



COURT INTERPRETERS ADVISORY PANEL

MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING

September 24, 2024
12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Virtual

Advisory Body Members Present: Hon. Brian L. McCabe (Chair), Hon. Maurice Sanchez. (Vice-Chair), Ms. Angie Birchfield, Ms. Stephanie Cameron, Mr. Mark Crossley, Mr. Hany Farag, Mr. Bryan Kritzeck, Ms. Jennifer De La Cruz, Ms. Shirley Luo, Ms. Mary Ma, Ms. M. Luisa McEwen, Mr. José Navarrete, Hon. Michael P. Pulos, Ms. Anabel Romero

Advisory Body Members Absent: Hon. Jaqueline Jackson (Liaison), Hector Gonzalez

Others Present: Mr. Don Will, Mr. Ray Mata, Russell McGregor, Mr. Douglas Denton

OPEN MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call

The chair called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. and Mr. Ray Mata took roll call.

Approval of Minutes

The advisory body reviewed and approved as submitted the minutes of the August 20, 2024, Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) meeting.

Public Comment

The public did provide written comments by the deadline, and they were shared with the members.

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS (NO ACTION REQUIRED)

Item 1

Potential Certification of Persons with American Sign Language (ASL) Generalist Credentials to Perform Work in the Courts (Information Only)

Mr. Russell McGregor, Senior Analyst, Language Access Services, gave an informational presentation on how the National Center for State Courts will develop findings for CIAP on potential training, portfolio, and other requirements California could develop to potentially recognize persons with ASL generalist credentials to work in the California courts. Judicial Council staff will develop a proposal based on those findings.

The members asked questions concerning how the interpreters were contacted by NCSC and how the research was done.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS (ITEMS 2 – 4)

Item 2

Revised Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing Persons and New Application Form (Action Required)

Mr. McGregor gave a presentation to CIAP to review proposed changes to the *Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons (Guidelines)* and a new application form. With CIAP approval, the *Guidelines* and application will be circulated for public comment.

Members asked if there will be an additional type of requirement that someone must take prior to becoming an ASL court interpreter within the State of California. Specifically, whether there might be a requirement that they take a training on how to work with a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) prior to certification.

Action: The voting members of CIAP unanimously voted to send the revised ASL *Guidelines* and new application form out for public comment.

Item 3

Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters (Action Required)

Mr. Ray Mata gave a presentation to CIAP to review proposed changes to the [*Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters*](#), which informs interpreters of their professional and ethical responsibilities. With CIAP approval, the document will be circulated for public comment.

The members had no questions concerning the presentation.

Action: The voting members of CIAP unanimously voted to send the document out for public comment.

Item 4

Draft 2025 CIAP Annual Agenda (Action Required)

Mr. Ray Mata gave a presentation to CIAP reviewing its draft 2025 Annual Agenda.

The members had no questions concerning the presentation.

Action: The voting members of CIAP unanimously voted to approve the 2025 Annual Agenda.

A D J O U R N M E N T

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Approved by the advisory body on enter date.



Judicial Council of California

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www.courts.ca.gov

REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 2025-XXX

For business meeting on February 21, 2025

Title

Court Interpreters: Compliance
Requirements for Certified Court and
Registered Interpreters

Submitted by

Court Interpreters Advisory Panel
Hon. Brian L. McCabe, Chair
Hon. Maurice Sanchez, Vice-Chair

Report Type

Information

Date of Report

December 2, 2024

Contact

Douglas G. Denton, Principal Manager
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Executive Summary

The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel has revised the *Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* to make the compliance process more efficient, clear to interpreters, and aligned with operational improvements. These improvements were approved by the Administrative Director under a delegation of authority from the Judicial Council.

Relevant Previous Reporting or Action

The *Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* were last revised in 2020. The Judicial Council previously delegated authority to the Administrative Director to approve changes to the compliance requirements once they were developed and approved by the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP). The revised *Compliance Requirements* can be found at Attachment A and Link A. The webpage regarding the annual court interpreter renewal and compliance cycle is available at Link B.

The council's responsibilities over court interpreters in California are set forth in Government Code sections 68560–68566 (Link C). In accordance with section 68562, all certified and registered spoken language interpreters are required to meet continuing education and certification renewal requirements established by the council. Specifically:

The Judicial Council shall adopt standards and requirements for interpreter proficiency, continuing education, certification renewal, and discipline. The Judicial Council shall adopt standards of professional conduct for court interpreters.

(Gov. Code, § 68562(d).)

Analysis/Rationale

On August 28, 2024, CIAP approved revisions to the *Compliance Requirements* for an effective date of January 1, 2025. The rationale behind the updates is to simplify and modernize the compliance process, update the requirements where needed, offer interpreters more options to complete their compliance requirements, and adapt to trends in online training. A chart summarizing changes, and the rationale may be found at Attachment B.

Specifically, CIAP approved the following updates:

1. Starting in 2025, shorten the compliance cycle to five months in the same calendar year (July 1 to the last business day in November).
2. Remove all late periods for payment or attestation. There will be no late periods and interpreters who are late will be suspended on a long-term basis.
3. Replace the current policy that requires permanent revocation of an interpreter's credential when the interpreter remains out of compliance with a long-term suspension policy that enables the interpreter to come back into compliance later without having to retake all the required interpreter examinations. The interpreter would have to pay a reinstatement fee of \$250, pay the \$100 annual renewal fee, and complete any continuing education requirements to be reinstated.
4. Convey that interpreters may make their annual renewal payments and attest to completion of their continuing education and professional assignment requirements online through the Court Interpreter Data Collection System's Interpreter Portal.
5. Include a requirement that interpreters who have been credentialed for more than two years must take a newly developed online ethics refresher training for interpreters every two years along with other ethics courses that the council develops and determines should be required in the future.
6. Replace "instructor-led instruction" with "live, instructor-led instruction" and define "live, instructor-led instruction" as providing a forum, virtual or in-person, that allows for live interaction between participants and faculty during the course.
7. Change the current requirement that interpreters can receive credit for a minimum of 15 hours of (live) instructor-led approved CIMCE educational activities to a minimum of 10 hours of live, instructor-led approved CIMCE educational activities.

8. Change the current requirement that interpreters can receive credit for a maximum of 15 hours of non-instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities to a maximum of 20 hours of non-instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities.
9. Change the requirement that an educational activity be at least one hour in duration to at least 30 minutes.
10. Allow for the Court Interpreters Program (CIP) to approve “finish at your own pace” types of training.
11. Add language in Appendix B to the *Compliance Requirements* to explicitly state that professional interpreting assignments do not require payment and can include translations.

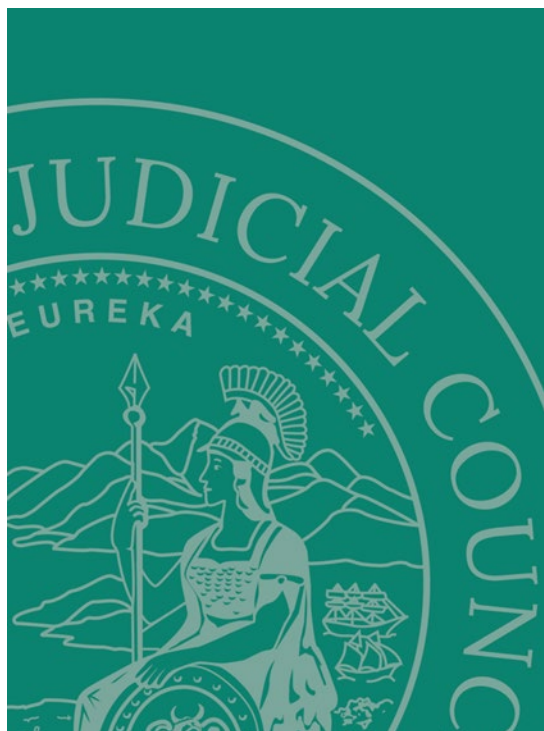
Fiscal Impact and Policy Implications

There is no anticipated fiscal impact for the trial courts. There will be a minimal operational impact on them if they are tracking the continuing education and professional assignment due dates of their interpreter employees. There also is no anticipated fiscal impact on the council. However, CIP staff will need to dedicate time and employee resources to implementing the approved recommendations, including making necessary changes to the Court Interpreter Data Collection System and the CIP public webpages to convey the changes.

Attachments and Links

1. Attachment A: *Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* (revised 2025)
2. Attachment B: Proposed Changes to Compliance Requirements for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters (chart)
3. Link A: *Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* (revised 2025),
https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2024-11/CIP-Compliance-Requirements_11-13-2024_FINAL.pdf
4. Link B: “Annual Renewal, Compliance, and Continuing Education” (webpage),
<https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/court-interpreters-resources/current-court-interpreters/annual-renewal-compliance-and-continuing>
5. Link C: Gov. Code, §§ 68560–68566,
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=GOV&division=&title=8.&part=&chapter=2.&article=4

January 2025



Compliance Requirements for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters

With Procedures for Providers of
Court Interpreter Continuing Education
Activities



Judicial Council of California

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Sixth edition effective January 1, 2025.

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Introduction

Purpose

The Judicial Council of California, through its Court Interpreters Program (CIP), is the credentialing (sometimes referred to as *licensing*) body for certified court and registered spoken-language interpreters (hereafter “interpreters”). CIP administers the policy and procedures established by the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel for annual renewal fees and compliance requirements that interpreters are required to abide by to maintain their credentialing status. CIP also maintains the Judicial Council’s online *Master List of Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* (hereafter “Master List”),¹ which is used by courts, justice partners, and the public to locate credentialed interpreters in good standing with the Judicial Council.²

The Judicial Council’s responsibilities over court interpreters in California are stated in California Government Code sections 68560–68566. In accordance with section 68562, all spoken language interpreters are required to meet continuing education and certification renewal requirements established by the Judicial Council of California. Specifically:

The Judicial Council shall adopt standards and requirements for interpreter proficiency, continuing education, certification renewal, and discipline. The Judicial Council shall adopt standards of professional conduct for court interpreters.³

Providers of continuing education activities are also required to abide by the procedures stated in these requirements.

The **compliance requirements** for California certified court and registered interpreters:

- Ensure that the interpreters continuously improve and learn in order to maintain the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform their responsibilities competently, fairly, and efficiently;
- Help interpreters preserve the integrity and impartiality of the judicial system through their efforts to ensure that all members of the public have equal access to the courts,

¹ Available at <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/court-interpreters-resources/search-interpreter>.

² American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters currently holding a Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L) issued by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or the Court Interpreter Certification issued by the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters may become a California certified court interpreter. For additional information, interpreters may contact courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov. Effective January 1, 2024, ASL court interpreters on the Master List will be responsible for paying the \$100 annual renewal fee and attesting that they are in good standing. The continuing education requirements for ASL court interpreters remain with their credentialing body.

³ Gov. Code, § 68562(d).

stand on equal footing when participating in court proceedings, and are treated fairly and justly; and

- Help improve the administration of justice, reduce court delays, and promote fair and efficient court proceedings and standardized court practices and procedures.

In addition, **interpreters have a duty to the profession** and are required to do the following:

- Abide by the canons found in California Rules of Court, rule 2.890, Professional conduct for interpreters;⁴
- Read and understand the *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters*;⁵
- Newly credentialed interpreters must take the required live and remote ethics workshop provided by the Judicial Council within their first two years. It is recommended that new interpreters take this course as soon as possible;
- Interpreters who have been credentialed for more than two years must take an online ethics refresher training developed by the Judicial Council for interpreters every two years along with other ethics courses that the council develops and determines should be required in the future.
- If employed by the California courts, abide by the employing court's policies and procedures, including the *Code of Ethics for the Court Employees of California* as they pertain to interpreter employees;
- If contracted by the courts, abide by the terms of the courts' contractual agreements;
- Continually strive to increase language skills, including but not limited to staying current with technical, vernacular, and regional terminology; and
- Stay up to date on statutes, rules of court, legislative changes, and changes to policies and procedures that inform the duties of the interpreting profession.

Education Defined

Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education (CIMCE) refers to educational activities the interpreter participates in after passing the required examinations for certification or registration and enrolling on the Judicial Council's Master List.

⁴ Available at www.courts.ca.gov/cms/rules/index.cfm?title=two&linkid=rule2_890.

⁵ Available at www.courts.ca.gov/documents/CIP-Ethics-Manual.pdf.

Education, for the purposes of these requirements, is an educational activity relevant to court-related interpreting that:

- Offers development of existing skills and bridges identified knowledge gaps;
- Addresses the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for court interpretation;⁶
- Enhances an interpreter participant’s ability to perform interpreting work for the courts, other justice partners, and interpreting professions; and
- Is offered by a CIP-approved provider.

The **educational activity** must meet the following criteria:

1. The subject matter is relevant to court interpreting, the function of the courts or the judicial branch, or other approved interpreting services conducted outside the courts.
2. The activity is at least 30 minutes in length.
3. Clear goals and objectives are identified in the course outline or syllabus describing how learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, or abilities) will be applied, demonstrated, or used.
4. The course meets the educational standards, requirements, and rigor necessary for professional interpreters.

The educational activity must also meet at least two of the following five criteria:

1. The location where the learning activity takes place is educationally sound.
2. The interpreter participant receives or has access to all reference tools, materials, and resources required for learning and applying educational content.
3. The interpreter participant can practice using or applying the new information or skill as part of the learning experience.
4. The interpreter can interact with knowledgeable faculty or other experts by posing questions to clarify understanding of educational content.
5. An assessment tool or activity is provided that enables the participant to determine whether the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained through the educational activity can be applied to their work in the future.

⁶ The knowledge, skills, and abilities are available at <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/KSAs.pdf>.

Part 1: Requirements and Procedures for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters

1.0 Summary of Compliance Requirements

All interpreters enrolled on the Judicial Council’s *Master List of Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* receive email notification every July on how to complete their annual renewal requirements, accompanied by forms and instructions.

