishonesty or moral turpitude, are prohibited from interpreting in Iowa's courts unless the Office of Professional Regulation (OPR) determines otherwise.
6. [Guide for Iowa Court Interpreters](#)

### D. Requirements for Being on the Iowa's Roster of Court Interpreters

The Iowa courts seek to employ interpreters who meet more than just the minimum qualifications listed above. In an effort to improve the quality of court interpreting, Iowa established training and testing requirements for interpreters to be listed on the Iowa courts' roster of court interpreters (see Iowa Court Rule 47.6). In addition to meeting the minimum requirements (see section C, above), an

interpreter must complete the following requirements to be listed on the Iowa's roster of court interpreters:

1. **Court interpreter orientation program:** Both oral language and sign language interpreters must complete a court interpreter orientation program, which is offered twice each year (spring and fall) in Des Moines. Interpreter applicants must pass the written exams before they can attend the orientation workshop.
2. **Pass three exams** for court interpreters [see section B, above, to obtain test registration forms.] Both oral language interpreters and sign language interpreters must pass written Exams 1 and 2:
  - a. **Exam 1** (written) – Achieve a score of at least 80 percent correct on the National Center for State Courts' (NCSC) standard multiple-choice exam (in English) with a total of 135 questions. It tests an interpreter's knowledge of general English vocabulary, slang, legal terminology, and court-related issues.  
Interpreters who have passed the NCSC's multiple-choice exam with 135 questions in another state have fulfilled that requirement for being listed on Iowa's roster of court interpreters, but they still need to pass the ethics test and meet the other requirements to be listed on Iowa's roster.
  - b. **Exam 2** (written) -- Achieve a score of at least 75 percent correct on a multiple-choice exam (25 questions) on court interpreter ethics.
  - c. **Exam 3** (oral) – Achieve a score of at least 55 percent correct on each of the three parts of the NCSC oral interpreter certification exam. For more information on this exam, see Section E.1., below. Interpreters of languages for which the NCSC does not offer an oral exam must take the ALTA Language Services' oral proficiency interview (OPI), which is a test of speaking and listening skills. An interpreter must achieve scores of at least 11 on a scale of 12 on exams in both the English and non-English language. For more information on this exam, see section B.5, above.
  - d. **Attend six hours of continuing education each year** after being listed on the roster of court interpreters. ([See the Information for Current Court Interpreters on the information page](#))

#### E. Certification for Court Interpreters

Pursuant to the Iowa Court Rules 47.3(4) and (5), Iowa's courts will appoint a certified court interpreter, if one is reasonably available, before they will appoint a noncertified interpreter. Certified court interpreters also receive a significantly higher hourly fee than noncertified interpreters.

1. **Certification of oral language interpreters**  
Oral language interpreters in Iowa can take the interpretation exam for court interpreter certification in Iowa only if they have met the requirements to be listed on Iowa's roster of court interpreters – or – equivalent requirements in another state (see section D., above). An interpreter can meet the oral language interpreter certification test requirement by passing an exam developed by: the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), the Federal Court Interpreter Program, or the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT). See Iowa Court Rule 47.4(1).

Iowa's Office of Professional Regulation administers the National Center for State Courts' (NCSC) oral interpretation exams for court interpreter certification, which are currently available in 20 different languages. The oral exams are conducted twice each year in Iowa, usually in May and

September. For the certification exam schedule, [see the Information for Current Court Interpreters page](#).

The NCSC's oral interpretation certification exam contains three components:

**Oral interpretation of two written documents** (one in English and one in the interpreter's other language)

**Consecutive interpretation** of digitally recorded witness testimony

**Simultaneous (continuous) interpretation**, typically involving a digitally recorded attorney's closing argument or other continuous statement in court.

To pass the oral language certification exam in Iowa, an interpreter must correctly interpret at least 70 percent of the "scoring units" (words and phrases pre-selected by language testing professionals) in each section of the exam – during a single test session. Test scoring is done by certified court interpreters trained by the NCSC to be certification exam evaluators.

*Note: This is a difficult exam. Nationwide only eight to twenty percent of interpreters who take the NCSC's oral interpretation exams for court interpreter certification pass the exam, depending on the language.*

Some states that offer the NCSC's oral interpreter certification exams allow interpreters to pass the three parts of the exam in multiple test sessions within a limited period of time (e.g., an interpreter takes all three parts, but pass only one part at that time; the interpreter must take and pass the remaining parts of the exam within six months). If an interpreter is certified in another state by passing the three parts of the exam in multiple test sessions, the interpreter will be considered a Class B interpreter in Iowa. (See section G, below.)

## 2. Certification of sign language interpreters

The Iowa judicial branch does not conduct the sign language performance testing for sign language interpreters who seek to be listed on Iowa's roster of court interpreters. For information on the testing required to be certified sign language interpreter, see Iowa Court Rule 47.5 and section G.2, below. [Also see the Department of Human Rights \(DHR\) – Office of Deaf Services website](#)

## Kentucky

Below is a step-by-step summary of Kentucky's Court Interpreter Certification Process for Spoken Language Interpreters.

### **STEP 1: Pass a Background Check**

To begin the certification process, interpreter candidates must pass a background check conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). In order to initiate the background investigation, candidates must fill out and send in the forms entitled "Criminal Background Check" (AOC-INT-4) and 'Information Form' (AOC-INT-5), both of which can be found on our forms website. Please use the background check form on our website (this background check is free).

This is the first step in the process, and applicants will not be able to advance to STEP 2 until receiving clearance from the AOC. AOC background checks are typically completed within one month from the time of submission of the appropriate forms.

**STEP 2: Complete the Orientation Workshop**

The Orientation Workshop is designed to introduce all interpreter candidates to the profession of court interpreting in a language-neutral setting. Topics covered during this initial orientation include a general introduction to the profession of court interpreting, a high-level overview of the Kentucky Court of Justice, an in-depth discussion about Kentucky's court interpreting certification process, the three modes of interpreting and materials for continued development, and Kentucky's Code of Professional Responsibility for practicing interpreters. There is a \$75.00 participation fee to attend the workshop. Interpreter candidates can find the dates for upcoming orientations on our website. Applicants may only attend the Orientation Workshop after successfully completing STEP 1.

**STEP 3: Pass the English Written Exam**

All spoken language interpreter candidates must pass the English Written Exam. The English Written Exam consists of 135 multiple-choice questions, and applicants must obtain an aggregate score of 80% or higher to pass and move on to the next step in the certification process. The test costs \$50.00 and is offered 2 weeks after the workshop at our main office in Frankfort, KY. If an interpreter candidate fails to obtain a minimal score of 80% on the English Written Exam, the candidate must wait at least six months before taking the exam again. Candidates may only take the English Written Exam a total of two times without special permission from the AOC, so it is imperative that applicants are as prepared as possible before sitting for the exam. Only candidates that have completed STEPS 1 and 2 of the process are eligible to sit for the English Written Exam. Eligible applicants can find the registration form on our website.

**STEP 4: Pass an Oral Proficiency Interview in each Working Language**

Interpreter candidates must pass an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) for each of their working languages, including English, to the satisfaction of the AOC. The OPI consists of a conversation with one or more professional language evaluators either in person or over the phone at one of our staff locations across the state. The topics covered during the OPI aren't necessarily legal in nature; the purpose of the OPI is to determine how well applicants express themselves on a general level in the tested language. While the cost of the OPI varies according to the language to be tested, the average price is approximately \$150.00 but could be more depending on the rarity of the language and the availability of the raters. Interpreter candidates' performance during the OPI is rated using the proficiency guidelines recommended by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. Unless otherwise specified by the AOC, all interpreter candidates must receive an OPI rating of 'Superior' for each working language to advance to STEP 5. If an interpreter candidate fails to obtain a 'Superior' classification on the OPI, the candidate must wait at least six months before retaking the OPI for the language in question. Candidates may only take the OPI a total of two times per language without special permission from the AOC, so it is imperative that applicants are as prepared as possible before scheduling the interview. Eligible candidates may request to schedule an OPI by contacting The Office of Language Access at (502) 573-2350.

**STEP 5: Complete 4 Hours of Court Observation**

Interpreter candidates must complete four (4) hours of court observation under the supervision of a certified staff interpreter before they may sit for the Oral Certification Exam. Court observation is an integral part of the real-life training that is necessary to become a court interpreter, and it is also an excellent way to prepare for the certification exam itself. Only those candidates that have completed STEPS 1 through 4 may complete the initial four hours of court observation. Eligible candidates can schedule their first four hours of court observation by contacting The Office of Language Access at (502)

573-2350. Interpreter candidates will be required to complete 20 additional hours of court observation at the end of the certification process.

**STEP 6: Complete The Skills Building Workshop**

The Skills Building Workshop is designed as a last-minute prep course for individuals that are expected to begin interpreting in Kentucky's courts in the very near future. While many of the topics will be presented in a language-neutral format, specific content and hands-on exercises may also be offered using a language-specific approach when feasible. Topics covered during this training include a detailed discussion of the Kentucky Court of Justice and interaction with a judge, pragmatic protocols and procedures for court interpreters, court interpreter ethics, including the role of the interpreter. Participants will also take part in several hands-on training exercises geared towards helping them use their linguistic and court interpreting knowledge in real-life applications. There is a \$50.00 participation fee to attend the Skills Building Workshop. This workshop will also count towards the required hours of Court Observation.

Interpreter candidates can find the dates for upcoming orientations by going to the OLA calendar online or by contacting the Office. Applicants may only attend Part 2 of the Orientation Workshop after successfully completing STEPS 1 through 5.