Note the following important points:

- If an email address is not on file or bounces back, the annual renewal materials will be sent via U.S. mail to the address listed on the interpreter’s profile.
- The annual renewal packets include instructions on how to submit annual renewal fees and verification of completion of compliance requirements.
- Interpreters are responsible for keeping their contact information in their profile up to date by either updating this information directly in their profile or providing CIP with a completed *Information Update/Verification* form to update this information.⁷ It is especially important that interpreters keep their email address updated as CIP, by default, communicates with credentialed interpreters almost exclusively by email.
- Failure to provide a current mailing address and/or email address, or not receiving the annual renewal materials, does not exempt an interpreter from fulfilling all compliance requirements and does not constitute lack of notice from CIP.

1.1 Summary Chart of Annual Renewal Requirements

Description	Required	Due Dates and Notes
Annual Fee (active interpreter) Annual Fee (inactive interpreter)	\$100 \$50	Due every year between July 1 and the last business day in November.
Continuing Education and Professional Interpreting Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 hours of CIP-approved CIMCE courses • 40 professional interpreting assignments 	<p>Due every two years. Attestation of completion of continuing education and professional assignments is due every other year between July 1 and the last business day in November.</p> <p>Effective September 2019, interpreters were no longer required to turn in continuing education and professional assignment documentation. They are required to attest, under penalty of perjury, to completing all continuing education and</p>

⁷ The form is available to all interpreters at <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/court-interpreters-resources/current-court-interpreters/annual-renewal-compliance-and-continuing>.

Description	Required	Due Dates and Notes
		professional interpreting assignment requirements. CIP reserves the right to audit. Interpreters must maintain records verifying compliance for five years. Failure to provide records may result in suspension of the interpreting credential.
Suspension and Reinstatement Fee	\$350 (\$100 annual fee plus \$250 reinstatement fee)	Suspension is effective December 1. Checks or money orders sent by mail must be received by CIP by the last business day in November to avoid suspension. Interpreters who are facing economic or other hardship are encouraged to contact CIP as soon as possible in November before the deadline to avoid suspension and being assessed the reinstatement fee. The interpreter's credentials are suspended until the interpreter asks to be reinstated. To be reinstated, the interpreter must pay the annual fee of \$100 and a \$250 reinstatement fee (\$350 total).
All interpreters on the Master List receive instructions on how to submit payment and attest to completing their continuing education and professional interpreting assignment requirements.		

1.2 Maintenance of Records

Interpreters must retain all records of continuing education and professional interpreting assignments for **five years**. Each education record must be accompanied by a valid CIMCE or Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) number and include:

1. An official transcript with a passing grade of C or above from a U.S. accredited college or university;⁸
2. A letter or certificate of completion from the education provider; and
3. A record of professional interpreting assignments that includes the date, type, and location of the event and, if applicable, the case number. (See Appendix B.)

⁸ Courses provided by colleges or universities outside of the United States are subject to review by the Judicial Council; approval as CIMCE providers is not guaranteed.

If an interpreter misplaces any record that verifies proof of attendance, the interpreter must contact the education provider and request a copy or replacement.⁹

1.3 Keeping Contact Information and Other Key Information Up to Date

Interpreters are responsible for keeping their contact information up to date in the Court Interpreter Data Collection System by either updating this information directly via the [Interpreter Portal](#) or by providing CIP with a completed [Information Update/Verification form](#) and mailing it to CIP at the address shown on the form. Interpreters are responsible for relaying changes to names, place of employment, and employment status (e.g., independent contractor, court employee, retired) by submitting this form.

It is especially important that interpreters keep their email address updated as CIP, by default, communicates with credentialed interpreters almost exclusively by email. Failure to keep CIP apprised of current contact information is likely to result in not receiving important communications.

1.4 Audit of Compliance Documentation

The Judicial Council reserves the right to conduct an audit and request verification of continuing education and professional assignment documentation. Failure to provide records and documentation as requested could result in the matter being referred to the credential review process and sanctions up to and including suspension of an interpreter's credential, additional required training, assessment of the reinstatement fee, and revocation.

2.0 Annual Renewal Fees

Interpreters are notified by email when a new compliance cycle launches and are provided with related information and applicable forms:

1. Annual renewal fees are due every year between July 1 and the last business day in November.
2. The Language Access Services webpages¹⁰ include the due dates as well any updated information regarding the annual renewal fees.
3. In the absence of an email address, notification will be mailed to the address on file as a reminder that the annual renewal fee is due.
4. Interpreters are strongly encouraged to pay their annual renewal fee online via the [Interpreter Portal](#) of the Court Interpreter Data Collection System to avoid delays. However,

⁹ A list of providers is available at <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/publication/list-providers-court-interpreter-minimum-continuing-education-cimce-credit>.

¹⁰ See <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/court-interpreters-resources/current-court-interpreters/annual-renewal-compliance-and-continuing>.

they may also pay this fee by check, money order, cashier's check, or as otherwise instructed by CIP. Checks or money orders sent by mail must be received by CIP by the last business day in November to avoid suspension.

6. CIP cannot provide information on whether the State Controller has cashed a check, money order, or cashier's check.

3.0 Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education Requirements

Interpreters may participate in continuing education activities that are CIP approved for Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education (CIMCE) only *after* passing the required examinations in place to obtain California certified court or registered interpreter status and subsequent enrollment on the Master List.

Once the full enrollment process is complete, the interpreter is listed on the Master List, which is available to the public. The first continuing education compliance period begins on the interpreter's enrollment date with the Judicial Council and ends on the last day of November of the following year. All subsequent compliance periods for continuing education requirements begin on January 1 and end on November 30 of the following year.

Continuing education activities **must have an assigned CIMCE number** granted by:

- The Judicial Council of California's Court Interpreters Program; or
- Other U.S. state courts or Administrative Office of the Courts;

or **an assigned Minimum Continuing Education (MCLE) number** granted by:

- The State Bar of California.

3.1 Required Continuing Education Hours

All interpreters on the Master List are required to complete **30 hours** of continuing education within every two-year compliance period as follows:

1. All **30 hours** may consist of live, instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities (in person or online); or
2. A minimum of **10 hours** of non-instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities and a **maximum** of **20 hours** of non-instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities.
3. Interpreters who have been credentialed for more than two years must take an online ethics refresher training developed by the Judicial Council for interpreters every two years along with other ethics courses that the council develops and determines should be required in the future. This instruction can be included as part of the maximum of 20 hours of non-instructor-led training.

4. Online, “self-paced” types of training may be taken and are classified as non-instructor-led training.

3.2 Interpreters Applying for CIMCE Credit

It is strongly recommended that interpreters seek courses that the Court Interpreters Program has approved for Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education. If an educational activity has not been approved, we encourage submission of the application requesting CIMCE credit immediately after completion of the activity to avoid the possibility of nonapproval.

The **following conditions apply** to all interpreter applications for CIMCE credit:

1. CIMCE credit will be awarded only after completion of the entire educational activity.
2. For activities not approved by the Court Interpreters Program for CIMCE, proof of attendance—in the form of an official transcript or certificate of completion, including the number of hours—must accompany the application.
3. CIMCE credit will count toward requirements for the compliance period corresponding to the year in which the educational activity is completed.
4. CIMCE hours or credit for interpreting assignments may NOT be carried over from one compliance period to the next.
5. Educational activities approved by the State Bar of California for MCLE credit or awarded by other state court systems do not require submission of an application.
6. Certified and registered interpreters who are instructors of CIP-approved CIMCE activities or teach in interpreter training programs are eligible to receive non-instructor-led credit up to the maximum allowed continuing education credit for teaching activities. (See [section 9.1](#), *Interpreters Teaching a CIP-Approved CIMCE Activity*.)
7. The maximum amount of CIMCE credit awarded for instructors of approved activities is 20 credits for non-instructor-led educational activities. An application must be submitted.
9. Interpreters must maintain transcripts, certificates, or letters of completion verifying proof of attendance for five years.

Note: Applications for CIMCE credit that are received after September 1 are *not* guaranteed to be approved by the last business day in November. Applications should be submitted as early as possible.

3.3 Application Fees

Interpreters who attend non-CIP-approved activities and wish to request CIMCE credit must submit a nonrefundable application fee of \$50 per activity, not to exceed \$300 per year, provided all applications are submitted at the same time.

Education providers requesting CIMCE approval must submit a nonrefundable application fee of \$300 for conferences, interpreter vacations (approved only if the provider submits an application), and some multiday activities.

Educational activities offered by the following groups are **exempt** from application fees:

- Judicial Council of California
- California superior courts
- National Center for State Courts
- Other state courts and Administrative Office of the Courts
- Federal courts
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. accredited colleges and universities¹¹

For information on how to submit your application for CIMCE credit or approval, see [section 9.2](#), *Application Fees and Submission*.

3.4 Activities Not Approved by CIP for CIMCE

CIP will not approve for Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education the following activities:

1. Rating candidates for any state, federal, or National Center for State Courts (NCSC) court interpreter exam;
2. Developing any state, federal, or NCSC court interpreter exam, or exam development for any profession;
3. Attending classes in person or via distance learning that provide instruction on how to take and pass any state or federal court certification and/or registered court exam;
4. Attending classes in person or via distance learning that provide instruction on how to take and pass any professional exam, and/or prepare for any professional certification, licensing, or credentialing exam;
5. Attending courses on brand development, marketing, running or building a business, or engaging in marketing or consulting activities;

¹¹ Training provided by colleges or universities outside of the United States is considered on a case-by-case basis.

6. Performing self-directed research or publishing;
7. Attending courses primarily based on reading works of fiction (novels, movies, podcasts);¹²
8. Completing the same CIMCE-approved activity more than once in the same compliance period;
9. Time spent doing homework; or
10. Attending or conducting activities unrelated to continuing education requirements.

CIMCE credit is **not guaranteed** for participation in activities that are advertised as, or are part of, interpreter vacations or workshops and conferences offered in a foreign country. Foreign travel in general is not CIMCE eligible.¹³ (See [Section 11.0](#), *Professional Conferences and Educational Activities Outside of the United States*.)

CIP may also deny approval of courses deemed not to meet the educational criteria or definition of education (see [Introduction](#), *Education Defined*).

3.5 Computation of CIMCE Credit

1. CIMCE credit is awarded as follows:
 - a. Each hour of participation in an educational activity is counted as 1 hour of CIMCE credit.
 - b. One satisfactorily completed academic quarter unit is equal to 10 hours of CIMCE credit.
 - c. One satisfactorily completed academic semester unit is equal to 15 hours of CIMCE credit.
2. CIMCE credit is approved for a minimum of 30 minutes of participation; subsequent time is measured in 15-minute increments and rounded down. For example, if an educational activity is 2 hours and 20 minutes, the allowable hours awarded are 2.25; if it is 2 hours and 45 minutes, 2.75 hours are awarded.
3. The maximum CIMCE credit per day is generally 6 hours. Credit may be approved for up to 8 hours per day at the discretion of CIP for conferences or other educational activities.

¹² Courses in translation that include instruction on how to translate fictional work may be accepted.

¹³ Interpreters are highly encouraged to seek out courses from providers that have obtained CIMCE numbers approved by CIP.

4.0 Professional Interpreting Assignments

All certified court and registered interpreters are required to complete 40 court-related or other qualifying professional interpreting assignments during each continuing education compliance period. (For a list of qualifying professional interpreting assignments, see Appendix B.)

Interpreters must retain documentation of completed professional interpreting assignments for **five years**. Documentation must include the date and type of event, case number (if applicable), location, name of venue where the event took place, and the duration of the assignment.

4.1 Waiver of Professional Interpreting Assignments Requirement

Registered court interpreters may be eligible for a waiver if they cannot complete the required 40 court-related or other approved professional interpreting assignments because of a limited need for their language¹⁴ by the court or other provider of interpreting services, as follows:

1. Interpreters can request a waiver in writing indicating the reason that a waiver is being requested, or request a waiver as otherwise instructed by CIP.
2. Waivers are granted on a case-by-case basis.

5.0 Penalties for Noncompliance

Interpreters must pay the annual renewal fee and attest to completing their continuing education and professional interpreting assignment requirements by the last business day of November to avoid suspension and a reinstatement fee. Checks or money orders sent by mail must be received by CIP by the last business day in November to avoid suspension. Interpreters who remain out of compliance after the last business day in November will be notified by email in December that their credential has been suspended and they have been assessed a reinstatement fee.¹⁵

5.1 Reinstatement Fee

A reinstatement fee is assessed to each interpreter who remains out of compliance beginning December 1.

5.2 Suspension of Interpreter's Credential

If an interpreter has not met all annual renewal requirements by the last business day in November, the interpreter's certification and/or registration status will be **suspended**, the

¹⁴ Interpreters who reside out of state may not request a waiver due to out-of-state residence. Qualifying professional interpreting assignments completed out of state are acceptable.

¹⁵ Consistent with Government Code section 71802(d), only court interpreters who retain their certified or registered status may maintain trial court employee status. For independent contractors, the consequence of suspension is that the interpreter is considered non-certified or non-registered by the courts, and thus the interpreter loses assignment priority under the Trial Court Interpreter Employment and Labor Relations Act (Gov. Code, § 71800 et seq.).

interpreter will be removed from the Judicial Council's Master List, and the trial courts will be notified.

An interpreter whose credential has been suspended no longer retains active status. Interpreters who are facing economic or other hardship are encouraged to contact CIP as soon as possible in November before the deadline to avoid suspension and being assessed the reinstatement fee. After suspension, interpreters are encouraged to contact CIP to be reinstated and placed back on the Master List.

5.3 Reinstatement to the Master List

For a suspended interpreter to be reinstated to the Master List in good standing, the interpreter must complete each of the following requirements:

1. Pay the past-due annual renewal fee.
2. Pay the reinstatement fee.
3. Pay the returned-check fee, if applicable.
4. Provide updated contact information, place of employment (if applicable), employment status (court-employed or independent contractor), and any other information needed by CIP.

After being reinstated, the interpreter must comply with the continuing education and professional interpreting assignment requirements and pay future annual renewal fees to remain in good standing.