**STEP 7: Pass the Oral Certification Exam**

Interpreter Candidates must score a 70% or higher in each of the three sections of the Oral Certification Exam in one sitting. The three sections correspond to the three modes of interpreting (Sight Translation, Consecutive Interpretation, and Simultaneous Interpretation). The test is only offered in Kentucky twice per calendar year. Candidates may only take the Oral Certification Exam a total of two times without special permission from the AOC, so it is imperative that applicants are as prepared as possible before sitting for the exam. The fee to sit for the exam ranges from \$300.00 to \$500.00 depending upon the language to be tested. Test results are usually available within 8 to 10 weeks after taking the exam. Eligible applicants may register and pay for the Oral Certification Exam by contacting The Office of Language Access at (502) 573-2350. Only those applicants that have completed STEPS 1 through 5 will **be allowed to sit for the Oral Certification Exam.**

**STEP 8: Complete the required Hours of Court Observation**

After successfully fulfilling the requirements outlined in STEPS 1 through 7, interpreter candidates may then complete the remaining hours of court observation under the supervision of a certified staff interpreter. This final round of court observation is intended to be similar to 'on-the-job training', and it is during this time that interpreter candidates really learn what the job entails and how to perform their duties efficiently within the scope of the parameters set by the Kentucky Supreme Court.

Interpreter candidates must also complete and submit the forms entitled "Acceptance of the Kentucky Certification Policy" (AOC-INT-3) and the "Acceptance of Interpreter Oath and Code of Professional Responsibility" (AOC-INT-6), both of which can be found on our website.

**STEP 9: Approval and Contract**

After all 8 steps have been completed and all paperwork is received, the OLA will offer a contract to the interpreter. This contract must be completed, signed, notarized, and mailed back in to the OLA. Once the contract has been accepted, the AOC shall classify the interpreter candidate as a 'Certified Interpreter', list any such individual in the AOC Directory of Certified Interpreters, and issue a Certificate of Certification.

Depending upon the needs of the Kentucky Court of Justice, the AOC may allow interpreter candidates to accumulate their final 20 hours of court observation (or some portion thereof) while working (and receiving remuneration) as a certified court interpreter. The AOC Directory of Interpreters includes the name and contact information of all Certified and Registered court interpreters. If you wish to have your name and contact information listed on the AOC Directory you must submit a completed the "Release Form" (AOC-INT-7). The form is found on our website.



## **American Sign Language Interpreter**

Kentucky's Court Interpreter Certification Process consists of a series of steps that must be completed in sequential order; candidates may only advance to a new step after successfully fulfilling the requirements of each preceding step. All steps may be completed in as little as 6 months during what is called a "Testing Cycle". The AOC offers two full Testing Cycles per calendar year (January-June, July-December). If a candidate is unable to complete the certification process within one full Testing Cycle, the candidate has the option of participating in the following Testing Cycle in order to continue working towards certification. If a candidate is unable to complete the entire certification process after two consecutive Testing Cycles, the candidate must return to Step 1 of the process and fulfill all requirements again starting from the beginning.

### **STEP 1. Pass a Background Check**

To begin the certification process, interpreter candidates must pass a background check conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). In order to initiate the background investigation, candidates must fill out and send in the forms entitled "Criminal Background Check" (AOC-INT-4) and 'Information Form' (AOC-INT-5), both of which can be found on our [website](#).

This is the first step in the process, and applicants will not be able to advance to step 2 until receiving clearance from the AOC. AOC background checks are typically completed within one month from the time of submission of the appropriate form.

### **STEP 2. Submission of Professional Credentials**

Submit proof of RID Certification and Kentucky Interpreter License

Submit proof of Passing the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) \*\*\*only applies to interpreting students interested in Legal Interpreting\*\*\*

- SLPI Advanced or better required to proceed onto Step #3 only
- Applicants with RID Certification and KY Interpreter License move onto Step #4

### **STEP 3. Complete Part 1 of the Orientation Workshop**

Part 1 of the orientation workshop is designed to introduce all interpreter candidates to the profession of court interpreting in a language-neutral setting. Topics covered during this initial, 1-day orientation include a general overview of the profession of court interpreting, a high level overview of the Kentucky Court of Justice, an in-depth discussion about becoming a court interpreter in Kentucky, the three modes of interpreting and materials for continued development, and Kentucky's Code of Professional Responsibility for practicing interpreters. There is a \$50.00 participation fee to attend Part 1 of the orientation workshop. Interpreter candidates can find the dates for upcoming orientations and make payment [online](#). Applicants may only attend part 1 of the orientation workshop after successfully completing steps 1 and 2.

### **STEP 4. Submit proof of RID Certification AND full Kentucky Interpreting License per KRS 309.301**

Only submit proof if it was not completed in Step 2

### **STEP 5. Complete Part 2 of the Orientation Workshop**

Part 2 of the orientation workshop is designed as a last-minute prep course for individuals that are expected to begin interpreting in Kentucky's courts in the very near future. While many of the topics will be presented in a language-neutral format, specific content and hands-on exercises may also be offered using a language-specific approach when feasible. Topics covered during this 1-2day training include a general overview of the Kentucky Court of Justice and interaction with a judge, pragmatic protocols and procedures for court interpreters, court interpreter ethics, including the role of the interpreter. Participants will also take part in several hands-on training exercises geared towards helping them use their linguistic and court interpreting knowledge in real-life applications. There is a \$50.00 participation fee to attend Part 2 of the orientation workshop. Part 2 of the Orientation Workshop will also count towards the required hours of Court Observation.

Interpreter candidates can find the dates for upcoming orientations and make payment [online](#). Applicants may only attend part 2 of the orientation workshop after successfully completing steps 1 through 5.

#### **STEP 6. Complete the required Hours of Court Observation**

After successfully fulfilling the requirements outlined in steps 1 through 5, interpreter candidates may then complete the remaining hours of court observation under the supervision of a certified staff interpreter. This final round of court observation is intended to be similar to ‘on-the-job training’, and it is during this time that interpreter candidates really learn what the job entails and how to perform their duties efficiently within the scope of the parameters set by the Kentucky Supreme Court.

Depending upon the needs of the Kentucky Court of Justice, the AOC may allow interpreter candidates to accumulate their final 20 hours of court observation (or some portion thereof) while working (and receiving remuneration) as a certified court interpreter. After completion of this step, and upon verification of completion of steps 1 through 6, the AOC shall classify the interpreter candidate as a ‘Certified Interpreter’ and list any such individual in the AOC Directory of Interpreters.

Depending upon the needs of the Kentucky Court of Justice, the AOC may allow interpreter candidates to accumulate their final hours of court observation (or some portion thereof) while working (and receiving remuneration) as a certified court interpreter.

Interpreter candidates must also complete and submit the forms entitled “Acceptance of the Kentucky Certification Policy” (AOC-INT-3) and the “Acceptance of Interpreter Oath and Code of Professional Responsibility” (AOC-INT-6), both of which can be found on our [website](#).

The AOC Directory of Interpreters includes the name and contact information of all Certified and Registered court interpreters. If you wish to have your name and contact information listed on this directory you must submit a completed “Release Form” (AOC-INT-7). The form is found on our [website](#).

#### **Certification of Reciprocity in Kentucky**

Reciprocity in Kentucky is only available to certified interpreters. Certification must have been granted either by another state court system that uses the exams provided by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts at the National Center for State Courts, (NCSC), or the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Program.

Requirements to be considered for reciprocity in Kentucky are as follows:

- Pass an equivalent oral examination in another state.
- The following criteria must be met in order for the exam to be considered valid:
  - The exam must have been developed by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts. Federal oral exams offered by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts also satisfy this requirement.
  - The exam must have tested all modes of interpreting in one sitting, except in those cases in which a language is tested using an official Consortium Abbreviated Exam.
  - The candidate must have passed the exam with a score of at least 70% on each segment of the exam. This requirement will be enforced even if the candidate’s cumulative total score is above 70%.
- Pass a criminal history background check to the satisfaction of the Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts. Please complete and submit form “Certification Request Form for Criminal Background Checks (AOC-INT-4)
- Submit verification of good standing as an interpreter in another state.
- Submit a completed copy of the following forms:
  - Request for Reciprocity (AOC-INT-12) form and a \$100 fee
  - Acceptance of the Kentucky Certification Policy (AOC-INT-3)
  - Release Form (AOC-INT-7)

- Information Form (AOC-INT-5)
- Acceptance of the Interpreter Oath and Code of Professional Responsibility (AOC-INT-6)
- Read the Code of Professional Responsibility and other relevant laws and procedures that govern interpreting services in Kentucky.
- Attend an Orientation Workshop Part 2 and complete the necessary court observation hours

## Louisiana

### REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFIED AND REGISTERED COURT INTERPRETERS

Certification is the highest level court interpreter in the Louisiana Judicial system. To become a “Certified” court interpreter in Louisiana, a candidate must already be a “Registered” court interpreter and additionally must pass the National Center of State Court (NCSC) Oral Certification Examination (oral exam) as administered in Louisiana in accordance with NCSC testing protocols. A “Certified” court interpreter has tested skills in simultaneous and consecutive court interpreting as well as in sight translation and has scored at least a 70% percent on each testing section.

In Louisiana, a court interpreter is listed as “Registered” in the language for which he tested if the interpreter: completes a two day training course, passes a standard written English examination as provided by the National Center for State Courts, passes a written translation examination, agrees to be bound by [Part G, Section 14 of the General Administrative Rules for all Louisiana Courts: The Code of Professional Responsibility for Language Interpreters](#), and passes a criminal background check. (Note that American Sign Language interpreters are not required to take the written translation examination, but instead shall provide proof of a valid Specialist Certificate Legal (SC:L) or a national generalist certificate from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID).) Below are links to the lists of certified and registered court interpreters in Louisiana by language.

The purpose of this roster is to help courts and other related entities utilize qualified interpreters on a freelance basis. The fact that an interpreter is listed on this roster does not indicate an employment relationship with the Louisiana Supreme Court or any of the courts in the Louisiana judicial system. Court interpreters working on an individual contract basis or for agencies are not employees of the courts.

### LOUISIANA SUPREME COURT INTERPRETER TRAINING AND TESTING SCHEDULE

The Louisiana Supreme Court’s court interpreter training program is specifically designed for bilingual individuals who are interested in becoming registered court interpreters. In these highly focused, two-day training classes, participants will be exposed to the:

- structure of Louisiana’s judicial system & legal terminology;
- Louisiana’s Code of Professional Responsibility for Language Interpreters;
- role of the interpreter in the various legal and court proceedings; and
- modes of interpretation including consecutive, simultaneous, and sight.

The training, which is conducted primarily in English, is conducted by a certified court interpreter who has many years of interpreting, training, and testing experience. The classes are highly interactive, which means the participants will practice various interpreting modes and techniques, discuss shared

challenges, and take part in insightful exercises designed to build court interpreting skills.