6.0 Inactive Status

An interpreter may request to be put on inactive status at any time after the completion of a two-year compliance cycle. The following conditions apply:

1. A request for inactive status must be submitted in writing, in advance, to CIP and include the effective start and end dates.
2. The period of inactivity is limited to two years.
3. Requests must be made at least 30 days before the end of the current compliance year.
4. CIP will respond within 10 business days of receipt of the request with all pertinent information, including the prorated continuing education requirements, professional interpreting assignments required, and annual renewal fee based on the requested dates of inactive status.
5. Only interpreters in good standing are eligible for inactive status.

6. Interpreters on inactive status are prohibited from interpreting in the courts.
7. The annual renewal fee for interpreters on inactive status is one-half of the published annual renewal fee.
8. An interpreter on inactive status is exempt from CIMCE requirements but is awarded credit if the interpreter chooses to complete CIMCE courses during the period of inactivity.
9. To return to active status, an interpreter must submit a written request to CIP before the end of the period of inactive status.
10. Once an interpreter returns to active status, the interpreter must complete the requirements for continuing education and court-related professional interpreting assignments for the months during which the interpreter is active by the end of their regular compliance cycle.

For questions or more information regarding any of the requirements or procedures provided, please visit the “Annual Renewal, Compliance, and Continuing Education” webpage¹⁶ or contact CIP at courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov or by mail at:

Judicial Council of California
Court Interpreters Program
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

¹⁶ Available at <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/court-interpreters-resources/current-court-interpreters/annual-renewal-compliance-and-continuing>.

Part 2: Requirements and Procedures for Education Providers

7.0 Education Defined

Education, for the purposes of these requirements, is an educational activity relevant to court-related interpreting that offers development of existing skills; bridges identified knowledge gaps; addresses the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) essential for interpretation in the courts;¹⁷ enhances the interpreter participant’s ability to perform interpreting work for the courts or other justice partners and interpreter settings; and that is offered by a Judicial Council–approved provider. CIP may also deny approval of courses deemed not to meet the educational criteria or definition of education. (See [Introduction](#), *Education Defined*.) It is recommended providers read this entire manual.

8.0 Instructor Qualifications

Applications for CIP approval of a continuing education activity must be accompanied by a curriculum vitae (CV) or statement of instructor qualifications. For a course to be eligible for CIMCE credit, instructors must meet the following minimum requirements:

1. An instructor of an *interpreting skills* course must possess:
 - a. A bachelor’s or postgraduate degree from a U.S. university or an equivalent degree from a foreign university; and
 - b. At least five years’ demonstrated experience in courtroom, medical, or conference interpreting; and
 - c. California court interpreter certified or registered status or valid court interpreter certification from another state;¹⁸ or
 - d. United States District Court federal court interpreter certification or valid court interpreter certification from another country.
2. An instructor of a *translation skills* course must possess:
 - a. A bachelor’s or postgraduate degree from a U.S. university or an equivalent degree from a foreign university; and
 - b. At least five years’ experience as a professional translator; and
 - c. Credentials from a recognized U.S. professional translators’ association or a university degree in translation.

¹⁷ The KSAs are available at <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/KSAs.pdf>.

¹⁸ Interpreter instructors from other states must have passed the National Center for State Courts certification exams currently used in California or equivalent certification exams recognized by California.

3. An instructor of *any other course* must possess:
 - a. Required and valid credentials to practice their profession or trade (an academic degree, license, certificate, etc.); and
 - b. At least five years' experience in the profession or trade; and
 - c. Experience delivering professional education.

The Judicial Council may waive the academic degree requirement for uniquely qualified individuals who do not possess a formal academic degree but who meet all other requirements. Requests for waivers will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Requests must be made in writing.

9.0 Application Procedures

All education providers must adhere to the following requirements for requesting CIP approval for Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education:

1. The provider must submit a completed and signed application form in English for the course to be considered.
2. If applying for multiple courses, the provider may list each course on a single application; all required information for each course must be attached on a separate document.
3. The term *approved continuing education activity* or any phrase indicating approval by CIP may not be used in any promotional materials unless approval has been granted.
4. If approval is pending, promotional materials should include this statement:
“Application has been submitted to the Judicial Council of California’s Court Interpreters Program for Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education credit.”¹⁹
5. The application and all supporting documents must be in **English** and include:
 - a. A description of the continuing education activity or program that establishes instructional goals, objectives, and learning outcomes and demonstrates relevancy to court interpreting;²⁰
 - b. The course agenda or syllabus, in English, that states the delivery method (see [section 12.0](#)) and a clear, concise description (a current course catalog is acceptable);

¹⁹ The use of the Judicial Council of California or Court Interpreter Program logo or indication of sponsorship is strictly forbidden unless prior authorization or sponsorship has been approved.

²⁰ A *goal* is an overarching principle that guides decision-making. *Objectives* are specific, measurable steps or an activity taken to meet the stated goal.

- c. The date and number of hours (lunch breaks must be provided for courses exceeding five hours; homework is not counted for CIMCE); and
 - d. An instructor statement of qualifications or a current CV demonstrating ability and education that qualifies one to teach the course, except for fee-exempt providers.
6. A fee of \$50 per course for which a CIMCE number is requested; payment must accompany the application or, if the application is electronically submitted, mailed separately (see [section 9.2, Application Fees and Submission](#)).
 7. Applications will not be processed until payment is received.
 8. Illegible, hard-to-read, or incomplete applications will not be considered and will be returned to the provider with a request for missing information or clarification. This complication will delay approval of the application.

Note: Approval is usually granted for one calendar year only; providers who will offer the same educational activity without change to content, hours, or instructors may apply for approval for up to a three-calendar-year period.

9.1 Interpreters Teaching a CIP-Approved CIMCE Activity

1. CIMCE credit for teaching a CIP-approved activity is granted as non-instructor-led CIMCE credit and is computed at the rate of 3 hours' preparation time for each hour of instruction, plus instruction time.

Example: The first time you teach a 1-hour class, you will receive 3 hours of non-instructor-led CIMCE credit for preparation plus 1 hour of non-instructor-led CIMCE credit for the presentation, for a total of 4 hours of non-instructor-led CIMCE credit. The second time you teach the course in the two-year compliance period, you will not receive CIMCE credit.

2. The maximum amount of CIMCE credit granted for teaching a CIP-approved activity is 20 non-instructor-led hours. Credit is granted only once for the activity within a two-year compliance cycle.
3. A CIMCE number for teaching a CIP-approved activity in an accredited college, university, state court, or approved educational or governmental institution will be assigned to the instructor upon application and submission of proof of having taught the course.²¹
4. There is no fee for teaching at fee-exempt institutions (see [section 3.3](#)).

²¹ Teaching interpreter training courses is approved for instructors of those courses, if all requirements are met.

9.2 Application Fees and Submission

1. The nonrefundable application fee for education activities is \$50 per activity or course, not to exceed \$300 per year, provided the applications are submitted at the same time.²²
2. The nonrefundable application fee for conferences, interpreter vacations, and some multiday activities is \$300.
3. Approval is granted for one calendar year only.
5. Providers that offer the same educational activity without change to content, hours, or instructors may apply for approval for up to three calendar years. Application fees of \$50 per activity and a maximum of \$300 **per year** remain the same.
6. The following information must be submitted for each course application:
 - a. Goals and objectives;
 - b. Course outline and agenda, including breaks and lunch (CIMCE credit not given for meal breaks), with clear times indicated;
 - c. Statement of instructor qualifications (not required for fee-exempt providers);
 - d. Promotional materials, if available;
 - e. Method of delivery; and
 - f. Name of provider or institution.
7. Applications may be submitted via email to cimce@jud.ca.gov. The name of the course or provider should be indicated in the subject line of the email.

Materials and/or application fees in the form of a check, cashier's check, or money order may be mailed to:

Judicial Council of California
Court Interpreters Program
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

Note: Please allow up to 30 business days to process your application, and be aware of the following:

- Providers who submit applications for approval of continuing education activities that have concluded will not necessarily be approved retroactively; retroactive approval is at

²² Interpreters may submit a single application for multiple courses provided that each course is listed on the application and an attached document for each course contains all the required information. CIP recommends submitting the application via email as a PDF to cimce@jud.ca.gov. Allow up to 30 days for review and approval.

the discretion of CIP for providers of an educational activity. An exception is made for interpreters who have taught a course and are applying for CIMCE approval.

- Within the same calendar year, an approved educational activity may be offered on more than one occasion, or at more than one location, without submission of a new application for approval, provided that no substantive changes are made to the activity content, hours, or faculty.
- Incomplete or illegible applications—or applications lacking payment, required information, or documents—will not be considered. The applicant will be notified and will need to submit the required documentation as requested in order for the application to be processed.
- Incomplete applications will be returned or held.

10.0 Maintenance of Records

1. The provider of an approved continuing education activity must keep the following records for five years after the activity concludes and furnish them on request at no cost to the Judicial Council:
 - a. The letter or notice of course approval issued by CIP;
 - b. A roster of attendance with the participants' full names, signatures, or initials; and
 - c. A copy of the certificate or letter of completion issued to the participants.
2. All providers of a continuing education activity must notify CIP of any changes to organizational structure or personnel responsible for the continuing education activities, including name and address changes, within 30 days after the change.
3. Within 60 days of completion of an approved continuing education activity, the provider must issue a document to each participant to certify attendance. The document may be a letter, grade slip, transcript, or certificate of completion. A certificate of completion must not contain any language that could be construed as constituting interpreter certification.
4. All documents (except for university or college transcripts) must contain the following:
 - a. Name of the interpreter attendee and, optionally, their certification or registration number or other identification number;
 - b. Course title, course date or dates, and CIMCE number;
 - c. Provider's name and address;
 - d. Number of continuing education hours; and
 - e. Signature or seal of the instructor or the provider.

5. The provider of an approved continuing education activity must distribute an evaluation form that allows the interpreter to assess the course and submit comments. The provider must retain the evaluation forms for at least five years and submit them to the Court Interpreters Program upon request and at no cost.
6. The letter or notice received from CIP approving a course for CIMCE **must** not be distributed to attendees as verification of course attendance.

11.0 Professional Conferences or Educational Activities Outside of the United States

In the case of a conference at which multiple continuing education activities will take place, including those held outside of the United States, or for educational activities that are advertised as being part of interpreter vacations, the sponsoring entity or attendee must submit the following:

1. A single application for all workshops, with an Excel file or Word chart that lists all required information, to allow CIP to evaluate course content; or
2. A single application for all workshops occurring on the same day; and
4. A conference fee of \$50 per presentation (maximum of \$300), or a fee of \$300 for an interpreter vacation.

Note: If you are an attendee, approval of your application is *not* guaranteed. Approval is guaranteed if the application was submitted by the provider and approved by CIP for CIMCE.

12.0 Education Delivery Methods

There are several ways to offer educational activities. Regardless of method, the activity must meet all the requirements of an educational activity as stated in these requirements to ensure that professional court interpreter education meets the demands of the profession.

1. *Live, instructor-led distance learning:* Student and instructor are not in the same location but a forum is provided for instruction that allows for live interaction between participants and faculty during the course. The instructor is present during the entire activity and can interact with the students and answer questions. Distance education includes courses offered over the internet, through webinars, via videoconferencing, on interactive satellite broadcasts, and via electronic device applications.
2. *Non-instructor-led distance learning:* Most of the learning is not led by an instructor but has a specific structure and outcomes. Examples of courses that may be considered for non-instructor-led CIMCE credit include online courses with no live instructor or public lectures on relevant topics by subject-matter experts.

3. In addition to the requirements stated in [section 9.0, *Application Procedures*](#), providers of a distance learning course or workshop must comply with the following:
 - a. Inform students of the specific technology required for participation;
 - b. For live, instructor-led distance learning, have instructors available to students in person or by phone or email during the course or workshop; and
 - c. For live, instructor-led activities, establish a system that provides proof of full attendance and completion within the parameters of the medium.

13.0 Judicial Council Course Audits

CIP may request the records of a provider at any time or send a representative to attend any approved continuing education activity. If CIP staff or a designated representative attends a course, the following will apply:

1. If a course will be attended by CIP staff or a representative, CIP will notify the provider no less than two weeks before the course with the name of the attendee.
2. Representatives for CIP will not be required to pay the course fee.
3. The provider may request feedback from CIP following the completion of the course.

Appendix A: Suggested Educational Topics for Continuing Education

Note: This list of possible topics for study is not a comprehensive list or an inventory of all approved subject matter with guaranteed approval. All educational activities are subject to approval by the Judicial Council's Court Interpreters Program.

Skill Areas

- Consecutive interpreting skills techniques and skills practice
- Developing memory skills
- Interpreting skills for conference, immigration, medical; test preparation courses do not qualify
- Note taking
- Sight translation skills
- Simultaneous interpreting skills: beginning and advanced techniques and skills practice

Language Skills

- Contrastive analysis and grammar (language pairs)
- Advanced vocabulary/grammar (should include instruction in the target language)
- Correct pronunciation
- Dialects/regionalisms
- Etymology, linguistics
- Translation courses
- False cognates
- Syntax
- Diction (accent reduction)
- Voice protection

Knowledge Areas

- Arraignments, hearings, motions
- Civil law
- Civil rights history
- Conference interpreting and procedures
- Constitutional law
- Contracts
- Courses in law
- Courtroom protocols and procedures
- Criminal or civil investigation
- Cultural competency
- Cybersecurity and the law
- Diversity
- Domestic violence
- Drug and alcohol testing
- Drug terminology

- Elder abuse
- Ethics
- Family law
- Fingerprints
- Forensic pathology
- History of law
- Supreme Court rulings and history
- Role of government
- Immigration court interpreting and procedures
- Implicit bias
- International law/contracts
- Investigative procedures
- Juvenile proceedings (dependency, delinquency, child support, Indian Child Welfare Act)
- Law enforcement terms and procedures
- Legal advice versus legal information
- Legal precedents
- Legal procedure in other countries
- Legal terminology
- Maritime law
- Medical interpreting and procedures
- Mental health proceedings
- Changes in the law and statutes
- Sentencing procedures
- Sex offenses
- Street slang and idioms
- Unlawful detainer
- Vicarious trauma
- Weapons and ballistics

Appendix B: Qualifying Professional Interpreting Assignments

Government Code section 68562(d) provides, in part, that “[t]he Judicial Council shall adopt standards and requirements for interpreter proficiency, continuing education, certification renewal, and discipline.”

To maintain proficiency in the duties required of a court interpreter, and to meet compliance requirements, California certified court and registered interpreters must complete 40 professional interpreting assignments every two years. (See [section 4.1](#), *Waiver of Professional Interpreting Assignments Requirement*.)

A *professional interpreting assignment* is an interpreting event that involves a legal case or other structured interaction between a limited-English-proficient (LEP) individual and a third party and that requires professional or technical interpretation in person, by video, or telephonically. Professional interpreting assignments may also include translation of written documents. Pro bono (nonpaid) assignments count toward the 40-assignment total requirement.

Examples of interpreting events include:²³

1. Any federal, state, tribal, or administrative court proceedings, within or outside California,²⁴ in which:
 - a. Interpreters seeking approval of professional interpreting assignments performed outside the United States must retain and submit appropriate documentation, if requested, reflecting that they interpreted into (or from) English; and
 - b. Administrative court proceedings include immigration court proceedings, Social Security Administration and similar federal agency hearings, and California administrative agency proceedings such as those involving workers’ compensation, Office of Administrative Hearings, Department of Industrial Relations, Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board, and Department of Motor Vehicles;
2. Court-ordered or court-operated services in which LEP court users ordered to participate require interpreter assistance to access the service, including family court services orientation, rehabilitation services (anger management, substance abuse), and court-ordered traffic school;
3. Interactions between counsel and LEP clients/defendants to litigate a legal case, including:

²³ For any questions regarding professional interpreting assignments, please contact the Court Interpreters Program at courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov.

²⁴ Each day of a multiday trial counts as one professional assignment.

- a. Depositions and deposition preparation sessions in which the LEP client is present;
 - b. Case preparation sessions with attorneys (with the LEP client present);
 - c. In-custody interviews (also known as “jailhouse” interviews);
 - d. Mediation sessions or arbitration hearings;
 - e. Settlement conferences;
 - f. Probation department interviews;
 - g. Witness conferences; and
 - h. Psychiatric or other medical evaluations.
4. Self-help center services and training; and
 5. Professional conferences (interpreting services for speaker presentations, workshops, or panels).

All interpreters must retain documentation verifying the completion of 40 professional interpreting assignments for five years and submit it to the Court Interpreters Program, if requested.

Changes to Compliance Requirements for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters, effective January 1, 2025

Current Process	Proposed Change	Reason for Change	Page Citations
<p>The compliance cycle runs from September 15 to June 30 of the following year (9.5 months). The first deadline is December 31.</p>	<p>Starting in 2025, shorten the compliance cycle to 5 months in the same calendar year (July 1 to last business day in November).</p>	<p>Cycle ends in same calendar year to avoid confusion among interpreters.</p> <p>Avoids rush of interpreters trying to meet deadline during December holidays.</p>	<p>Pages 4, 5, 6, 11</p>
<p>There is a late fee of \$50 assessed for nonpayment of annual renewal fee, due January 1 thru last working day in February.</p> <p>Interpreters who still haven't paid by February are suspended as of March 1 and must pay \$400 by June 30 to come back into compliance.</p>	<p>Starting in 2025, remove all late periods for payment or attestation.</p> <p>There will be no late periods and interpreters who are late will be suspended on a long-term basis.</p>	<p>Remove late fees and make the reinstatement process clearer and easier for interpreters.</p>	<p>Pages 4, 5</p>
<p>Interpreters who fail to comply by June 30 of the compliance cycle have their credential permanently revoked and must retake all examinations to re-enroll and be reinstated.</p>	<p>Starting in 2025, replace permanent revocation with a long-term suspension policy that enables the interpreter to come back into compliance at any time without having to retake all the required interpreter examinations.</p> <p>A suspended interpreter would have to pay a reinstatement fee of \$250 plus the \$100 annual renewal fee to be reinstated.</p>	<p>Would remove revocation/requirement to retake all examinations and replace with long-term suspension status for interpreters.</p> <p>Makes it easier for interpreters to come back into compliance.</p>	<p>Pages 5, 11, 12</p>

Current Process	Proposed Change	Reason for Change	Page Citations
<p>Payment of annual renewal fees may be made by check, money order, or cashier's check; or as otherwise instructed by CIP.</p> <p>Interpreters needed to attest to completion of compliance requirements on a paper form.</p>	<p>Interpreters may make their annual renewal payments and attest to completion of their continuing education and professional assignment requirements online through the Court Interpreter Data Collection System (CIDCS) Interpreter Portal.</p>	<p>Informs interpreters of their options to pay for compliance through CIDCS or they may send a check to JCC.</p> <p>Use of CIDCS for payments is more convenient and saves staff time with processing paper forms or checks.</p>	<p>Pages 4, 5, 6</p>
<p>Interpreters must complete the Judicial Council ethics workshop during their first compliance period.</p>	<p>Starting in 2025, interpreters who have been credentialed for more than two years must take a newly developed online ethics refresher training for interpreters every two years along with other ethics courses that the council develops and determines should be required in the future.</p>	<p>Maintains interpreter familiarity with ethics and professional standards. Ethics courses provided by the Judicial Council will be periodically updated to adapt to new or evolving issues.</p>	<p>Pages 2, 7</p>
<p>Interpreters must complete a minimum amount of instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities</p>	<p>Replace "instructor-led instruction" with "live, instructor-led instruction," which can be either led in person or online with faculty</p>	<p>Clarifies CIMCE qualifications, particularly for remote courses that are live and led by an instructor.</p>	<p>Pages 7, 16, 19</p>
<p>Interpreters can receive credit for a minimum of 15 hours of instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities.</p>	<p>Change to a minimum of 10 hours of live, instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities.</p>	<p>Allows interpreters to complete their requirements with more affordable and flexible options.</p>	<p>Page. 7</p>
<p>Interpreters can receive credit for a maximum of 15 hours of non-instructor-led, approved CIMCE education activities.</p>	<p>Change to a maximum of 20 hours of non-instructor-led, approved CIMCE educational activities.</p>	<p>Allows interpreters to complete their requirements with more affordable and flexible options.</p>	<p>Pages 7, 8, 16</p>

Current Process	Proposed Change	Reason for Change	Page Citations
Educational activities must be one hour in duration.	Change to educational activity must be at least 30 minutes.	Allows interpreters to complete their requirements with more affordable and flexible options.	Pages 3, 10
	Allow for CIP's approval of "finish at your own pace" types of training.	Allows interpreters to complete their requirements with more affordable and flexible options.	Page 8
	Add language in Appendix B to explicitly state that professional interpreting assignments do not require payment and can include translations.	Clarifies reported confusion from interpreters regarding the credit that they may report toward compliance.	Page 23



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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 25-XXX

For business meeting on February 21, 2025

Title

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected
NA

Recommended by

Court Interpreters Advisory Panel
Hon. Brian L. McCabe, Chair
Hon. Maurice Sanchez, Vice-Chair

Agenda Item Type

Action Required

Effective Date

February 21, 2025

Date of Report

December 2, 2024

Contact

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Executive Summary

The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel recommends approval of revisions to the *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters* (fifth edition, May 2013). These revisions are necessary to update the document and address new ethical challenges in remote and hybrid interpreting, and interpreter conduct on social media. The ethics document is based on California Rules of Court, rule 2.890 (Professional conduct for interpreters).

Recommendation

The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) recommends that the Judicial Council, effective February 21, 2025:

1. Approve revisions to the *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters (Ethics Guide)* to include new sections on social media conduct, technical challenges in remote interpreting, and maintaining impartiality in hybrid courtrooms.

The proposed revised *Ethics Guide* is attached at pages TBA.

Analysis/Rationale

The *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters* (hereafter “*Ethics Guide*”) is based on California Rules of Court, rule 2.890, which covers professional conduct for interpreters (see Link A).

The *Ethics Guide* serves as a critical resource for ensuring that interpreters maintain professionalism and uphold the ethical standards required by the California judicial system. Last updated in 2013 (see Link B), the ethics document could not have anticipated the significant changes in the courts and the interpreting profession that have occurred in both the pre- and post-COVID-19 world, including the rise of remote and hybrid courtrooms and the pervasive influence of social media.

The current revisions address these gaps by providing updated guidance that will support interpreters in navigating these modern challenges. By aligning the *Ethics Guide* with contemporary practices and updated training formats, these revisions ensure that interpreters are equipped to uphold impartiality, confidentiality, and professionalism in the evolving judicial landscape.

Judicial Council staff worked closely on the revision with CIAP’s Professional Standards and Ethics Subcommittee. On September 24, 2024, CIAP approved the revised *Ethics Guide* to circulate for public comment. Most of the content has been repeated from the 2013 version; however, the document (formerly called the Ethics Manual) has been updated as an *Ethics Guide* and put in bullet form for ease of reading. Two new sections have been added: ethics for remote interpreting, and ethics for social media. Also, more depth has been added to provide guidance to interpreters on how to handle real-world situations (with specific examples and best practices). See Attachment A for the updated *Ethics Guide*.

Key proposed changes include:

- Align ethics with remote and hybrid courtroom interpreting, and contemporary ethical issues such as interpreter conduct on social media.
- Increase interpreter accessibility and engagement.
- Align content with a redesigned live ethics training that is required for new interpreters and a new online ethics refresher training required every two years for more experienced interpreters.
- Regarding remote and hybrid interpreting, provide clearer guidelines on the use of technology, background setup, and professional conduct during remote court appearances.
- Regarding social media conduct, outline ethical considerations for court interpreters who use social media.
- Regarding impartiality and conflicts of interest, strengthen guidance on how to handle conflicts of interest in remote and in-person court environments.

Policy implications

By providing clearer guidance and incorporating contemporary issues, the revisions enhance interpreter accountability, professional development, and accessibility, while supporting the judiciary's mandate to uphold justice and fair and impartial treatment for all language users. Additionally, aligning the updates with live and online ethics training will ensure that interpreters are well-equipped to meet the dynamic demands of their essential and important role in the courts, thereby strengthening the administration of justice statewide.

Comments

This proposal circulated for comment from October 16 through November 27, 2024. Three comments were received, from the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, the Superior Court of Orange County, and one community member.

Los Angeles Superior Court supported the proposal and provided detailed recommendations for consideration as amendments to clarify several of the revisions. These included suggestions to clarify guidance on confidentiality, interpreter conduct in remote and hybrid settings, and sight translation practices, as well as adjustments to language regarding fatigue management for interpreters. The committee acknowledges these thoughtful suggestions and has incorporated these changes to strengthen and align the guidelines with current best practices.

Orange Superior Court expressed agreement with the proposal and commended the updates as well-crafted, reflecting CIAP's effort to address technological and ethical challenges. The court suggested allowing interpreters to retain notes related to learning new or challenging terminology for professional development and made additional recommendations to improve clarity and consistency in language. The committee appreciates this feedback and has incorporated these changes to enhance the guide's usability.

The community member's comment focused on broader concerns regarding access for indigenous and dialect-specific languages, as well as language justice and the equitable allocation of court resources. While these issues are important, they fall outside the scope of CIAP's annual agenda project to update the ethics document with current considerations and guidance to improve interpreters' ethical and professional performance in the courts.

A chart with the full text of the comments and CIAP's responses is attached at **pages TBA**.

Alternatives considered

No alternatives were considered. The 2013 ethics document is outdated, and CIAP has an annual agenda project to update the *Ethics Guide*. With the increased reliance on remote interpreting and the heightened use of social media, it was determined that an update was necessary to ensure court interpreters could navigate these evolving challenges while upholding ethical standards.

Fiscal and Operational Impacts

The proposal is expected to have a minimal fiscal impact on courts, as most updates involve guidance, procedural clarifications, and best practices. However, additional training may be required for interpreters and court staff, particularly in the areas of ethics for remote and hybrid interpretation.