Participants are expected to already possess a bilingual level of fluency in both English and the language or languages in which they desire to become registered.

On Day 3, participants who desire to be listed as a registered interpreter by the Louisiana Supreme Court, must take and pass two written examinations:

Part 1 - Translation exam from English into the target language; and

Part 2 - General English Language Proficiency, Court Related Terms, Ethics & Professionalism.

Interpreters for the hearing impaired are welcome to attend the training sessions but should note that the classes focus primarily on the spoken languages.

The required two day interpreter training courses as mentioned above are regularly offered by the Louisiana Supreme Court. To access additional information regarding the training classes, a schedule of upcoming classes, and a registration form, please click the link below.

## Maine

Age, Education, and Credentials:

- At least 20 years of age;
- High school diploma or equivalent;
- Must be authorized to work in the United States; and
- Prior legal interpreting experience is preferred.

Additional Requirements:

- Must agree to abide by the Maine Judicial Branch policy [Standards of Professional Conduct for Interpreters Providing Services in Judicial Proceedings](#); and
- Must submit to and pass a [background check](#) completed by the Judicial Branch.

Qualifications for: Tier I - \$35 per interpreting hour\*

- File an approved [Application for Maine Court Interpreter Work](#);
- Pass the [National Center for State Courts Written Examination](#) with a score of 70% or higher;
- Obtain a minimum of “Advanced – Low” rating on [ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview](#) in the target language;
- Complete the Maine Court Interpreters Orientation Program (2 days).

Qualifications for: Tier II - \$45 per interpreting hour\*

- Successful completion of Tier I requirements AND
- Two years at least of post-secondary education;
- Pass the [National Center for State Courts Written Examination](#) with a score of 80% or higher;
- Complete the Maine Court Interpreter Advanced Legal Training Program (4 days);
- 50 hours of documented legal interpreting experience.

Qualifications for: Tier III - \$50 per interpreting hour\*

- Successful completion of Tier II requirements AND
- Obtain [Federal Court certification](#) (OR)  
Satisfactory completion of all three sections of the [NCSC Oral Examination](#)

Maine Court interpreters are also paid for travel time and reimbursed for mileage expenses pursuant to current policy.

[Court Interpreter Requirements](#) (PDF)

# Maryland

In summary, anyone interested in working as a court interpreter for the Maryland State Judiciary must:

1. Attend a 1-Day Introductory Workshop on Court Interpreting.
2. After attending the Introductory workshop, interpreter candidates will need to:
  1. Pass a written examination in English.
  2. Pass a language proficiency interview (LPI) in English and target languages once the written examination is passed.
  3. Attend a mandatory 2-day Court Interpreter Orientation (non-language specific)

Interpreter candidates who complete these requirements are listed on the Court Interpreter Registry as "ELIGIBLE" interpreters. They are allowed to take a Court Interpreter Certification Exam, if available in their languages. Certified and Qualified court interpreters listed on the Court Interpreter Registry work on an as needed basis. Being listed on the Registry does not guarantee full-time, part-time or contractual employment. If you are looking for permanent employment with the Maryland Judiciary, please visit the Maryland Judiciary website at <http://mdcourts.gov/jobs/index.html>.

Massachusetts

## **(A) Requirements.**

- (1) The minimum requirements to be eligible for certification are as follows:
  - a) a four-year degree from a United States college/university, or October 30, 2009 23 an equivalent higher education degree from another country (Official transcript and/or a photocopy of the diploma are required as proof of degree. When not in English or Latin, official translation must be included.),
  - b) proof of language proficiency in English and the foreign language through successful completion of any required screening examination,
  - c) attendance at the mandatory introductory training,
  - d) successful completion of the Mentoring Program, and e) attendance at any mandatory sessions or workshops.
- (2) In addition to the minimum eligibility requirements, one or more of the following is also required:
  - a) a minimum of one year of work experience in interpretation, preferably in, but not limited to, court or conference interpretation with OCIS and/or with another reputable organization,
  - b) a legal interpretation certification from another state where certification requirements are equivalent to those of OCIS,
  - c) certification or qualification from the Federal Court's Interpreter Program, or
  - d) a legal or conference interpretation diploma or certification from a reputable national or international interpreter training institution or program.
- (3) In certain circumstances, at the Manager's discretion, any of the requirements in paragraphs (1) or (2) above may be waived. Upon such waiver, the Manager shall document in writing the reasons for the waiver.

**(B) Examination.** Screened Interpreters who have met the prerequisites set forth in (A) above and who are seeking certification in a language for which there is an approved examination will be given a written and oral certification examination. Examinations approved or accepted by OCIS October 30, 2009 24 will be scheduled and administered as necessary by OCIS. If a candidate has already passed an examination from the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts, the Federal Court Interpreter Certification examination, or a certification exam from the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and

Translators (NAJIT), the candidate may be excused from taking the OCIS exam provided official proof of successful completion of the exam is presented to OCIS.

**(C) No Approved Certification Examination.** Screened Interpreters who have met the requirements set forth in (A) above who are seeking certification in a language for which there is no approved examination may apply for certification by submitting to OCIS a certification packet that includes the following information and related documentation:

(1) proof of the Screened Interpreter's English written proficiency (unless waived by the Manager of Interpreter Services or the Program Manager for Training in extraordinary circumstances) as demonstrated by the following:

- (a) a four-year college degree from a country where the official language is English, or
- (b) a minimum of one year of successful graduate course work at a university in the United States or a country where the official language is English,
- (c) publication(s) in English where the candidate is the sole or main author, or
- (d) accreditation from the American Translators Association in translation into English,

(2) proof of the Screened Interpreter's English oral proficiency as demonstrated by the following:

- (a) a minimum of two years of teaching experience at the college level (undergraduate or graduate) using English as the language of instruction, or
- (b) a minimum of two years of other professional work experience in the United States or in a country where the official language is English,

(3) proof of written proficiency in the foreign language(s) as demonstrated by the following:

- (a) a minimum four-year college degree from the United States, or an equivalent higher education degree from another country where instruction is conducted in that language,
- (b) publication(s) in the foreign language in which the applicant is the sole or main author, or
- (c) accreditation from the American Translators Association in translation into the foreign language,

(4) proof of oral proficiency in the foreign language as demonstrated by the following:

- (a) a minimum of two years teaching at the October 30, 2009 25 college level (undergraduate or graduate) using the language as the language of instruction,
- (b) a minimum of two years of other professional experience in a country where the language is the official language, or
- (c) a degree from an internationally recognized university or academic institution, ideally in, but not limited to, translation and interpretation with concentration in the foreign language, and

(5) three letters of reference to attest to the Screened Interpreter's interpreting and professional experience within the past two years. In certain circumstances, at the Manager's discretion, any of the above requirements may be waived. Upon such waiver, the Manager shall document in writing the reasons for the waiver.

(D) Upon having met the requirements set forth in (A) above and having successfully passed an approved examination pursuant to (B) above, or having met the criteria set forth in (C) above, a Screened Interpreter will be certified by OCIS in a language.

(E) Continuing Education and Reassessment of Certified Status. To maintain certified status, court interpreters must submit to OCIS proof of successful completion of the minimum requirements for continuing education every twenty-four months. Such minimum requirements will be determined by OCIS and will be periodically reviewed to reflect training currently available through OCIS. (F) Lists of Qualified, Certified, and Screened Interpreters will be published by OCIS pursuant to section 9.02

# Michigan

## Testing and Certification

The State Court Administrative Office offers certification testing to persons interested in becoming a non-English-language court interpreter. [An overview of the written examination is available for candidates.](#) SCAO does not hire interpreters, but does test and certify individuals to interpret for Michigan's trial courts. Persons who pass the certification exam, will be issued a certification card and have his or her name added to the official list of certified interpreters. Currently, depending upon interest, tests can be offered in these languages:

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Arabic	Haitian Creole	Korean	Portuguese
Cantonese	Hmong	Laotian	Russian
Filipino (Tagalog)	Ilocano	Mandarin	Spanish
French	Khmer	Polish	Vietnamese

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## ABBREVIATED EXAMINATIONS OFFERED IN THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGES

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Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian

Turkish

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The test has two parts: Part I: General Language Proficiency, and Part II: Court-Related Terms & Usage, and Ethics & Professional Conduct

The test is designed and developed by a team of experts from several parts of the country who have extensive knowledge of court proceedings, the job requirements for court interpreters, and/or advanced training or high levels of fluency in English and other languages. These experts may include federally certified court interpreters, judges, lawyers, scholars, and/or legal professionals.

The test measures knowledge and fluency in both languages and the ability to successfully render meaning from source to target language in each of the three modes of interpreting that are required of a court interpreter:

- Sight Translation of Documents
- Consecutive Interpreting
- Simultaneous Interpreting

During the [sight translation portion](#), the examinee reads aloud a document in the second language for which the test is being taken (target language). When that reading is completed, the examinee is given the document in English and asked to read it in the target language.

During the [consecutive interpreting mode](#), the examinee interprets English language questions into the second language for which the test is being taken (target language) and target language answers into English. A test proctor administers the consecutive interpreting portion by playing the recorded courtroom simulation on a CD player. The examinee listens to sentences, the CD is paused, and the interpreter then interprets from memory.

During the [simultaneous interpreting mode](#), the examinee, wearing headphones, listens to a prerecorded English passage and, while listening, interprets aloud into the nonEnglish language.

The entire court interpreter certification test takes approximately one hour. Test tapes are scored by a team of two certified interpreters who have been trained by the National Center for State Courts for rating the certification tests. Candidates must score at least 70 percent on each part of the test in order to pass. Efforts are made to report scores to the candidates within 60 days.

For information about reciprocity of federal court interpreter certification or certification from another state, contact the Language Access Certification Program.

# Minnesota

## Minnesota Certification Requirements

Advanced and experienced interpreters who want to specialize in court work are encouraged to take the Certification Exam to become a Minnesota Certified Court Interpreter. Minnesota's district courts are required to appoint certified interpreters first.

Certification is available in the following languages only: Arabic (Egyptian and Levantine), Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Cantonese, Filipino (formerly Tagalog), French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The Somali exam has been suspended until further notice.