Attachments and Links

1. Comment chart, at pages X-X.
2. Attachment A: *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters* (sixth edition, February 2025)
3. Link A: Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890,
www.courts.ca.gov/cms/rules/index.cfm?title=two&linkid=rule2_890
4. Link B: *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters* (fifth edition, May 2013), <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2024-03/CIP-Ethics-Manual.pdf>

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
1.	Ana [no last name provided], Community Member, Los Angeles	N	<p>There should be more access to individual dialects within the Spanish language. To be more accessible to the various dialects within the Indigenous community. With the budget that the courts are currently there should be much more material in various different languages. The courts are aware there have been discrepancies and the funds must be appropriately used. Language justice is what the courts should be representing and echoing the needs of their respective communities, the courts represent the communities. Many community members have been affected and this should be a highlight in this proposal. Now that you know better please do better and put your best foot forward serving the needs of our community. There are many languages that are being under-served due to lack of translation services please make this correction and meet the needs of many across various courts not just Los Angeles or Fullerton.</p>	<p>The committee thanks the commenter for taking the time to share their thoughts and concerns. We appreciate your commitment to language access and your advocacy for better representation of the diverse linguistic needs of California's communities.</p> <p>While the comments highlight important issues related to language justice and access to dialect-specific and indigenous language resources, these concerns fall outside the scope of this Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) 2024 Annual Agenda project, which is to revise and update the Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters.</p>
2.	Superior Court of Los Angeles by Stephanie Kuo, Legislative Analyst	AM	<p>The following comments are representative of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, and do not represent or promote the viewpoint of any particular officer or employee.</p> <p>In response to the Judicial Council of California's "ITC SP24-10: Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters," the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles (Court), agrees with proposal if the listed modifications below are incorporated.</p>	<p>The committee thanks the commenter for their comment. We acknowledge and value your helpful feedback for specific changes and have incorporated many of your suggestions (see below).</p>

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p>We believe the proposal appropriately addresses the state purpose. It is clear to the Court’s Language Access Services Department that the <i>Court Interpreter Advisory Panel</i> proposes to revise the published <i>Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters (fifth edition)</i>.</p> <p>In regard to other potential ethical considerations for individual sections, we recommend rewriting the following:</p> <p>Page 6: Officer of the Court, first paragraph, 3rd sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original: It’s a good idea to keep your cell phone off while you’re working to avoid interruptions or distractions. • Recommended: It’s a good idea to keep your cell phone off while you are interpreting to avoid interruptions or distractions. • Interpreters should keep their contact tools on and enabled when not interpreting but are working and may be available for assignments. <p>Officer of the Court, second paragraph, 1st sentence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original: Additionally, you may want to inform other judicial officers about this Ethics Guide. • Recommended: Additionally, the Court may want to inform judicial officers about the Professional Standards and Ethics for Court Interpreters guide. 	<p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p>

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p>Confidentiality of Privileged Communications, 13th bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original: Confidentiality applies to “in camera” (closed) hearings, grand juries, and juvenile matters. • Recommended: Confidentiality applies, but is not limited to, to “in camera” (closed) hearings, grand juries, and juvenile matters. • This is not a comprehensive list of confidential case types, for example adoptions, LPS, CARE Court, Parentage cases before 2023, etc. <p>Page 12:</p> <p>Do Not Give Legal Advice, 5th and 6th bullets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original: Direct them to the attorney • Recommended: Direct them to the attorney or court staff • Some parties may not have an attorney. <p>Page 13:</p> <p>Impartial Professional Relationships, add new bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended: Interpreters who are employees shall follow Court policies, procedures, and Code of Ethics Guidelines. <p>Page 17:</p> <p>Personal Conduct While Working Remotely or in a Hybrid Environment, 2nd bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original: Dress professionally and select a neutral background 	<p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p>

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended: Dress professionally and select a neutral or court approved background • Some courts provide a designated background to be used. <p>Personal Conduct While Working Remotely or in a Hybrid Environment, 10th bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended: If you are team interpreting for a remote proceeding, you must act professionally even when you are not actively interpreting. <p>Personal Conduct While Working Remotely or in a Hybrid Environment, 13th bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original: If the court is unable to assist and you believe you cannot provide a complete and accurate interpretation under the present conditions, you may recuse yourself. • Recommended: If the court is unable to assist and you believe you cannot provide a complete and accurate interpretation under the present conditions, and you cannot reasonably transition to in person interpreting, you may recuse yourself. • Some remote interpreting rooms may be in the same building as the hearing is taking place. <p>Page 21: Interpreter Conduct on Social Media, second sentence:</p>	<p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p>

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest replacing he/him and she/her pronouns with “they, their, them, etc.” to be gender neutral. <p>Page 27: Common Impediments to Performance (Live & Remote):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move: You may find you get more fatigued working remotely, owing to the additional load of staring at a video screen, lack of visual clues, inconsistent quality of audio, etc. Monitor this and request breaks as needed. • Suggest moving this paragraph to the technical equipment issues section. The paragraph before and after provide information on “how to handle” • Original: Work as a team with another interpreter, alternating 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off to prevent fatigue, ensure accuracy, and avoid interruptions to the proceedings. • Recommended: Work as a team with another interpreter, alternating with each other to prevent fatigue, ensure accuracy, and avoid interruptions to the proceedings. • Specifying the amount of time to take for a break in this section may contradict language in MOUs for team interpreting agreements. Also, this is a change from 30 minutes in prior version of the standards. 	<p>Where appropriate, the committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has added the following: “Alternating times are usually 30 minutes, but check with the court to see if there is MOU language or other guidance regarding prescribed times for alternating while team interpreting.”</p>

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move: You may find additional difficulty while working remotely due to technical factors that are out of your control, such as network bandwidth or ambient noise. • Suggest moving this paragraph to the technical equipment issues section. The paragraph before provides information on “how to handle.” • Move: You may find additional difficulty with people talking over each other while working remotely owing to technical factors that are out of your control, such as network bandwidth, ambient noise, or software limitations. • Suggest moving this paragraph to the technical equipment issues section. The paragraph before provides information on “how to handle.” • Move: You may find additional difficulty with people talking too softly, mumbling, etc. while working remotely owing to technical factors that are out of your control, such as network bandwidth, ambient noise, or software limitations. • Suggest moving this paragraph to the technical equipment issues section. The paragraph before provides information on “how to handle.” • Original: Network outages, variable bandwidth and network speed, and software glitches are out of the interpreter’s control. If technical issues preclude the interpreter from providing 	<p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p>

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
3.	Superior Court of Orange County by Alma Guzman, Language Access Services Manager	AM	<p>The proposal addresses the stated purpose by addressing the changing technological landscape of the profession while remaining faithful to the California Rules of Court.</p> <p>On page 10 and 18, where it states: “Properly delete or destroy/shred any documents shared and your interpreting notes.” Recommend allowing interpreters to retain notes related to new or challenging terminology to enhance professional development.</p> <p>There are no operational impacts that would create specific cost savings. The only perceivable cost savings would derive from compliance with the Ethics Guide as non-compliance may result in delayed proceedings.</p> <p>The updated Ethics Guide would have no impact on court operations that might necessitate changes to processes, procedures, or case management systems.</p> <p>Court interpreter ethics are not relevant to or impacted by the size of the court.</p> <p>General Comments The updates to the Ethics Guide are well-crafted, reflecting a collaborative effort by the Court Interpreter Advisory Panel (CIAP) to address modern technology and social media's impact on court interpreters. I commend the CIAP members for advancing professional standards and ethics. Well done.</p>	<p>The committee thanks the commenter for their comment. We acknowledge and value your helpful feedback for specific changes and have incorporated many of your suggestions (see below).</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p>

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

SP24-10

Court Interpreters: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p>On page 4, second paragraph in the Introduction to the Ethics Guide, delete the second “who” in the third sentence.</p> <p>On page 11, third bullet point under Sight Translation and written translation of documents, the sentence could be clearer and more concise, for example: It is generally advisable not to sight translate lengthy documents (exceeding one page) directly into the record and in open court due to the considerable time required for such translations.</p> <p>In Appendix B, under Fatigue, alternating interpreters can be impactful and distracting to the jurors and proceedings in general. Recommend every 30 to 45 minutes, instead of 20 minutes.</p>	<p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has incorporated this change.</p> <p>The committee has added the following: “Alternating times are usually 30 minutes, but check with the court to see if there is MOU language or other guidance regarding prescribed times for alternating while team interpreting.”</p>

Draft 12/02/2024



Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

Sixth Edition, February 2025



Judicial Council of California

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Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters

Introduction

The *Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters* (hereafter “Ethics Guide”) provides guidance for certified and registered court interpreters on how to conduct themselves appropriately on the job. The Ethics Guide also provides guidance for provisionally qualified interpreters, who assist the court when a certified or registered interpreter is not available. The Ethics Guide can also be used as a reference for other court staff such as judges, attorneys, court clerks, and bailiffs.

The ethical and professional standards outlined in the Ethics Guide offer guidance on how interpreters can navigate a range of ethically challenging situations they may encounter in their work. These challenges could arise while working in person, remotely, in a traditional courtroom, in a hybrid courtroom, or at a proceeding outside of court. These challenges are shared by all persons who may participate in or observe interpreted court proceedings: the judge, attorneys, parties, jury members, and other court staff. It is important for everyone to have a clear, shared understanding of the interpreter’s role, responsibilities, and limitations.

The Ethics Guide is based on the California Rules of Court, [rule 2.890](#) (Professional conduct for interpreters), which every interpreter should be familiar with. Interpreters are also bound by the laws found in the California Evidence Code [sections 750–755.5](#).

Interpreter ethics is an evolving topic, and new ethical challenges continually present themselves for interpreters. Under the direction of the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel and its Professional Standards and Ethics subcommittee, the Ethics Guide has been updated from the 2013 edition to include new sections on ethics for remote and hybrid interpreting and social media.¹

The Ethics Guide is not intended to be a substitute for formal interpreter ethics training. The topics herein are covered in much greater depth in the online “Interpreter Orientation” course that is required for all newly credentialed court interpreters and the required “Ethics Training” virtual workshop, which is required within a new interpreter’s first two years. Although newly credentialed interpreters may take their required “Ethics Training” at any time during their first two-year compliance cycle, it is recommended to do so as early as possible, preferably prior to accepting court assignments if this would be practical. It is critical for new interpreters to have a solid understanding of interpreter ethics and professional standards prior to accepting interpreting assignments, whether for courtroom work or work in the private sector. It is the

¹ This document replaces and updates the previous version from 2013. A downloadable PDF version of this document can be found [here](#). The current document provides in Appendix E links and attachments for content that were previously incorporated as text in the main paginated document. This change was made to streamline the document and make it easier for interpreters to read on screen and for Judicial Council staff to update, while still preserving the detailed content from prior versions for those who wish to download or print out attachments.

interpreter’s responsibility to review and become familiar with the ethical and professional standards that are applicable to their job.

An “Ethics Refresher” course is also available for experienced interpreters. This course is now required to be taken every two years by all credentialed interpreters after an interpreter’s first two years. It is a good practice and strongly recommended for interpreters at every level to incorporate some ethics training into their continuing education during every two-year compliance cycle. More information on the free ethics courses offered by the Judicial Council for interpreters can be found on the Language Access Services “[Learning Management System](#)” webpage.

Training, specific judicial education, bench cards, and other resources on how to work with an interpreter are also available for court staff and judges. Court staff should contact the Court Interpreters Program or the Center for Judicial Education and Research for more information.²

Officer of the Court

Interpreters are officers of the court and as such are expected to uphold the highest personal and professional standards of integrity and accuracy, not only for their interpretations but also in their business practices.

This includes, but is not limited to, submitting timely and accurate billing to reflect only actual work performed and only mileage and/or travel time authorized for and by the court. Deliberately falsifying hours or billing, whether the interpreter is a court employee or contractor, is grounds for review and potential revocation of the interpreter’s credential. It may result in the interpreter being banned from working in court and from recertifying or reinstating his or her credential. For more information, see the “[Court Interpreters Complaints](#)” page on the Language Access Services website.

Further, as officers of the court, interpreters should always conduct themselves professionally, whether working in person or remotely, whether in court or in another environment. Interpreters should always follow these professional standards and ethics, whether they are communicating in person or on social media platforms.

Professional conduct includes dressing professionally and being punctual. If working remotely, allow sufficient time for logging in and testing your computer setup. If working in person, allow enough time to park, pass through building security, and find the location of your assignment.

² Ethics courses for interpreters at every level are available from Judicial Council approved continuing education providers. A list of these providers can be found at <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/publication/list-providers-court-interpreter-minimum-continuing-education-cimce-credit>. Additional resources on interpreter ethics have been included in Appendix D of this document. You will also find more information on interpreter ethics by searching on the National Center for State Courts’ website (www.ncsc.org).

You must also learn and follow the required courtroom protocols, such as where to position yourself and how to address the court. Professional conduct applies to appropriate use of cell phones and smart phones on the job. It's a good idea to keep your cell phone off while you are interpreting to avoid interruptions or distractions. **Avoid glancing at your phone while working; it is a serious detriment to your ability to maintain your focus and concentration, both of which are required to deliver a complete and accurate interpretation.** If you must refer to an electronic dictionary on your cell phone while interpreting, please do so discreetly. If you are unable to do so, or feel like it might break your concentration while interpreting, please request a short recess. **Interpreters should keep their contact tools on and enabled when they are not interpreting but are working and may be available for assignments.**

Additionally, the court may want to inform judicial officers about the Ethics Guide. They should also have a good understanding of the interpreters' responsibilities and limitations to ensure a smooth, problem-free interpreted proceeding.

Rules of Conduct for Court Interpreters

The rules of conduct for court interpreters are documented in the California Rules of Court, as previously referenced. This rule is discussed individually below by subsection, along with the ethical and professional conduct implications for interpreters.

Rule 2.890(a) (Representation of Qualifications)

An interpreter must accurately and completely represent his or her certifications, training, and relevant experience.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(a).)

Best practices for appropriate representation of your qualifications include:

- Maintain your credential in good standing by meeting all compliance requirements and paying annual renewal fees. See the [Compliance Requirements for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters](#).
- **Wear your badge so that it is easily visible when you are working; take off your badge in accordance with your court's security protocol and when you are not working.**
- **There may be security protocols that require the interpreter to keep their badge on while they are in secured court spaces.**
- You may also leave your badge on to identify yourself, if needed, so that other parties would refrain from discussing case details in your presence.
- Do not misrepresent your credentials or the status of your credential to obtain work. For example, if an interpreter is certified in Mandarin and speaks but is not certified in Cantonese, he or she should not interpret in the noncertified language unless provisionally qualified to do so by a judge.

California does not currently offer an examination to become credentialed as an American Sign Language (ASL) court interpreter because there is no entity available at this time to administer certification exams in our state. Certified ASL court interpreters (currently in good standing) may possess any of the following credentials:

- Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L), which was formerly issued by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.
- Legal Interpreting Certificate, which was formerly issued by the California Coalition of Agencies Serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. before October 20, 2006.
- The Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Court Interpreter Certificate (CIC), which is currently offered and issued by the Texas Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services.

California is now offering reciprocity for ASL court interpreters who have passed the Texas BEI CIC and are credentialed by Texas and in good standing. Please refer to the "[Certified American Sign Language Interpreter](#)" webpage for updated information.

Rule 2.890(b) (Complete and Accurate Interpretation)

An interpreter must use his or her best skills and judgment to interpret accurately without embellishing, omitting, or editing. When interpreting for a party, the interpreter must interpret everything that is said during the entire proceeding. When interpreting for a witness, the interpreter must interpret everything that is said during the witness's testimony.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(b).)

Interpreter's oath

Regarding your interpreter's oath, please keep the following in mind:

- You must ensure your signed oath is on file with the court. If you do not have an oath on file with the court, you will be sworn in at the proceeding at the beginning of your assignment.
- For each proceeding, you will swear to "well and truly interpret to the best of your ability completely and accurately," prior to interpreting on the record.
- Please take your oath to heart. Keep in mind there is much at stake for the limited-English-proficient individuals for whom you will be interpreting. The judges, jurors, attorneys, court reporters, witnesses, defendants, and victims will have only your interpretation to rely on.

Complete and accurate interpretation guidance

The following provide guidance for delivering a complete and accurate interpretation:

- Interpret everything said faithfully and accurately, conserving all elements of the source

message in the target language.

- Do not mimic the speaker's gestures, and do not use gestures yourself or be overly dramatic to convey emotion.
- Never address a witness or speaker directly; this will create confusion and potentially the appearance of bias.
- All communication from the interpreter should be directed to the judge, attorney, or court reporter.
- Always refer to yourself in the third person as "the interpreter."
- If you are interpreting remotely, ensure your screen name indicates "Interpreter."
- Always stay on camera when working remotely, unless taking an official break.
- If onscreen glare is causing additional fatigue that could impact the completeness or accuracy of your interpretation, request to turn your camera off.
- In a civil matter, if the interpreter is instructed to not interpret objections, he or she can make a statement on the record to the effect that "per the professional standards and ethics guidelines for interpreters, published by the Judicial Council, interpreters are expected to interpret everything said during the proceeding. At the request of [INSERT ATTORNEY'S NAME], the interpreter is not interpreting colloquy between attorneys, and objections, unless specifically instructed to do so." You may adjust the specific wording as needed so that it fits your particular situation.

For additional guidance on common issues interpreters encounter while trying to deliver a complete and accurate interpretation, see [Appendix A: Common Issues for Complete and Accurate Interpretation](#).

Rule 2.890(c) (Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest)

(1) Impartiality

An interpreter must be impartial and unbiased and must refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias.

(2) Disclosure of conflicts

An interpreter must disclose to the judge and to all parties any actual or apparent conflict of interest. Any condition that interferes with the objectivity of an interpreter is a conflict of interest. A conflict may exist if the interpreter is acquainted with or related to any witness or party to the action or if the interpreter has an interest in the outcome of the case.

(3) Conduct

An interpreter must not engage in conduct creating the appearance of bias.

(4) Statements

An interpreter must not make statements to any person about the merits of the case until the litigation has concluded.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(c).)

Opinions and statements

Best practices for appropriate managing of opinions and statements include:

- Do not express opinions about the cases you work on, or parties involved in your cases.
- If an attorney asks your opinion, politely explain that interpreters are not allowed to express opinions about cases they work on.
- Do not share opinions about your cases with other interpreters.
- Make no verbal or written statements about a case, its merits, its parties, or its outcome.
- Do not post or respond to posts on social media about the cases you work on.
- Do not make statements to the press or media about cases you are working on.
- Consider refraining from making statements altogether to the media or on social media about cases you have worked on even after the case has concluded.

Emotions

Best practices for appropriate managing and handling of emotions on the job include:

- Remain neutral and always maintain a professional demeanor.
- Do not display your emotions (e.g., anger, pity, fear, disgust, empathy) as you are interpreting, regardless of the message. Doing so could bias the jury, witnesses, court personnel, or others.
- If you feel unable to maintain your composure while interpreting, request a break.

Conflict of interest and interpreter bias

A conflict of interest is when the interpreter has a personal interest in or could personally benefit from the outcome of a case. Below are some best practices for how to avoid conflicts of interest and the perception of interpreter bias:

- Immediately inform attorneys or the judge, or both, of any conflict of interest or potential or perceived conflict of interest.
- Disclose prior involvement in a case to the parties, attorneys, and the judge.
- Do not develop a bias, do not give the appearance of bias, and do not take sides.
- Treat all parties equally, neutrally, and professionally.
- Accept no gifts, favors, tips, or gratuities from the parties, attorneys, court staff, etc. This also includes things such as accepting or offering rides (for money or gratis) to and from court. Though this seems innocent enough, it could create the appearance of bias.
- Refrain from any behaviors that could create the appearance of bias (e.g., hugging a client or an attorney).

- For interpreters of languages of lesser diffusions, where there are not as many certified or registered interpreters available, take care to not work outside of court on a case you will be interpreting for in court to also avoid the appearance of bias or a conflict of interest.
- If, because of a shortage of interpreters in a particular language, an interpreter must work on both sides of a case, maintaining neutrality, avoiding even the slightest appearance of bias, and maintaining strictest standards of confidentiality for all information will be required.

Personal interactions

Below are some best practices for how to manage personal interactions with parties, attorneys, and others, which will help you to avoid the appearance of bias or a potential conflict of interest. These practices will also assist you in avoiding other ethical breaches, such as inadvertently giving legal advice:

- Do not have direct, personal conversations with clients you're interpreting for.
- Do not directly interact with members of the jury or discuss the case with them even after the matter is resolved.
- Do not interact with court or law enforcement personnel while you are working on a case except in a professional capacity.
- Refer questions from the public about the case to appropriate court personnel.
- You may be able to avoid potentially compromising situations by taking off your interpreter badge when you are not working—for example, when you leave your assignment to take your lunch break or when you are on your way out of the courthouse after work. However, it may also be appropriate to leave it on to identify yourself in case you are surrounded by jurors or similarly while entering or leaving the courtroom. Use your discretion based on the specifics of the situation and court policy.
- As noted above, there may be security protocols that require the interpreter to keep their badge on while they are in secured court spaces.
- Do not hand out business cards while on the job or solicit for additional work. If someone asks for your personal contact information, refer them to the court personnel (i.e. judge, attorney, interpreter services coordinator for the court) as appropriate.

Rule 2.890(d) (Confidentiality of Privileged Communications)

An interpreter must not disclose privileged communications between counsel and client to any person.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(d).)

Below are some best practices for managing confidential and privileged communications:

- Treat all information as confidential.
- If interpreting remotely, you should be in a secure, private place, free of distractions.
- Ensure your computer audio is not leaking into the public domain.

- Properly destroy all documents shared for the proceeding and your case-related interpreting notes. Note: You may retain your notes related to new or challenging terminology to enhance your professional development.
- Interpreters are bound by the same rules of confidentiality as attorneys.
- An interpreter may not be called as a witness against a client he or she has interpreted for if the communications were privileged.
- If an interpreter has interpreted nonprivileged communications for a client, he or she can potentially be called as a witness against that client.
- The best way for an interpreter to avoid inadvertently being called as a witness against a client is to understand his or her role, responsibilities, and limitations, and to not exceed them. Remain neutral at all times and take care to avoid giving any appearance of bias.
- Attorney-client privilege does not apply the same to interpreted communications between prosecutors and prosecution witnesses as it does between an attorney and a defendant.
- An interpreter should not reveal the content of interpreted conversations.
- If there is any doubt about confidentiality, do not share information.
- Do not break confidentiality unless ordered by a judge to do so.
- Confidentiality applies, but is not limited to, to “in camera” (closed) hearings, grand juries, and juvenile matters.
- Do not comment on evidence you see or hear prior to it being presented in court.

Sight translation and written translation of documents

- California certified court or registered interpreters are authorized in a judicial proceeding to interpret orally the verbal content of documents (sight translation), but the Judicial Council does not otherwise test or certify an interpreter’s written translation skills.
- If an interpreter is asked to sight translate any document into the record in court, whether a written document, text messages on a cell phone, an email, etc., it is recommended to request a brief recess to review and assess the material.
- It is generally advisable not to sight translate lengthy documents (exceeding one page) directly into the record and in open court due to the considerable time required for such translations.
- If the document is long, dense, and/or complex, and would require the interpreter to do additional research and preparation prior to translating (either sight translating or translating in writing), when returning from the break, inform the court of this and request the time necessary to prepare.
- You may also remind the court it is in the best interest of all parties to take the necessary time to prepare the translation to ensure completeness and accuracy.
- If the source material is short (less than one page) and the interpreter believes he or she can provide a smooth, complete, and accurate sight translation into the record in open court, then that would be appropriate, and he or she can proceed. Exercise caution and discretion.
- While the Judicial Council does not otherwise test or certify an interpreter’s written translation skills, Government Code section 27293 permits California county clerks to certify documents translated into English only if the document has been translated

by [American Translators Association](#)—certified translators, California certified court interpreters, or California registered interpreters.³

- If you are asked to provide a written translation of a document, apply the same standards of care and accuracy as for verbal interpretation.
- If you undertake a written translation, never go beyond your translation skill, especially if the translation you performed will be certified by a county clerk.
- Confidentiality also applies to translations and transcriptions of written materials.
- You may be required to testify about written translations, so be careful and check your translation.

Rule 2.890(e) (Do Not Give Legal Advice)

An interpreter must not give legal advice to parties and witnesses, nor recommend specific attorneys or law firms.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(e).)

Below are some best practices for interpreters regarding not giving legal advice:

- On the record, interpret the speaker’s questions; do not answer them.
- If the speaker addresses you (the interpreter) directly, interpret exactly what has been said. If there is ambiguity, allow the attorneys or judge to request clarification.
- Off the record, do not answer questions from clients regarding their cases or any other legal matter; explain you are not an attorney and you do not know the answer.
- You may politely and briefly answer general questions such as hours or time and date of the next proceeding or directions to the restroom or parking lot.
- Do not discuss a client’s case with him or her; if a client has questions about his or her case, direct them to the attorney.
- Do not discuss a client’s case with the client’s friends or family, or other witnesses. **Direct them to the attorney or court staff if the party does not have an attorney.**
- For self-represented parties, do not suggest that they could benefit from an attorney and do not make any specific referrals to any attorneys.

Rule 2.890(f) (Impartial Professional Relationships)

An interpreter must maintain an impartial, professional relationship with all court officers, attorneys, jurors, parties, and witnesses.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(f).)

Best practices for interpreters regarding impartial professional relationships include:

³ You may also review the relevant Government Code sections regarding written translations at https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=27293.

- The interpreter is an officer of the court and must always remain neutral.
- The interpreter may be called on to assist any or all the parties during the case.
- The interpreter should ensure they are not perceived as being on one “team” or another.
- Remain as unobtrusive as possible; do not draw attention to yourself.
- Your job is to facilitate communication between the parties through complete and accurate interpretation, no more and no less.
- Address parties formally—for example, Mr. [NAME] or Ms. [NAME], using appropriate pronouns.
- Address the judge as “Your Honor”; address attorneys as “Counsel” or Mr. or Ms. [NAME].
- Interpreters should not distribute business cards or solicit work while on the job.
- Interpreters should be judicious on professional networking and social media sites.
- The standards of professional conduct apply to online as well as in-person situations.
- Interpreters who are employees shall follow court policies, procedures, and Code of Ethics guidelines.

Rule 2.890(g) (Continuing Education and Duty to the Profession)

An interpreter must, through continuing education, maintain and improve his or her interpreting skills and knowledge of procedures used by the courts. An interpreter should seek to elevate the standards of performance of the interpreting profession.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(g).)

Court interpreting is a highly regarded profession that requires a high level of skill to perform well. It requires a commitment to lifelong learning and continuing education. Regular ethics training will prepare you to handle new challenges as they come up on the job.

Some best practices for interpreters regarding continuing education and duty to the profession include:

- As much as possible, familiarize yourself with the facts of the case before the case begins.
- Identify potential ethical issues ahead of time so you can respond appropriately.
- Study specialized technical terminology in advance so you will be well prepared.
- Identify glossaries or resources you might need, and have them ready to refer to.
- If you are using a tablet or smart phone as a reference, be unobtrusive with it in court.
- Study jury instructions ahead of time; you will need to interpret them in their entirety.
- If you are not able to interpret for a case accurately and completely for any reason, you must recuse yourself.
- Inform the judge or the attorneys you are unable to interpret if the level of difficulty and complexity of the case exceeds your current skill level.

- If you must recuse yourself, you might say something like, “Your Honor, the interpreter is unable to provide a complete and accurate interpretation due to [excessive fatigue, source material is beyond the interpreter’s current abilities, etc.; INSERT REASON HERE] and must recuse him(her)self.”
- You might also consider requesting a recess, alerting the interpreter services manager and requesting assistance to properly recuse yourself.

Ongoing training:

- Ensure you are always in compliance with your continuing education hours and minimum number of professional assignments. For more details, see the [Compliance Requirements for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters](#).
- Incorporate ethics training into your continuing education every compliance cycle. The ethics courses from the Judicial Council can be repeated, but an interpreter can only receive Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education credit for them once per compliance cycle.
- On-demand ethics courses from the Judicial Council can be reviewed or retaken at any time. Visit Language Access Services’ [“Learning Management System”](#) webpage for details.
- Continue your professional development by networking with colleagues and joining professional interpreting and translation associations.
- Familiarize yourself with technical equipment for interpreting such as headsets and software for remote interpreting, including video remote interpreting (VRI) software
- For more information on Ethical Challenges for Remote Interpreting, see the subsequent section of this document.
- You will also find more information on VRI on the [“Video Remote Interpreting \(VRI\)”](#) webpage.

Rule 2.890(h) (Assessing and Reporting Impediments to Performance)

An interpreter must assess at all times his or her ability to perform interpreting services. If an interpreter has any reservation about his or her ability to satisfy an assignment competently, the interpreter must immediately disclose that reservation to the court or other appropriate authority.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(h).)

For guidance on how to handle common impediments to performance for interpreters, see [Appendix B: Common Impediments to Performance \(Live and Remote\)](#).

Rule 2.890(i) (Duty to Report Ethical Violations)

An interpreter must report to the court or other appropriate authority any effort to impede the interpreter's compliance with the law, this rule, or any other official policy governing court interpreting and legal translating.

(Cal. Rules of Court, rule 2.890(i).)

Below are some best practices for interpreters regarding reporting ethical violations:

- You are required to report any attempt to induce or encourage you to violate any statute, rule, regulation, or policy related to court interpreting.
- You may report these violations to the judge, interpreter coordinator, supervising attorneys, district attorney, or presiding judge of the court.
- Examples of an ethical violation would be if a person tries to bribe an interpreter to not interpret certain testimony, to change what the witness or defendant said, or to tamper with evidence.
- An ethical violation that occurs during a remote proceeding should be reported the same as if it had happened in person.