To be certified, an interpreter must complete all of the following prerequisites:

- Must already be on the Minnesota Court Interpreter Roster (see Roster Requirements and Training Tab);
- Receive a passing score on the court interpreter certification exam developed by the National Center for State Courts that is administered or approved by the State Court Administrator's Office;
- Be at least 18 years old; and
- Be of good character and fitness as evidenced by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) report.

Sign language interpreters: The State Court Administrator recognizes the Legal Specialist Certificate in sign language as the highest level of certification currently available from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. Certificate holders are considered more qualified to interpret in legal settings than sign language interpreters holding generalist certificates only. Sign language interpreters who obtain the certificate and complete all requirements for inclusion on the statewide roster can apply for certification in the Minnesota state court system.

To Satisfy Minnesota Certification Requirements:

### 1. Join the Minnesota Court Interpreter Program

The first step toward becoming a Certified Interpreter is completing the requirements to join our roster. Please see the Roster Requirements and Training page to learn how.

### 2. Certification Examination

Any interpreter who wishes to become a Certified Court Interpreter must pass each section of the [National Center for State Courts: Oral Certification Exam](#) with 70% accuracy. Candidates for the certification exam should already be fluent in their non-English language at levels equivalent to that of highly educated native speakers.

The oral exam is divided into three sections: Sight, Consecutive, and Simultaneous. All three sections are given at one scheduled exam appointment. The State of Minnesota offers exams each November in the following languages: Arabic (Modern Standard for sight and simultaneous portions & Egyptian Colloquial



or Levantine Colloquial for the consecutive portion), Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Oral Certification will be November 5-9, 2018.

Registration and Additional Information: Please check back for the 2019 schedule.

The examination fee is \$300 for Spanish and \$400 for all other languages. There are currently no scholarships available to subsidize this fee.

Prepare for the Certification Exam:

- Interpreters MUST read [Overview of the Oral Performance Examination](#) for information about the certification exam.
- The [Council of Language Access Coordinators](#) (CLAC) has a wealth of information, including practice kits and resources to prepare you for the certification exam.
- Interpreters are encouraged to purchase a Court Interpreter Practice Examination Kit - All-English to study prior to the Certification Exam. Information on purchasing the kit is available on the [NCSC website](#).
- Resources for Skill-Building and Certification (visit "Interpreter Resources" tab under "For Interpreters" tab)

Please note the following rules regarding spoken language certification exams:

- To be eligible for certification in Minnesota, you must pass all three sections of the exam (Simultaneous, Consecutive, and Sight Translation) with a score of at least 70 percent in each section.
- To be eligible for certification in Minnesota, you must initially take all three sections on the same day or within the same testing period. Candidates may retain passing score(s) achieved on each section for up to 12 months and retest only the sections they did not previously pass. Candidates must wait 10 months before retesting.
- Interpreters are limited as to the number of times they may take the same version of the test. The rationale behind this is that if an interpreter continued to take the same test version over and over, that interpreter may easily memorize the exam contents and the exam would no longer hold validity as a measure of interpreting skills. The number of versions varies depending on language.
- Some people assume that being certified in one state automatically qualifies them to be certified in other states. This is not necessarily true. To find out whether you qualify for certification in another state, please contact that state's Court Interpreter Program Manager. [See list of state court interpreter program contacts](#).

3. Must be 18 years old

4. Criminal Background Check

After a candidate has passed the National Center for State Courts Oral Exam, a criminal background check is required to screen for good character and fitness. A court interpreter should be one whose record of conduct justifies the trust of the courts, witnesses, jurors, attorneys, parties, and others with respect to the official duties they will have in court. To help determine good character and fitness a Criminal Background Check Authorization Form must be completed, signed before a notary public, and mailed along with a check or money order for \$15.00, to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). An interpreter will not qualify for certification if the BCA check includes any of the following:

- Conviction of a crime which resulted in a sentence or a suspended sentence;
- Misconduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation;
- Revocation or suspension of certification as an interpreter, or for any other position or license for which a character check was performed in this state or in other jurisdictions; and
- Acts that indicate abuse of or disrespect for the judicial process.

## Mississippi

Ethics and Skills Building Workshops

[September 12 – 13, 2019](#)

Written Examination Workshops

[March 1, 2019](#) | [October 4, 2019](#)

Written Examination

[March 29, 2019](#) | [November 1, 2019](#)

### VII. CERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION

(A) Examination Requirements: A court reporter may make application to the Board for Certification by examination to do verbatim reporting within the State of Mississippi. To be granted Certification by examination, the applicant must make application on the same official forms as required of other applicants, shall provide all documentation as required by the official application form, must pay the Board a fee of \$100, provide proof of residence in the State of Mississippi, meet all other requirements of the Board for certification, and provide proof that the applicant has successfully passed the examination administered by the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters as set forth in Rule XI. Examinations, either written knowledge or skills portions/legs, given in other states will not be valid and not qualify the applicant for certification by examination as set forth in this subsection.

(B) Certification shall be granted upon a finding by the Board that the applicant is twenty-one (21) years of age or older, is of good moral character, is a resident of the State of Mississippi, has provided all documentation as required by the official application form, and has provided proof that the applicant has successfully passed the examination administered by the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters as set forth in Rule XI.

(C) The Board shall issue to each successful applicant a licensure card containing the following information: Certification number, certification expiration date, and method of reporting. A court reporter shall be certified to use only that method of reporting in which he/she has been examined/certified. Said CCR number shall be placed on any transcript title page and certificate page, along with the signature of said court reporter. No licensed court reporter may authorize the use of the court reporter's CCR number on any transcript not produced through the court reporter's personal effort and/or supervision.

(D) Annual Fee. The designation "Certified Court Reporter (CCR)", once granted by the Board, shall remain in effect upon the payment to the Board of an annual fee of \$100.00, or such other amount as may be hereafter established by the Board, on or before January 2nd of each succeeding year unless such designation is suspended or revoked. Upon payment of the annual fee and compliance with continuing educational requirements under Rule IX(A) herein, a court reporter shall have renewal of their license on or before January 2nd of each succeeding year. (E) The Board may reinstate an expired license if, not later than the 120th day after the date of expiration, the applicant pays the renewal fee and a penalty fee of \$50.00. The reinstatement dates from the original date of expiration. The Board

may reinstate a license that has expired for more than 120 days if the Board finds, on a sworn affidavit of the applicant, that the applicant has retained the professional skills required for original certification and has paid all delinquent renewal fees and a penalty fee of \$50.00. If the Board finds otherwise, the court reporter must reapply for certification. (F) A Certified Court Reporter shall comply with the provisions set forth in Rule IX and the continuing education requirements as set forth in Rule X(B).

(G) Upon being granted certification, a court reporter is entitled to use the title "Certified Court Reporter" or the abbreviation "CCR" in conjunction with their names. VIII. CERTIFICATION BY RECIPROCIDITY

(A) Reciprocity Requirements: A court reporter from another state may make application to the Board for Certification by reciprocity to do verbatim reporting within the State of Mississippi. To be granted Certification by reciprocity, the applicant must make application on the same official forms as required of other applicants, shall provide all documentation as required by the official application form, must pay the Board a fee of \$100, provide proof of residence in the State of Mississippi, meet all other requirements of the Board for certification, and provide proof that the applicant has successfully passed any of the following: The Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) examination administered by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), the Certified Voice Reporter (CVR) examination as administered by the National Verbatim Reporters Association (NVRA), or any state, agency, or other entity that licenses, certifies, or registers court reporters, if the Board finds that the state, agency, or other entity has substantially the same or more stringent requirements as the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters. The applicant must ensure that his/her examination scores and a copy of his/her certificate and/or license are furnished to the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters by said state, agency, association, or other entity.

(B) Certification shall be granted upon a finding by the Board that the applicant is twenty-one (21) years of age or older, is of good moral character, is a resident of the State of Mississippi, has provided all documentation as required by the official application form, and has provided proof that the applicant has successfully passed any of the following: The Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) examination administered by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), the Certified Voice Reporter (CVR) examination as administered by the National Verbatim Reporters Association (NVRA), or any state, agency, or other entity that licenses, certifies, or registers court reporters, if the Board finds that the state, agency, or other entity has substantially the same or more stringent requirements as the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters (the applicant must ensure that his/her examination scores and a copy of his/her certificate and/or license are furnished to the Mississippi Board of Certified Court Reporters by said state, agency, association, or other entity).

(C) The Board shall issue to each successful applicant a licensure card containing the following information: Certification number, certification expiration date, and method of reporting. A court reporter shall be certified to use only that method of reporting in which he/she has been examined/certified. Said CCR number shall be placed on any transcript title page and certificate page, along with the signature of said court reporter. No licensed court reporter may authorize the use of the court reporter's CCR number on any transcript not produced through the court reporter's personal effort and/or supervision.

(D) Annual Fee. The designation "Certified Court Reporter (CCR)", once granted by the Board, shall remain in effect upon the payment to the Board of an annual fee of \$100.00, or such other amount as may be hereafter established by the Board, on or before January 2nd of each succeeding year unless such designation is suspended or revoked. Upon payment of the annual fee and compliance with continuing educational requirements under Rule IX(A) herein, a court reporter shall have renewal of their certificate on or before January 2nd of each succeeding year.

(E) The Board may reinstate an expired license if, not later than the 120th day after the date of expiration, the applicant pays the renewal fee and a penalty fee of \$50.00. The reinstatement dates

from the original date of expiration. The Board may reinstate a license that has expired for more than 120 days if the Board finds, on a sworn affidavit of the applicant, that the applicant has retained the professional skills required for original certification and has paid all delinquent renewal fees and a penalty fee of \$50.00. If the Board finds otherwise, the court reporter must reapply for certification.

(F) A Certified Court Reporter shall comply with the provisions set forth in Rule IX and the continuing education requirements as set forth in Rule X(B).

(G) Upon being granted certification, a court reporter is entitled to use the title "Certified Court Reporter" or the abbreviation "CCR" in conjunction with their names.

Missouri

The Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator (OSCA) Court Interpreter Certification Program consists of three phases that must be completed in the order explained below.

**Orientation:** The first phase must be completed before any other part of the program. The 16 hour workshop is open to any person at least 18 years of age with a native-like mastery of English and a second language. This is an introductory workshop that covers the interpreter's role and professional ethics, the modes of interpreting used in court, legal terminology and court protocol. Registering for this course requires candidates to get fingerprinted by a Missouri Fingerprint Services vendor and complete an application form. Candidates also sign an affidavit indicating that they will adhere to the Code of Professional Responsibility for Court Interpreters.

**Written Exam:** After completing orientation, candidates may register to take the written exam. The 3.25 hour exam covers English proficiency, legal terms, court protocol, ethical situations, and includes translation from English to a second language. The multiple choice portion must be passed with 80% or greater before a candidate may schedule the oral exam. The written translation must receive a "Pass" or "Borderline Pass" grade in order for the candidate to qualify to take the oral exam.

**Oral Exam:** Candidates who have passed the written test may take the 1 hour oral exam testing their proficiency in sight translation, consecutive, and simultaneous interpreting. Each part of this exam must be passed with 70% or greater for a candidate to receive certification.

**Oral Proficiency Interview:** In the event a candidate speaks a language that National Center for State Courts does not have a full oral exam, candidates that pass the multiple-choice written exam may schedule an oral proficiency interview (OPI). The oral proficiency interview is a standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability. This means that an OPI is a testing method which measures how well a person speaks a language by comparing their performance of specific language tasks, not with some other person's, but with the criteria for each of ten proficiency levels described in the ACTFL Revised Proficiency Guidelines-Speaking, revised by ACTFL in 1999. Missouri Foreign Language Court Interpreter Handbook 7 The ACTFL OPI takes the form of a carefully structured conversation between a trained and certified interviewer and the person whose speaking proficiency is being assessed. A ratable speech sample is elicited from the interviewee by an individually determined series of questions or comments, which follow the established ACTFL protocol of "probes" and "levelchecks." Upon passing an oral proficiency interview (OPI) at the highest possible rating by a company selected by OSCA, you will be given a "registered" status.

## Nebraska

In order to receive certification as a Nebraska Court Interpreter, an individual must complete the following steps:

1. Attend a 2-day interpreter orientation. This provides an introduction to the courts, ethics, vocabulary, talents and skills needed to pass the certification oral examination and assume the responsibilities of a court interpreter. Cost for Orientation is \$150, including required online information for individual review and a two-day in-person workshop. Scholarships based upon financial need may be considered for qualified Nebraska applicants who are required to travel more than 100 miles (one way) to attend Orientation.
2. Pass a written English comprehension exam.
3. Pass an oral examination of the interpreter's sight, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills. Cost for the Oral Exam is: \$225.00 (Nebraska residents) and \$350.00 (Out-of-state residents)

## Nevada

Current basic requirements for a Foreign Language Certification/Registration include:

1. Complete the Orientation Workshop for Interpreters in the NV Courts. The Nevada Orientation Workshop is the first step necessary toward certification/registration. The workshop covers fundamentals of court interpretation (modes, ethics, and role of the interpreter) as well as an introduction to Nevada's court system. The written exam provided by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts is administered at the conclusion of the workshop.
2. Pass the NV Certified Court Interpreter Written Test consisting of 4 sections (General English Language Vocabulary, Court Related Terms and Usage, Ethics and Professional Conduct) with a minimum score of 80%.
3. Pass the NV Certified Court Interpreter Oral Examination consisting of 4 sections (Consecutive skills interpreting test, Simultaneous skills interpreting test and a two-part Sight translation skills test) with a minimum score of 70%;
4. Provide verification of Nevada courtroom observation or work (40 hours in total for a period of last 12 months); to download a form, [click here](#)
5. Submit a NV Certified Court Interpreter Certification Request; to download a form, [click here](#)
6. Submit two (2) fingerprint cards; to download a form, [click here](#)
7. Filing and processing fee of \$50.00;
8. A passport size photograph.

According to the State Court Administrator Guidelines, item 4.3.1.5 'candidates must pass the oral exam within two years of passing the written exam, or they will be required to retake the written exam.'

## New Jersey

- 1. Pass the Written Exam
- 2. Complete the Orientation Seminar
- 3. Pass the Oral Exam

## New Mexico

- Step I: Mandatory online interpreter course
- Step II: A score of **80% or above** is required to register for the Simultaneous Exam.
- Step III: Simultaneous Examination: A score of **70% or above** is required to register for the Consecutive and Sight Translation Exams. Consecutive and Sight Translation Examinations: A score of **70% or above** on each of these exams is required for certification.  
[Justice System Interpreter Qualification](#)
- Individuals testing via the Oral Proficiency Interviews must receive at minimum Advanced High in English and Advanced High in their other language in order to be qualified as Justice System Interpreters by the New Mexico Court Interpreter Program.  
[Court Certification Qualification](#)
- Individuals testing via the Oral Proficiency Interviews must receive Superior Scores on both English and their other language in order to have “passed” the examinations at the level required for certification by the New Mexico Court Interpreter Program.

## New York

### TESTING PROCESS

Starting October 2018, the New York State Unified Court System will offer monthly computer-based Per Diem Court Interpreter examinations statewide. The computer-based examination replaces the paper-and-pencil testing process.

All applicants must successfully pass the multiple-choice and oral examinations to become eligible to provide court interpreting services for the New York State Unified Court System. [Detailed info about the exam process, exam content and practice examinations](#)

### Written Test (Spanish/English)

Spanish only

This written test is a multiple-choice format examination designed to assess English and Spanish language proficiency involving grammar, vocabulary, word usage and reading comprehension. Due to the high frequency of use of this language, this examination also has a component where the candidate is required to accurately identify a written translation in Spanish of a selection presented in English and vice versa. Candidates are allowed 90 minutes to complete this examination and must obtain a passing score on the examination.

### Written Test (English Proficiency Only)

*for all languages except Spanish*

This written test is multiple-choice format examination designed to assess English Language Proficiency and Legal Terminology. The examination consists of 75 items, and you will have an hour and a half (90 minutes) to complete the written examination. The examination is designed to assess the following areas: Reading and Understanding Written Material - Sentence Completion and Paragraph Comprehension; Grammar and Language Usage; Vocabulary - Synonyms and Antonyms; Idiomatic Expressions and Legal Terminology.

### Oral Performance Language Assessment

The Oral Performance Language Assessment is based on material which Court Interpreters typically encounter in courtroom situations. The examination is approximately one hour in duration. The exam consists of the following six (6) sections:

1. English Sight Translation
2. Foreign Language Sight Translation
3. Consecutive Question and Answer (English and the Foreign Language)
4. One-Voice Simultaneous (English)
5. One-Voice Simultaneous (Foreign Language)
6. Two-Voice Simultaneous (English)

#### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

To apply for the Per Diem Court Interpreter examination, you must complete the following [online application](#). After submitting the application, you will immediately receive a confirmation email with information about the scheduling process for the multiple-choice Per Diem Court Interpreter examination.

#### **RECIPROCITY AND EXAM WAIVER**

Interpreters possessing out-of-state court interpreter certification(s) may apply for NYS-UCS reciprocity. Please refer to [Reciprocity Provisions](#) for more information. Applicants seeking reciprocity or an exam waiver must complete the [online application](#) and the [Exam Waiver/Reciprocity Form](#).

#### **Qualifications for Interpreters of Languages in Which the UCS does not Currently have an Oral Performance Assessment**

Following a successful performance on the required written test of English Language Proficiency and Legal Terminology, you must submit at least three (3) professional references, for each language in which you wish to be qualified to provide interpreting services.

References should:

- Specifically attest to your interpreting skills and/or language proficiency in the particular language.
- Include addresses and corresponding phone numbers where these individuals may be reached during normal business hours.

References from UCS personnel are not accepted. Subject to the verification of submitted references (and fingerprinting, as required of all court interpreters), you may be qualified to provide interpretation services.

Note: If an oral examination is incorporated into the Language Assessment Testing Program at a later date, you will be asked to participate and pass such a test in order to remain eligible to provide court interpreting services.

You may also refer to the [Reciprocity Provisions](#) for the Per Diem Assignment Registry for other certifications accepted by the Unified Court System.

## North Carolina

- Pass the written English multiple choice screening test (**80% or better**) given at the close of the orientation session; and
- For Spanish, Arabic, Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Vietnamese language candidates, pass the written foreign language proficiency assessment test (Pass / Not Pass rating) given at the close of the orientation training session; or

- For all other languages for which a certification examination is available, pass the ACTFL OPI in the candidate's language of expertise with a Superior rating. NOTE: Test date must be scheduled with OLAS prior to purchasing test;
- Receive passing scores (70% or higher) on all three sections of the NCCICE exam
- Provide four letters of recommendation from a judge, clerk, district attorney, public defender or magistrate, **or a person of equivalent rank in another area in which the candidate has performed interpreting services, or if the person has never interpreted, a supervisor for whom they have worked;**
- Demonstrate good character and fitness (letters of recommendation may address this);
- Pass criminal background check (must not have been convicted of any crime which would affect one's credibility in court);
- Agree in writing to abide by all official guidelines established by the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts for legal interpreting, including the *Code of Ethical Conduct for Court Interpreters*;
- Sign and notarize the Oath of Interpretation;
- Agree in writing to provide updated contact information for the *Registry and Directory*;
- Complete 12 hours of continuing education every twenty-four months from the effective date of the interpreter's personal services contract;
- Adhere to any evaluation process, criminal record check, renewal fee, post-certification training sessions, and continuing education classes required by the NCAOC.