Ethical Challenges for Remote and Hybrid Interpreting

This section expands on some of the ethical challenges that are unique to remote and hybrid interpreting. Hybrid interpreting is when some of the parties are appearing in person and some are appearing remotely. It also provides guidance on how to effectively navigate these challenges when they come up.

This topic is covered in greater depth in the ethics and VRI courses offered to interpreters by the Judicial Council. For more details, visit Language Access Services' "[Learning Management System](#)" webpage.

Remote and Hybrid Interpreting Generally

Interpreters should remember that everything that applies to in-person interpreting also applies to remote and hybrid interpreting. Remote and hybrid interpreting, however, introduce some extra complexities. The Ethics Guide should be followed whether you are working in person, in a formal courtroom environment, or in a hybrid courtroom, or appearing remotely.

Interpreting Credentials

Interpreters should keep the following in mind when working remotely or on a hybrid assignment regarding the appropriate way to represent their credentials:

- Use your screen name to identify yourself as the “Interpreter” and identify your language (e.g., “Mandarin Interpreter”).
- Remain on camera, unless on a break or you have received permission to turn your camera off to reduce fatigue from screen glare.
- Show your badge to all parties by holding it up to the camera; type your name and certification number into the chat if requested to do so.
- Wear your badge while you are on camera.

Being Sworn In Remotely

Your interpreter oath has the same force and effect while working remotely as it does when you are working in person:

- You will be sworn in prior to the proceeding as if you were interpreting in person.
- Your oath remains in effect even when you are not on screen.

Personal Conduct While Working Remotely or in a Hybrid Environment

Some best practices regarding your personal conduct while working remotely or in a hybrid environment include:

- Be aware that the proceeding may be recorded (even unintentionally), and conduct yourself in the same manner as if you were working in person.
- Dress professionally and select a neutral or court approved background, or blur your background to minimize visual distractions for participants. Do not blur your background if you are providing ASL interpretation, as doing so can interfere with the clarity of signed communication. Some courts provide a designated background to be used.
- Request participants in the proceeding blur their backgrounds to minimize distractions if this is becoming problematic, except when providing ASL interpretation, as a blurred background can interfere with the clarity of signed communication.
- Make sure you have sufficient connectivity and connection speed, and use professional-quality equipment such as a modern laptop or desktop computer, and a noise-canceling headset with a good microphone, and keep all software versions up to date.
- Have a backup plan for equipment failures, such as a second laptop or desktop computer, tablet, or smartphone, so the proceeding does not have to be rescheduled.
- Make sure your work area is set up comfortably, so you have enough room for all your equipment, note-taking items, etc.
- Be on time and allow sufficient time to log in and test equipment, connectivity, and software.
- Request a copy of any introductory statement the court would like you to recite, so you can review it before being sworn in.
- Be prepared to interpret the court interpreter's introductory statement regarding video remote interpretations; content may vary.
- If you are team interpreting for a remote proceeding, you must act professionally even when you are not actively interpreting.
- Avoid having multitasking draw attention to yourself while working remotely.
- Should you experience technical issues while working remotely, inform the court and the parties immediately, and remind them that for some limited-English-proficient court users the remote technology platforms are new and confusing to use. Request extra time or a longer recess if necessary to ensure the proceeding continues smoothly.
- If you are unable to provide a complete and accurate interpretation because of issues with a remote or hybrid environment, inform the court immediately and request assistance. If the court is unable to assist and you believe you cannot provide a complete and accurate interpretation under the present conditions, and you cannot reasonably transition to in-person interpreting, you may recuse yourself. Note: Some remote interpreting rooms may be available in the same building while the hearing is taking place.
- You may also inform the interpreter coordinator or file a complaint.

Complete and Accurate Interpretation

You are ethically bound to provide a complete and accurate interpretation while working remotely, despite technical glitches that may at times make that more difficult than while interpreting in person. Some best practices to assist you are below:

- Never interpret anything that you have not heard completely or fully understood.
- Request a repetition or a read back if there are technical issues such as frozen screen, low bandwidth, or too much background noise.
- If technical issues become an impediment to a complete and accurate interpretation, you must inform the court and the parties immediately.

Impartiality and Avoidance of Conflicts of Interest

Some important points for interpreters to consider regarding impartiality and avoidance of conflicts of interest include:

- Use the chat only when instructed by an attorney, judge, or court reporter. Do not use it for anything unrelated to the current proceeding. However, it is acceptable to use the chat to communicate with court staff.
- Provide only the information requested, such as your name and certification number.
- Turn off your camera and mute audio during breaks.
- Do not have personal conversations with any parties during a remote proceeding, even during breaks.
- If any of the parties, attorneys, or clients inquire about the future availability of the interpreter, refer them to the appropriate person, such as the interpreter coordinator, or defer the discussion until after the proceeding.

Confidentiality and Privileged Communications

When you are interpreting remotely, there are additional important considerations around confidentiality and privileged communications, such as:

- If interpreting remotely, you should be in a secure, private place, free of distractions. Do not provide remote interpreting services from your car or any other public place where other people can hear you such as a coffee shop, restaurant, or the public library.
- Do not utilize a shared space, if possible, for remote interpreting; use a private room.
- Keep pets and children off camera; have a neutral background or blur your background for privacy. Do not blur your background if providing ASL interpretation.
- Ensure audio is not leaking into the public domain.
- Ensure any documents shared with you electronically are secure.
- Properly destroy all documents shared for the proceeding and your case-related interpreting notes. Note: You may retain your notes related to new or challenging terminology to enhance your professional development.
- Do not use third-party software to enhance audio or video without prior authorization.

Do Not Give Legal Advice

Some best practices for not giving legal advice when interpreting remotely include:

- Do not give legal advice or answer any questions about legal matters when interpreting remotely.
- Remote proceedings may feel less formal than in person, but they are not.
- Information you provide during breaks or in chat may later be construed as legal advice.

Impartial Professional Relationships

There are additional challenges with maintaining impartiality in a remote setting, such as:

- Do not use the chat feature for personal comments or conversation; doing so may create the appearance of bias.
- Do not have off-the-record conversations with clients or attorneys during a remote proceeding.

Continuing Education and Duty to the Profession

If you will be working remotely, even just occasionally, you may want to include training on the new types of remote conferencing technologies that are used for interpreting. Some best practices for interpreters around continuing education and duty to the profession as they relate to remote interpreting are:

- Prepare for remote assignments the same way you would prepare for in-person events.
- Have any reference materials or other resources (e.g., glossaries or dictionaries) you might need for the assignment ready, open, and available on your desktop.
- If you are not able to interpret for a case accurately and completely because of technical equipment issues, you must inform the judge, attorneys, and parties and recuse yourself.
- Familiarize yourself with technical equipment for interpreting, such as devices, headsets, and remote interpreting and VRI software.
- Incorporate technical equipment training into your continuing education hours. Stay up to date with VRI practices by accessing recommended guidelines, online training modules, live and recorded webinars, and various support materials available through the Judicial Council of California.
- See [Appendix D: Guidelines for Video Remote Interpreting](#).

Common Impediments for Remote Interpreting

You must report any impediments to interpreting whether you are working in a remote or in-person proceeding. For a summary of common impediments interpreters encounter while working remotely, see [Appendix B: Common Impediments to Performance \(Live and Remote\)](#).

Duty to Report Ethical Violations

You are required to report any attempt to induce or encourage you to violate any statute, rule, regulation, or policy related to court interpreting whether working in person or remotely.

Any ethical violation that occurs during a remote interpreted proceeding should be reported the same as if it had happened in person.

Technical Issues or Other Problems

If you experience sporadic technical issues or any other problems during a remote or hybrid event, report issues or feedback to the interpreter coordinator after the event. This information will help the court to make improvements.

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Interpreter Conduct on Social Media

This section expands on the Ethics Guide as it applies to interpreter conduct on social media. It reviews the ethical challenges that may apply to interpreters who utilize social media platforms including, but not limited to, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn. It also provides guidance for interpreters on how to navigate some of these challenges and examines how rule 2.890 of the California Rules of Court can be applied.

Appropriate social media conduct for interpreters is also covered in more detail in the ethics courses available from the Judicial Council. For more information, visit the Language Access Services “[Learning Management System](#)” webpage.

Interpreters on Social Media Generally

Interpreters should remember that the same ethical standards that apply in person also apply on social media. The internet poses additional challenges in that once something is propagated on the internet or social media, it has a very long shelf life and may remain searchable forever. It may also be impossible to delete. Further, once information, opinion, or images are posted on social media, the author (in this case, the interpreter) loses control of where, how, when, and by whom these things may be modified, or they may be taken out of context.

With that in mind, consider how the professional standards and ethics for court interpreters should be followed when utilizing social media. While all are important, the most important ethical cannons for interpreters on social media deal with impartiality and confidentiality.

The simplest solution is to keep your work life as an interpreter and your personal life on social media completely separate.

Representation of Qualifications

While on social media, remember:

- Do not misrepresent qualifications on professional networking sites such as LinkedIn for the purpose of getting work.
- Do not post images of your badge or credential or certification number. These could be stolen from the internet and used by another person.

If you find someone is using your credential, report it immediately to the Judicial Council.

Personal Conduct on Social Media

Interpreters should keep in mind that everything on the internet is considered discoverable, meaning it may be identified later as a document that is demanded for inspection. Below are some best practices for interpreter personal conduct on social media:

- Remember that your personal conduct online and on social media will reflect on you in your in-person, professional work.
- You may not be able to delete something from the internet that you later regret posting.
- Social media posts may be used as evidence in court proceedings.

Impartiality

Social media provides a platform where many people feel comfortable aligning with specific causes or expressing their opinions. There are many opportunities, and increasing pressure, to monetize your social media presence. However, interpreters should keep the following in mind as it applies to behavior on social media:

- An interpreter should not make specific endorsements or professional referrals on social media—for example, endorsements of or referrals to attorneys, interpreting agencies, doctors, or other professionals.
- Be aware that your social media “friend relationships” could also give the appearance of bias or conflict of interest.

Confidentiality and Privileged Communications

The following are some best practices for protection of confidentiality and privileged communications on social media:

- Never post confidential information on any social media site.
- Refrain from posting about your cases on social media.
- Do not post opinions about cases or their merits or any of the parties.
- Be mindful that anything you post may be linked to by another site or lifted and used out of context by another person.
- Do not post photos from your interpreting assignments.

Do Not Give Legal Advice

Do not answer any legal questions or give legal advice or make any statements that could be construed as doing so on social media.

Appendix A: Common Issues for Complete and Accurate Interpretation

Interpreting Challenge	How to Handle	Example
Maintaining style and register of the source message	Maintain the same style and register as the original message; preserve all nuances of the source message in the target language. Do not add or embellish; do not omit anything.	If the speaker says, “gentleman” do not interpret it as “guy.”
Interpreting idiomatic expressions, proverbs, figurative language	If the speaker uses an idiomatic expression, proverb, or figurative language in the source message, interpret to an equivalent in the target. If an equivalent is unavailable, interpret literally.	An example of an idiomatic expression is “When it rains it pours.”
Money and measurements	Do not clarify or convert units of money or measurements	If the speaker says “20 kilos” you must not convert that to pounds.
Third-person references	Do not omit, edit, or try to “clean up” any third-person references; simply interpret exactly what the person says. Let the judge and attorneys instruct the speaker as needed.	“Tell them I was home last night,” should be literally interpreted as such.
Repetitions and redundancies	Include all repetitions and redundancies, false starts, fragments, and fillers in your interpretation. Your interpretation should be as if the speaker had spoken the text in the target language.	“It was a very large, gigantic, enormous car,” must be interpreted with all three adjectives.
Ambiguity	If the original message is ambiguous, conserve the ambiguity in your interpretation. If you are unable to interpret into the target language <u>because</u> of ambiguity, request clarification before interpreting.	

Interpreting Challenge	How to Handle	Example
Double negative	Interpret double negatives as such; let the judge or attorneys request clarification.	An example of a double negative is "It was not abnormal."
Nonsensical or nonresponsive	If the original message is nonsensical or nonresponsive, interpret this into the target language.	"Yeah, well, right, okay, right?" should be interpreted as such.
Profanity	If the speaker uses profanity, interpret the profanity into the target language.	
Interpreter doesn't understand a question or an answer or didn't hear something	Request a repetition or a read back. Never interpret something you have not completely heard and understood.	
Speaker (e.g., attorney, judge) makes an error when speaking	Interpret the error.	
Another interpreter makes an error	Confer with your colleague off the record and agree how to handle the situation. Allow your colleague to correct the error.	At the first opportunity ask for a break in an unobtrusive way (e.g., "May the interpreters have a moment to confer?").
You make an error while interpreting, or realize later that you made an error	Correct the record as soon as you realize you've made an error. Refer to your dictionary or other reference materials as needed.	At the first opportunity, request a chance to correct the record, (e.g., "The interpreter would like to correct the record. When the witness said 'house,' they meant to say 'cottage.'")
Speaker uses an unfamiliar term	Never guess; refer to a dictionary or confer with a colleague prior to interpreting.	
Speaker uses a culturally bound term (e.g., one for which there is no translation)	Leave it in the source language and spell it for the court reporter. If any further explanation is required, let the judge or attorney request it.	
Speaker uses an English word, or responds in English	Leave the word in English; repeat what the speaker says even if it's in English.	