## Ohio

### 1. COMPLETE AN APPLICATION TO TAKE THE WRITTEN EXAM

### 2. ATTEND A 2-DAY ORIENTATION TRAINING

- a. Orientation is typically scheduled a month after the written application deadline
- b. The two-day training will include a Friday-Saturday combination
- c. You are required to be at both days of the training
- d. The training is an overview of court interpreting, the code of ethics and terminology
- e. You will have about a month to prepare of your own before taking the exam
- f. The training may be waived if you can show comparable training or preparation

### 3. TAKE THE WRITTEN EXAM

- a. The written exam is an English proficiency exam; therefore, it is all in English
- b. The exam contains 135 multiple-choice questions
- c. Test has two parts: General Language Proficiency and Legal Terms & Ethics
- d. The exam lasts 2:15 hours. The average candidate completes it in less than 1.5 hrs
- e. It is key that you know synonyms, antonyms and idioms and well as English grammar
- f. The passing score is 80%, or 108 correct answers out of 135

### 4. ATTEND A 2-DAY MODES OF INTERPRETATION TRAINING

- a. Congratulations! You passed
- b. After passing the written exam, you may take a mock oral exam to guide your preparation
- c. The Modes training will also be scheduled on a Friday-Saturday combination
- d. You are required to attend both days
- e. The training focuses on Sight-Translation, Consecutive and Simultaneous interpretation
- f. You will have about 3 months to prepare before taking the oral exam



## 5. SUBMIT BACKGROUND CHECK

- a. To make sure all requirements are met, you must submit a background check
- b. A background check may be obtained from the local or state law enforcement office
- c. The background check must be submitted to the Language Services Program
- d. A conviction involving moral turpitude may prevent you from obtaining certification
- e. Make sure all your documentation is in before you take the oral exam

## 6. TAKE THE ORAL EXAM

- a. The exam measures your proficiency in English and your other language of expertise
- b. The test uses the three modes of interpretation to measure your language proficiency
- c. The first part is Sight-Translation, followed by Consecutive and ending with Simultaneous
- d. The test lasts about one hour
- e. It is key that you practice the modes of interpretation on a daily basis
- f. You must score 70% on each part of the oral exam to pass

## 7. SIGN ON OATH TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF ETHICS

- a. Congratulations you are now certified!
- b. Our office will send you an Oath and make sure all your paperwork is in
- c. You will receive an official certificate and ID from the Supreme Court of Ohio

## 8. AGREE TO BE LISTED ON THE SUPREME COURT ROSTER OF COURT INTERPRETERS

- a. Your name will appear among the few that have accomplished this goal
- b. Most court interpreters freelance and work for themselves or agencies
- c. Once you are listed, you will receive calls from courts, law firms and other legal entities

# Oklahoma

## Registered Courtroom Interpreters

To become a Registered Courtroom Interpreter, the candidate must:

- Complete the Oklahoma two-day orientation training program,
- Pass the Court Interpreter Written Examination as provided by the National Center for State Courts, and
- Pass a basic proficiency translation test in the foreign language.

All applicants must read and agree to be bound by the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Oklahoma Courts, pass a background check, and must meet all other requirements as set forth in the Rules. Applications are being accepted from Oklahoma residents ONLY at this time. For further information, please see the Rules, instructions and forms linked below.

## Oklahoma Orientation Training Program

The required two-day training course as mentioned above is regularly offered by the Administrative Office of the Courts. To access additional information regarding the program, a schedule of upcoming classes, and an application form, please see the links below.

## Certified Courtroom Interpreters

Once an interpreter has met all of the requirements to become a Registered Courtroom Interpreter in Oklahoma, s/he is then eligible to take an oral examination (provided by the National Center for State Courts) to become a Certified Courtroom Interpreter. While registration indicates a basic level of proficiency, certification as a court interpreter indicates the highest skill level and tests the interpreter in all three modes of court interpreting. Certification is a generally recognized standard in most state court

systems. The oral certification examination will be administered in Oklahoma in the near future. Information about upcoming oral examinations will be posted here when it becomes available.

- 1) To pass the Court Interpreter Oral Examination, the candidate shall receive an overall score of seventy percent (70%) or better in each of the three sections of the examination. The scores of Part I and Part II of the Sight Translation section are combined for one overall score for that section.
- 2) The oral examination shall be administered and rated in accordance with the test administration and rating protocols of the NCSC.
- 3) The Board shall charge the applicant a fee in an amount approved by the Supreme Court for the oral examination.
- 4) A candidate must pass all three sections in the same test sitting. A candidate who fails to achieve a passing score on one or more of the three sections must re-take the entire oral exam.
- 5) If more than one version of the NCSC oral examination for the same language is available, an applicant who fails to pass the oral examination must wait six (6) months to re-test, and must take a different version of the examination. An applicant may not take the same version of the oral examination more than once in a twelve (12) month period.
- 6) An applicant who has passed the NCSC oral examination in another state within the past twenty-four (24) months may apply to the Board for recognition of the score. The applicant shall prove to the satisfaction of the Board that the passing score is substantially comparable to that required by this Rule. c) For languages in which the NCSC oral exam is unavailable, the Board may utilize an abbreviated NCSC oral examination, if one is available. If no abbreviated NCSC oral examination is available, the Board may, at its discretion, recognize other oral proficiency examinations or interviews on a per-language basis.

#### Certification by Reciprocity

Foreign language interpreters possessing certification by another state court or federal court interpreter program may apply for Oklahoma certification without fulfilling the training and examination requirements. To qualify, a reciprocity candidate must prove that he or she holds a current certification by at least one of the following credentialing authorities:

- The Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination Program (FCICE), or
- Another state court which administers certification examinations developed by the NCSC, or
- The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) Spanish interpreter certification.

All reciprocity applicants must read and agree to be bound by the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Oklahoma Courts, pass a background check, and must meet all other requirements as set forth in the Rules. Applications are being accepted from Oklahoma residents ONLY at this time. For further information, please see the Rules, instructions and forms linked below.

## Oregon

The Oregon Certified Court Interpreter Credential will be awarded to a spoken-language interpreter who fulfills the following credential steps:

- Passes a criminal history check
- Achieves a [passing score](#) on the Written Examination

- Attends the Orientation and the Ethics Orientation Conducted by CLAS
- Achieves a [passing score](#) on the Court Interpreting Oral Examination
- Achieves a [passing score](#) on the Ethics Examination
- Completes and submits documentation of 20 hours of court interpreting services or court observation during the 12 months prior to application in courts of record in Oregon or Consortium member states, federal courts of record, or where the interpreter is sworn in and the record can be presented into evidence
- Completes the application process
- Takes the Interpreter's Oath administered by an Oregon state court judge.

## Pennsylvania

Interpreters who wish to become certified by the Pennsylvania Interpreter Certification Program must complete the following requirements:

- Program registration
- Orientation workshop
- Written examination
- Oral proficiency examination
- Pass a background check
- Agree to uphold the interpreter rules of conduct and professional responsibility and follow program policies and regulations
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Pay any fees required by the court administrator

Full exam languages

- Arabic (Egyptian and Levantine)
- Cantonese
- French
- Haitian-Creole
- Hmong
- Ilocano
- Khmer
- Korean
- Laotian
- Mandarin
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

Abbreviated Language Exam

- Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian
- Marshallese
- Turkish

**Languages with full oral proficiency exam**

The oral proficiency exam has three parts: simultaneous, consecutive and sight. Candidates must pass the simultaneous part first. Once a candidate passes the simultaneous part, the consecutive and sight parts must be taken within one year from the date the candidate passed the simultaneous. Candidates must achieve a score of 70 percent or higher on all three parts of the exam to be certified. Candidates who score 60 percent or higher on the simultaneous part will be allowed to take the sight and consecutive parts. If they score 60 percent or higher on the sight and consecutive parts, they are placed on the roster as otherwise qualified interpreters based on the combined score in all three parts of the test and will be allowed to work in limited types of cases while waiting to retest in order to achieve certification.

Candidates in languages other than Spanish (LOTS) who score 50 percent or higher in the simultaneous part of the oral exam will be allowed to take the sight and consecutive parts. If they score 60 percent or higher on the combined score of all three parts of the test, they will be placed on the roster as an otherwise qualified interpreter and allowed to work in limited types of cases while waiting to retest in order to achieve full certification.

Candidates may carry the score of any passed part of the oral exam for a maximum of two years. The same version of the test can be taken a maximum of two times and the test cannot be retaken more than once in a six months period.

**Languages with abbreviated oral proficiency exam**

Candidates must take the simultaneous portion of the exam first. If one does not exist, candidates must take the portions that are available, either consecutive, sight or both. The scores of any passed part of the exam can be carried for a maximum of two years. The same version of the test can be taken a maximum of two times and cannot be retaken more than once in a six months period.

**Languages with no oral proficiency test**

If a full or abbreviated oral proficiency exam does not exist in a given language, candidates are required to take an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)—if one is available in their language—and the Versant spoken English language test no later than six months after passing the written exam.

The OPI was developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) for evaluating the language skills of speakers of foreign languages and is administered by Language Testing International (LTI). There are over 50 languages available. During a telephone interview, the candidate's foreign language skills and fluency are evaluated by the rater. Candidates must perform at the superior level in order to pass the test.

Candidates must also pass the Versant spoken English language test. This test evaluates the spoken English skills of non-native speakers. Administered by Pearson, this automated test is delivered over the phone and the candidate's responses are recorded. It is approximately 15 minutes long and tests six areas: reading, sentence construction, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, and overall comprehension. The passing score the candidate must achieve is 47.

Sign language interpreters

After passing the multiple choice part of the written exam, sign language interpreters must comply with the following requirements in place of an oral examination:

Be certified by the Register of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or the National Association for the Deaf (NAD)

Provide proof of RID or NAD certifications, including a copy of certificates and a valid active membership card or a letter from RID or NAD certifying the results of the proficiency exam and status

Hold a relevant RID or NAD certificate for legal interpretation as determined by the Court Administrator (See Schedule C of the Interpreter Program Regulations for the list of certificates)

Be registered and in good standing with the Pennsylvania Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) Rhode Island

PROCESS: There are three (3) steps to become a certified court interpreter in Rhode Island: the candidate must pass the written examination, must pass the oral examination, and complete a one (1) day training session.

#### 1. Written Examination

The written exam consists of 135 multiple-choice questions designed to evaluate a candidate's general vocabulary in English, knowledge of court-related terms and usage, and ethics and professional conduct. Candidates are allowed two (2) hours and fifteen (15) minutes to complete the multiple choice section and they must score a minimum of 80%. Candidates who fail the written examination shall be required to wait a period of twelve (12) months to be tested again. A passing score in the written examination is valid only for two (2) years. Candidates register for the written exam by submitting the Foreign Language Certification Registration for Written Examination form included in this announcement. The cost of the written exam is \$150.00 payable at the time of registration by money order to the Rhode Island Supreme Court. Candidates will receive the written exam scores approximately three (3) weeks after taking the test.

#### 2. Oral examination

Only candidates who pass the written examination are eligible to register for the oral portion of the exam. Candidates register for the oral exam by submitting the Foreign Language Certification Registration for Oral Examination form included in this announcement once they pass the written portion of the certification process. The cost of the Spanish oral exam is \$300.00. For languages other than Spanish, please contact the OCI as fees will vary depending on the language. All fees must be paid at the time of registration by money order issued to the Rhode Island Supreme Court. The oral exam consists of three (3) sections: 1. Sight translation, with two subsections: a) English into foreign language; and b) Foreign language into English 2. Consecutive interpretation 3. Simultaneous interpretation The oral examination is a recorded process and will be conducted at a place to be determined. Audio recordings of each oral exam will be graded by raters from the NCSC and scored within four (4) to six (6) weeks. The passing score is 70% on each of the three (3) sections of the oral test. If no oral examination is available for the language requested due to unavailability, a candidate's oral proficiency may be assessed by the OCI in order to meet minimum requirements. Candidates who fail the oral examination shall be required to wait a period of twelve (12) months to be tested again. If you have taken the NCSC written exam in another state, the issuing state needs to submit the official scores of your written examination before you can register for the oral examination in Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Judiciary proctors only full written and oral examinations.

#### 3. Training Sessions

In order to be included on the Judiciary's roster as a certified interpreter and provide language services to the state court system at the highest compensation rate(s), each candidate who passes both the written and oral portions of the examination must attend a one (1) day training session conducted in Rhode Island. At the session, the candidates will learn about protocol and procedures in court. Those candidates who pass the written examination but who do not pass the oral examination may still meet the requirements for becoming a qualified interpreter for the Judiciary but may have limited assignments and will not be entitled to the same level pay as a certified interpreter. The one (1) day training session costs \$100.00 and is payable by money order issued to the Rhode Island Supreme Court at the time of the training registration.

#### South Carolina

A certified interpreter is an interpreter who has scored a minimum of 70 percent on an oral exam as well as a minimum of 80 percent on a written exam and who has also completed a two-day orientation seminar.

# Tennessee

## 1. Ethics and Skill-Building Workshop

This two-day, or 14-hour workshop, is offered several times a year. The AOC has approved curriculum for workshop providers and you can locate provider information as well as workshop dates on the AOC's website at [www.tncourts.gov](http://www.tncourts.gov). Once on the webpage, click on "Programs" and then on "Court Interpreters" and then "Workshop Providers." Workshop fees and location vary depending upon the workshop provider.

## 2. Written Examination

This is a multiple-choice examination which includes 135 questions in English. The examination tests an interpreter's knowledge regarding the following: (a) the English language; (b) court-related terms and usage; and (c) ethics and professional conduct. Interpreters will receive more information about this examination during the workshop. To pass the examination the interpreter must earn a minimum overall score of 80%. An interpreter who does not pass the examination must wait six months before retaking it. Interpreters who attend the workshop will automatically be notified when registration materials for the written examination become available on the AOC's website.

## 3. Oral Proficiency Interview (Effective July 1, 2008)

An interpreter who passes the written examination becomes eligible to submit to the oral proficiency interview ("OPI"), which is conducted by Language Testing International ("LTI") or ALTA Languages Services, Inc. ("ALTA") These interviews are 15-30 minute telephonic interviews between a tester and the interpreter, and this interview measures how well the interpreter speaks the language in which he is attempting to become credentialed. Each candidate must take the OPI in English as well as their target language. The OPI is offered each month in Jackson, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis and Nashville. Registration information can be found on the AOC website for these interviews. The AOC will provide the interpreter with additional information regarding the nature of this interview after the interpreter passes the written examination. The interpreter must receive a "Superior" rating according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for the LTI interview or must receive a score of 12 on ALTA's testing scale.

## 4. Criminal Background Check

Upon passing the OPI, the AOC will provide the interpreter with the necessary information regarding a criminal background check. The fingerprints will be submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for analysis and the non-refundable fee is \$48.00. Convictions for any felony or for a misdemeanor involving dishonesty or false statement will disqualify an interpreter if such conviction is ten years old or less as provided in Tennessee Rule of Evidence 609. The AOC will notify the interpreter after receiving the background check results from the TBI. The AOC usually receives the results within two weeks after the interpreter is printed, but re-printing is sometimes required and that could delay the results for months. 5 Rev June 2018

## 5. Citizenship Form

This form requires the interpreter to provide verification of United States citizenship or the legal right to work and remain in the United States. The interpreter is required to notify the AOC within three business days if their status changes at any point after they complete this form. Failure to do so may result in revocation of the interpreter's credentials.

## 6. Oath

The AOC will provide the interpreter with a form which contains the interpreter oath: The interpreter must sign this form and submit it to the AOC. Pursuant to Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 42, individual courts may also require an interpreter to take an oath prior to or during a court proceeding.

#### 7. Oral Performance Examination Content And General Information For All Languages

The oral performance examination tests an interpreter in sight translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation. The oral performance examination is currently offered in Spanish and languages other than Spanish as noted on the Council for Language

An interpreter must earn a minimum score of 70% on each of the three sections to pass the examination and to be designated as a certified interpreter. The non-refundable Tennessee resident registration fee is \$150.00 for the oral exam. The non-refundable registration fee is \$300.00 for out-of-state residents. The AOC will notify all eligible registered interpreters when registration materials for the oral examination become available on the AOC's website.

##### Sight Translation

The interpreter will be given a written document to translate orally from English into the target language. The interpreter will then be given a second document to translate orally from the target language into English. Each document is approximately 225 words in length. The interpreter will have a total of six minutes to complete each task. The interpreter is permitted to use a maximum of two of the six minutes to silently review the document. The average score for this section must be at least 70% and a candidate may not score lower than 65% on either of the two sight translation portions.

##### Consecutive Interpretation

This portion of the examination consists of an audio tape recording from a transcript representing witness testimony. The interpreter must interpret the testimony, acting exactly as if he was in court. This will involve interpreting from English into the target language (attorney's questions) and from the target language into English (witness' responses). The interpreter will have approximately 22 minutes to complete this task. To prepare for this section of the examination, the National Center for State Courts recommends that an 6 Rev June 2018 interpreter practice interpreting in the consecutive mode until he is able to interpret 45 to 50 separate utterances of varying lengths (up to 950 words total) within 20-22 minutes.

##### Simultaneous Interpretation

This portion of the examination consists of an audio tape recording of a passage based on an attorney's opening or closing statement to a judge or jury, a discussion between a judge and an attorney, or a similar proceeding. The interpreter will simultaneously interpret this material from English into the target language. It is approximately 900 words in length and is recorded at an approximate speed of 120 words per minute. Including the instructions and preparation time, this portion of the examination takes approximately 10 minutes. The recording itself lasts approximately seven minutes. The entire examination takes 40-45 minutes. The interpreter's response to each part of the examination is recorded on audiotape by the proctor. The examination is then rated by interpreters who have been trained to rate oral exams under the auspices of the Language and Access to Justice Initiatives program of the National Center for State Courts. Interpreters are not required to take an examination preparation course prior to the oral examination, but the AOC strongly encourages them to do so. The AOC posts available courses on the interpreter continuing education page of its website.

#### ORAL EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

An interpreter must sit for the oral performance examination a minimum of once every twelve months from the date designating as a registered interpreter until passing the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section. If an interpreter fails to comply with this requirement, the AOC will revoke the interpreter's credentials. The one-year requirement applies to every language in which an interpreter is credentialed. The AOC will review the examination results on a case-by-case basis, and it reserves the right to revoke the credentials of an interpreter whose skills do not appear to be adequate for a courtroom setting.

- The interpreter must sit for all three sections of the oral examination after becoming a registered interpreter.
- If the interpreter does not pass the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section, the interpreter must retake those sections which he/she did not pass. If the interpreter passes the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section at any point he will be designated as a certified interpreter and he will not be required to take the oral examination again.
- An interpreter will only be permitted to take each version of the oral examination twice unless exigent circumstances exist and the AOC program approves the taking of the exam version again.
- If the AOC revokes an interpreter's credentials at any point during the credentialing process, the interpreter must obtain written permission from the AOC before beginning the credentialing process anew.

## Texas

Texas does not have reciprocity with other states; however, those seeking information on certification by endorsement must submit inquiries to [courtinterpreters@txcourts.gov](mailto:courtinterpreters@txcourts.gov) for information on this process.

To become a Licensed Court Interpreter, you must do the following:

**1. Complete the Exam Orientation Course.**

Applicants must successfully complete a 6 hour Commission Approved Orientation course before

they are eligible to take the written and oral examinations. The certificate of completion must be submitted with the Application for Licensure. The 6 hour orientation course provides the basic knowledge, skills and abilities on all three major types of court interpreting; Sight, Consecutive and Simultaneous, to become a licensed court interpreter. The goal is for the candidate to achieve a high level of mastery of two languages, and specific performance skills in the modes of interpreting. Candidates should perform each type of interpreting skillfully enough to include everything that is said, preserve the tone and level of language of the speaker, neither changing nor adding anything to what is said.

The course is designed to help candidates deliver services in a manner faithful to all professional responsibilities and ethics, and court policies regarding court interpreting promulgated by the judiciary. The course should provide information and discussion about what the profession requires to help students decide whether and how to proceed with the pursuit of a license as a court interpreter.

**2. Submit the Application for Licensure and Exam Registration Form.**



You must apply for licensure and register for the exam via our online licensing and certification system. To apply online, please go to the online certification and licensing system on our [home page](#).

**3. Submit the application fee.**

Please see the [Fees](#) section of this page for information on amounts due, acceptable forms of payment, etc. **Application Fee:** \$200.00

**4. Pass a criminal history background check by DPS and the FBI.**

Staff will email the required form needed to schedule their fingerprinting appointment to applicants who have not yet been fingerprinted for the JBCC, after we've received their applications.

**5. Pass all parts of a Commission-approved examination.**

## Utah

### Certified:

- English written test
  - provided by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The exam tests English skills in sentence completion and understanding of English synonyms, antonyms, and idioms. The fee is \$25.00 and is nonrefundable.
- a test on the Interpreter Code of Professional Responsibility
- a 2-Day Orientation, a background check
- 10 hours of observation or a certified court interpreter
- a five-day training course and
- Pass a three-part oral examination on the modes of interpretation.(Oral Proficiency Examination or OPE)
  - The exam consists of three parts—sight translation, simultaneous interpretation and consecutive interpretation—and the candidate must pass all three parts (minimum score 70%) within two years after passing one part. The entire three-part exam requires one hour, and candidates are scheduled for the exam by registration date.
- Interpreter's Fees: \$39.80 for certification.
- Continuing Requirements for Certified Court Interpreters
  - Certified Court Interpreters must complete at least 16 hours of continuing education every two years. For more information, see our webpage on

### Vermont

Minimum Requirements to Serve as a Court Interpreter All interpreters must:

- Be 18 years of age
- Sign a written affidavit to uphold the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters or take an oath administered by the court prior to a proceeding;
- Certify that they have not been convicted of a felony or crime of dishonesty.

### Virginia

#### Three Components of Voluntary Certification

1. Complete an Orientation and Webinar Series

As the first step in the certification process, candidates must register for and complete three webinar classes and a 2-day orientation that will familiarize students with the Virginia Judicial System, courtroom protocol, the role of the interpreter, specific skills needed for the different modes of interpreting, and "do's and don'ts" on the job. Each webinar will be a 1-hour long session, offered live and also prerecorded. Candidates will receive instructions to log-in to the webinars, and all candidates will be expected to participate in the webinars prior to the orientation class. Each candidate will also receive an electronic binder with information on how to access court-related glossaries and documents that will give an understanding of the court system and legal procedures. The training also includes an overview of self-study techniques, practice sessions, available resources, and suggestions on how to prepare for the oral certification exam.

1. Successfully complete a written test as established by the Judicial Council of Virginia
2. The second step involves passing a written test. The written test consists of 135 multiple-choice questions that are designed to measure basic, general English language proficiency, and court and ethics knowledge. Candidates must score a minimum of 80% on the written test in order to be eligible to register for the oral exam.
3. **Complete the foreign language interpreter certification oral exam**  
Candidates must pass the National Center for State Courts Oral Exam. This exam tests proficiency in the 3 modes of interpretation:
  1. Simultaneous interpretation from English to the foreign language;
  2. Consecutive interpretation, English to the foreign language and the foreign language to English;
  3. Sight translation of an English document into the foreign language; and vice versa
4. **Note:** Candidates must score a minimum of 70% on each section in order to pass the oral exam.
5. **Sign and return Agreement form**  
Candidates who successfully complete all three steps to become certified in the Commonwealth of Virginia and Interpreters who wish to be inducted by applying Consortium credentials earned elsewhere toward Virginia certification must review and agree to adhere to the [Code of Professional Responsibility for Foreign Language Interpreters Serving Virginia Courts](#). Candidates may view the [Map of Virginia's Judicial Circuits and Districts](#) to indicate the judicial circuit(s) where they would like to work.

## Washington

The main steps to become a court interpreter are:

- Pass the Court Interpreter written exam with a score of 80% or better.
  - This exam tests your proficiency with English language vocabulary, court related terms, and ethics. Interpreters of all languages take the same exam. It is a multiple choice test, and you must get a score of at least 80% to pass. You can find an overview of the written exam [here](#). The test is typically held in late winter or early spring of each year. The written exam was developed by the [National Center for State Courts](#) and are used in a number of states.
- Attend a one-day orientation program sponsored by the AOC

- The orientation is an introduction to the structure and terminology used in Washington State Courts. It also provides an overview of what court interpreting is and how you can prepare for the Oral Exam. It typically takes place during the spring.
- Pass the oral Court Interpreter Exam with a score of at least 70% in each section.
  - This exam has three sections: sight translation, consecutive interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting. An audio recording is made during the exam which is scored by language professionals recruited nationally. Test candidates must get a score of 70% or better in all three sections. You can find an overview of the oral exam [here](#). The oral exams usually take place in the fall of each year. The oral exams were developed by the [National Center for State Courts](#) and are used in a number of states
- Attend a mandatory Ethics and Protocol Class
  - This class is usually the final step in the process of becoming certified. It covers the ethics issues facing interpreters and how to manage challenging situations. It also reviews some of the basic protocols of working in a court room setting. Interpreters who have completed all of requirements for certification take their oath of interpreter during this class and receive their badge. The class typically takes place in the fall and spring of each year.

#### Compliance Requirements

Every two years, certified interpreters must complete the following to maintain their certification:

- Take 16 [continuing education](#) credits
- Complete 20 hours of courtroom interpreting
- Sign a declaration of personal conduct
- Execute an oath stating that the interpreter will uphold the Code of Conduct for Court Interpreters.
- 

Before becoming certified you must also:

- Pass a fingerprint background check (processing fee applies)
- Take the Oath of Interpreter
- Receive an interpreter ID badge

If you already have certification in another state, you may be able to get certification by reciprocity. Please see the Reciprocity section below.

## Wisconsin

The certification process for candidates who would like to interpret in Wisconsin courts includes a series of steps that must be completed in order. For detailed information on each requirement follow the links below.

Step 1: [Two-day orientation](#)

- To begin the certification process all interpreter candidates must first complete orientation training. This two-day training is a 14-hour introductory workshop covering the fundamentals of court interpretation. It is designed to give participants an overview of the needs and expectations of the court with lectures on ethical conduct, legal terminology, court procedure, and modes of interpreting, along with small group

practice exercises designed to develop interpreter skills (see sample agenda below). Our faculty consists of judges, professors, and certified court interpreter-trainers.

Step 2: [Written examination](#)

- Interpreter candidates must have completed the two-day orientation to be eligible to take the written examination.
- The multiple-choice questions measure a candidate's knowledge of three areas central to the work of a court interpreter:
  1. English language. To function as a professional court interpreter, one indispensable component is a high degree of proficiency in the English language. Accordingly, the written examination assumes a high degree of literacy in English and familiarity with a range of language constructions. It tests comprehension of written English vocabulary and idioms.
    - Sentence completion (choosing the appropriate word to finish a sentence): Items 1-9
    - Synonyms in context (choosing the word/phrase closest to a chosen word/phrase): Items 10-17
    - Synonyms (choosing the word/phrase closest in meaning to the chosen word/phrase): Items 18-38
    - Antonyms (choosing the word/phrase opposite in meaning to the chosen word/phrase): Items 39-50
    - Idioms (choosing the phrase that is closest in meaning to the underlined idiom in the idiom): Items 51-75
  2. Court-related terms and usage. A second area of knowledge essential to successful professional performance is familiarity with the terminology and procedures of the court system. Accordingly, the written examination also measures recognition of common court-related situations and vocabulary, especially in the area of criminal courts.
    - Sentence completion (choosing the most appropriate phrase to complete the sentence): Items 76-111
    - Court related questions (choosing the best answer to the question given): Items 112-121
    - Sequences (choosing the correct order in which certain court events occur): Items 122-125
  3. Ethics and professional conduct. The third area of knowledge required of professional court interpreters encompassed in the written test is general knowledge of standards guiding the performance of duties. Accordingly, the written exam includes questions aimed at measuring candidates' knowledge of ethical behavior and professional conduct.
    - Professional conduct questions (choosing the best answer to the question given): Items 126-127
    - Scenarios (choosing the best response for an interpreter in this situation): Items 128-135

Step 3: [Oral examination](#)

- To be eligible to take the oral exam, individuals must have completed orientation training and passed the written examination.
- Sight translation: For this part of the exam, the candidate is asked to read a document written in English, while interpreting it aloud into the target language, and to read a document written in the target language, while interpreting it aloud in English. Each document is approximately 225

words in length. The candidate is given 6 minutes per document to review the content and perform the sight translation while being recorded.

- Consecutive: During this segment of the exam, the candidate listens to a recording of an English-speaking attorney who is questioning a non-English speaking witness. The candidate must interpret aloud the English questions into the target language and the witness' answers into English while being recorded. The questions and answers are of various lengths ranging from one word to a maximum of 50 words. The candidate is given between 22-27 minutes (depending upon the language) to complete this portion of the test.
- Simultaneous: With this part of the exam, the candidate listens to a recording in English of an attorney's opening statement or closing argument to a jury or judge. This passage is recorded at a speed of 120 words per minute and is approximately 900 words in length. The speech continues for about 7 to 10 minutes without stopping. While listening through headphones, the candidate simultaneously interprets aloud all statements into the target language while being recorded. This segment takes about 12 minutes total including instructions and equipment preparation.
- Fee \$250

## Wyoming

### Steps for Wyoming Court Interpreter Registration

1) First, you must submit an application. The application is available on the Court Interpreters page of the Wyoming Judicial Branch web site:

<http://www.courts.state.wy.us/Administration/Interpreters>

2) You must attend the 2-day Wyoming Court Interpreter Orientation Seminar. The Court Interpreter Program will offer these seminars at various locations throughout the state and throughout the year.

3) You must take and pass a written test, in English, covering basic interpreter ethics, professionalism, interpreting skills, court procedure, and legal terminology. The test will be given at the end of each seminar. You will not be allowed to take the test unless you have attended the seminar at least once. You may, however, take this test more than once.

4) Once you have passed the written test, you must schedule an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in your interpreting language. The interview is conducted over the phone and lasts approximately 30 minutes. The cost of this interview is \$145. You may take the interview more than once; however, there is a 90-day waiting period and the fee is charged for each test. More information on the OPI will be handed out during the orientation seminar.

5) When the court has received your passing score, you will be added to the roster of registered interpreters to be posted on the Court Interpreters page of the Wyoming Judicial Branch web site:

<http://www.courts.state.wy.us/Administration/Interpreters>. You will now be eligible for the higher rate of pay for "registered" interpreters. \*

This guide to the 37 US states with court interpreter credential programs was compiled directly from the state judicial websites, and may contain errors. It may be shared and used freely. Special thanks to the National Center for State Court's [online resources](#), and to Mary Langlinais, Claire Abs, Carla Collins and Marco Hanson for assembling this document.