Interpreting Challenge	How to Handle	Example
	<p>The court reporter is only taking down what you, the interpreter, says.</p>	
<p>Speaker asks the interpreter a direct question</p>	<p>Interpret what is said without explaining or clarifying; do not answer the speakers question directly.</p>	<p>If a witness says, "Do I have to answer that?" it should be interpreted as such.</p>
<p>Interpreter needs to address the court, or one of the parties directly</p>	<p>Refer to yourself in the third person as "the interpreter."</p>	<p>Never refer to yourself as "I." Instead, say, "May the interpreter request a clarification?"</p>
<p>Your interpretation is challenged by a party in court</p>	<p>If your interpretation is challenged, regardless of the source of the challenge, you should request a recess to do some research.</p> <p>If after you have completed your research you agree with the correction proposed, make the correction to the record as noted previously.</p> <p>If you do not agree, state that the interpreter stands by their interpretation. Explain your reasoning if necessary. Be polite and professional. You may want to emphasize that you are certified by the State of California to provide interpretation services in court, and the challenging party is not, if this is the case.</p> <p>If your interpretation is challenged by another interpreter, or if you wish to challenge another interpreter's interpretation, request a recess to confer.</p>	<p>You may say something like, "The interpreter stands by her interpretation."</p>

Interpreting Challenge	How to Handle	Example
Interpreting for a witness who is not a defendant	Interpret everything said, including all objections and colloquy unless otherwise instructed by the court	

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Appendix B: Common Impediments to Performance (Live and Remote)

Impediment	How to Handle
Fatigue	<p>Request a break before you are so mentally fatigued that it interferes with your ability to interpret accurately.</p> <p>Work as a team with another interpreter, alternating with each other to prevent fatigue, ensure accuracy, and avoid interruptions to the proceedings. Alternating times are usually 30 minutes, but check with the court to see if there is MOU language or other guidance regarding prescribed times for alternating while team interpreting.</p>
Multiple overlapping communications	Work as a team with another interpreter if possible.
Audibility	If you cannot hear what is being said, in person or remotely because of technical issues, do not guess or infer or continue. Advise the judge, attorneys, or other parties that you cannot hear what is being said.
Position in the courtroom	If your position in the courtroom makes it more difficult or impossible to interpret accurately and completely, inform the judge or the attorneys and request to move.
People talking over each other	Inform the judge, attorneys, or parties that you can only interpret for one person at a time. Ask for assistance and repetition of what was said.
People talking too softly, mumbling, etc.	If you cannot hear or understand what is being said, do not guess what the speaker said. Advise the judge, attorneys, or other parties that you cannot hear or understand what is being said.
No preappearance interview with client or instructions for interpreted proceedings	<p>Request a few moments to become familiar with the client's manner of speaking, accent, etc. if you feel you need to do this to ensure a complete and accurate interpretation.</p> <p>For more details on preappearance interviews and instructions for interpreted proceedings, see standard 2.10 and standard 2.11 of the California Standards for Judicial Administration.</p>
Instructions to not interpret during a court proceeding	Inform the judge you have been instructed to not interpret; allow the judge to decide how to handle.
Documents and sight translation	Do not begin translating until asked to do so. Allow the attorney to describe the document for the record and wait for instructions.

Impediment	How to Handle
Interpreting audio or video in real time in court	<p>Interpreting audio and video in real-time is typically not performed spontaneously; request adequate time to review materials beforehand to ensure accurate interpretation</p> <p>If, after reviewing, you do not believe you can accurately interpret it in real time, request a transcription.</p>
Cultural or linguistic expertise	<p>Avoid testifying as an expert witness in a case you are working on; do not testify in any case on topics that are beyond your personal expertise.</p> <p>Do not comment on these matters, even informally, with attorneys.</p>
Technical equipment issues	<p>Network outages, variable bandwidth and network speed, and software glitches are out of the interpreter's control. If technical issues preclude the interpreter from providing complete and accurate interpretation, the interpreter must inform the judge, attorney, and parties.</p> <p>Technical issues may include things such as software limitations, technical network bandwidth, or ambient noise. Interpreters may experience fatigue introduced from working remotely due to staring at a monitor for a prolonged period, lack of visual clues, or inconsistent quality of audio. Monitor fatigue and request breaks as needed.</p>
The interpreter is having difficulty getting the attention of the attorney, judge, witness, etc.	<p>Interpreter must be assertive, yet professional, when needing to interrupt the proceedings. Use a visual cue, such as raising your hand or gesturing, in addition to making your request.</p>

Appendix C: General Interpreter Ethics References

Interpreters may find these other resources on ethics and professional conduct of interest:

- [Code of Ethics for the Court Employees of California](#)
- [Federal Court Interpreter Standards for Performance and Professional Responsibility](#)
- [National Center for State Courts Model for Court Interpreter Ethics](#)

Appendix D: Guidelines for Video Remote Interpreting

Below are guidelines on video remote interpreting:

- [*Recommended Guidelines and Minimum Specifications for Video Remote Interpreting \(VRI\) for Spoken Language–Interpreted Events*](#)
- [*Recommended Guidelines for Video Remote Interpreting \(VRI\) for ASL-Interpreted Events*](#)

Appendix E: Links and Attachments

Below are additional links and attachments to this document:

- Link: California Evidence Code [sections 750–757](#)
- Attachment: California Rules of Court, rule 2.890
- Attachment: Standard 2.10 of the California Standards of Judicial Administration
- Attachment: Standard 2.11 of the California Standards of Judicial Administration



California Rules of Court

(Revised January 1, 2024)

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Rule 2.890. Professional conduct for interpreters

(a) Representation of qualifications

An interpreter must accurately and completely represent his or her certifications, training, and relevant experience.

(Subd (a) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(b) Complete and accurate interpretation

An interpreter must use his or her best skills and judgment to interpret accurately without embellishing, omitting, or editing. When interpreting for a party, the interpreter must interpret everything that is said during the entire proceedings. When interpreting for a witness, the interpreter must interpret everything that is said during the witness's testimony.

Subd (b) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(c) Impartiality and avoidance of conflicts of interest

(1) Impartiality

An interpreter must be impartial and unbiased and must refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of bias.

(2) Disclosure of conflicts

An interpreter must disclose to the judge and to all parties any actual or apparent conflict of interest. Any condition that interferes with the objectivity of an interpreter is a conflict of interest. A conflict may exist if the interpreter is acquainted with or related to any witness or party to the action or if the interpreter has an interest in the outcome of the case.

(3) Conduct

An interpreter must not engage in conduct creating the appearance of bias, prejudice, or partiality.

(4) Statements

An interpreter must not make statements to any person about the merits of the case until the litigation has concluded.

(Subd (c) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(d) Confidentiality of privileged communications

An interpreter must not disclose privileged communications between counsel and client to any person.

(Subd (d) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(e) Giving legal advice

An interpreter must not give legal advice to parties and witnesses, nor recommend specific attorneys or law firms.

(Subd (e) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(f) Impartial professional relationships

An interpreter must maintain an impartial, professional relationship with all court officers, attorneys, jurors, parties, and witnesses.

(Subd (f) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(g) Continuing education and duty to the profession

An interpreter must, through continuing education, maintain and improve his or her interpreting skills and knowledge of procedures used by the courts. An interpreter should seek to elevate the standards of performance of the interpreting profession.

(Subd (g) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(h) Assessing and reporting impediments to performance

An interpreter must assess at all times his or her ability to perform interpreting services. If an interpreter has any reservation about his or her ability to satisfy an assignment competently, the interpreter must immediately disclose that reservation to the court or other appropriate authority.

(Subd (h) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(i) Duty to report ethical violations

An interpreter must report to the court or other appropriate authority any effort to impede the interpreter's compliance with the law, this rule, or any other official policy governing court interpreting and legal translating.

(Subd (i) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

Rule 2.890 amended and renumbered effective January 1, 2007; adopted as rule 984.4 effective January 1, 1999.



California Rules of Court

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(Revised January 1, 2024)

Standard 2.10. Procedures for determining the need for an interpreter and a preappearance interview

(a) When an interpreter is needed

An interpreter is needed if, after an examination of a party or witness, the court concludes that:

- (1) The party cannot understand and speak English well enough to participate fully in the proceedings and to assist counsel; or
- (2) The witness cannot speak English so as to be understood directly by counsel, court, and jury.

(Subd (a) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(b) When an examination is required

The court should examine a party or witness on the record to determine whether an interpreter is needed if:

- (1) A party or counsel requests such an examination; or
- (2) It appears to the court that the party or witness may not understand and speak English well enough to participate fully in the proceedings.

(Subd (b) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(c) Examination of party or witness

To determine if an interpreter is needed, the court should normally include questions on the following:

- (1) Identification (for example: name, address, birthdate, age, place of birth);
- (2) Active vocabulary in vernacular English (for example: "How did you come to the court today?" "What kind of work do you do?" "Where did you go to school?" "What was the highest grade you completed?" "Describe what you see in the courtroom." "What have you eaten today?"). Questions should be phrased to avoid "yes" or "no" replies;
- (3) The court proceedings (for example: the nature of the charge or the type of case before the court, the purpose of the proceedings and function of the court, the rights of a party or criminal defendant, and the responsibilities of a witness).

(Subd (c) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(d) Record of examination

After the examination, the court should state its conclusion on the record. The file in the case should be clearly marked and data entered electronically when appropriate by court personnel to ensure that an interpreter will be present when needed in any subsequent proceeding.

(Subd (d) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(e) Good cause for preappearance interview

For good cause, the court should authorize a preappearance interview between the interpreter and the party or witness. Good cause exists if the interpreter needs clarification on any interpreting issues, including: colloquialisms, culturalisms, dialects, idioms, linguistic capabilities and traits, regionalisms, register, slang, speech patterns, or technical terms.

(Subd (e) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

Standard 2.10 amended and renumbered effective January 1, 2007; repealed and adopted as sec. 18 effective January 1, 1999.



California Rules of Court

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(Revised January 1, 2024)

Standard 2.11. Interpreted proceedings-instructing participants on procedure

(a) Instructions to interpreters

The court or the court's designee should give the following instructions to interpreters, either orally or in writing:

- (1) Do not discuss the pending proceedings with a party or witness.
- (2) Do not disclose communications between counsel and client.
- (3) Do not give legal advice to a party or witness. Refer legal questions to the attorney or to the court.
- (4) Inform the court if you are unable to interpret a word, expression, special terminology, or dialect, or have doubts about your linguistic expertise or ability to perform adequately in a particular case.
- (5) Interpret all words, including slang, vulgarisms, and epithets, to convey the intended meaning.
- (6) Use the first person when interpreting statements made in the first person. (For example, a statement or question should not be introduced with the words, "He says. . . .")
- (7) Direct all inquiries or problems to the court and not to the witness or counsel. If necessary, you may request permission to approach the bench with counsel to discuss a problem.
- (8) Position yourself near the witness or party without blocking the view of the judge, jury, or counsel.
- (9) Inform the court if you become fatigued during the proceedings.
- (10) When interpreting for a party at the counsel table, speak loudly enough to be heard by the party or counsel but not so loudly as to interfere with the proceedings.
- (11) Interpret everything, including objections.
- (12) If the court finds good cause under rule 2.893(e), hold a preappearance interview with the party or witness to become familiar with speech patterns and linguistic traits and to determine what technical or special terms may be used. Counsel may be present at the preappearance interview.
- (13) During the preappearance interview with a non-English-speaking witness, give the witness the following instructions on the procedure to be followed when the witness is testifying:
 - (A) The witness must speak in a loud, clear voice so that the entire court and not just the interpreter can hear.
 - (B) The witness must direct all responses to the person asking the question, not to the interpreter.
 - (C) The witness must direct all questions to counsel or to the court and not to the interpreter. The witness may not seek advice from or engage in any discussion with the interpreter.
- (14) During the preappearance interview with a non-English-speaking party, give the following instructions on the procedure to be used when the non-English-speaking party is not testifying:
 - (A) The interpreter will interpret all statements made in open court.
 - (B) The party must direct any questions to counsel. The interpreter will interpret all questions to counsel and the responses. The party may not seek advice from or engage in discussion with the interpreter.

(Subd (a) amended effective January 1, 2007.)

(b) Instructions to counsel

The court or the court's designee should give the following instructions to counsel, either orally or in writing:

- (1) When examining a non-English-speaking witness, direct all questions to the witness and not to the interpreter. (For example, do not say to the interpreter, "Ask him if. . . .")
- (2) If there is a disagreement with the interpretation, direct any objection to the court and not to the interpreter. Ask permission to approach the bench to discuss the problem.

- (3) If you have a question regarding the qualifications of the interpreter, you may request permission to conduct a supplemental examination on the interpreter's qualifications.

Standard 2.11 amended and renumbered effective January 1, 2007; repealed and adopted as sec. 18.1 effective January 1, 1999.

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Judicial Council of California

455 Golden Gate Avenue · San Francisco, California 94102-3688

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No.: 2025-XXX

For business meeting on February 21, 2025

Title

Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected

None

Recommended by

Court Interpreters Advisory Panel
Hon. Brian L. McCabe, Chair
Hon. Maurice Sanchez, Vice-Chair

Report Type

Action Required

Effective Date

February 21, 2025

Date of Report

December 2, 2024

Contact

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Executive Summary

The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) recommends approval of revised *Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons* (*Guidelines*) and an accompanying application form which will modernize the application process, support the recognition of additional American Sign Language (ASL) court interpreter testing entities as they become available, and maintain rigorous certification standards.

Recommendation

The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel recommend that the Judicial Council, effective February 21, 2025:

1. Approve the revised *Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons*; and
2. Approve the newly created *Application to the Judicial Council for ASL Court Interpreter Certification Programs* (*Application*) to streamline and modernize the approval process for certifying organizations under the revised *Guidelines*.

The proposed revised *Guidelines* and new *Application* are attached at pages TBA.

Relevant Previous Council Action

Evidence Code section 754(h)(1) states: “Before July 1, 1992, the Judicial Council shall conduct a study to establish the guidelines pursuant to which it shall determine which testing organizations, agencies, or educational institutions will be approved to administer tests for certification of court interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.” The council first adopted the *Guidelines* on February 21, 1992. The *Guidelines* were last revised in 2023, effective January 1, 2024, when the council approved the temporary exemption to adherence to the *Guidelines*.¹

From 1998 to 2016, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) offered the Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L), which demonstrated specialized knowledge of legal settings and greater familiarity with language used in the legal system.² However, on January 1, 2016, the RID Board of Directors imposed a moratorium on the SC:L certification and ceased its testing program.³ Although the council continues to recognize SC:L holders for inclusion on the Master List of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters, no new SC:L credentials have been awarded since 2016, which has prevented the addition of new ASL court interpreters to the Master List and thus significantly reduced the available pool of qualified ASL court interpreters.⁴

To address this gap, the Judicial Council approved temporary revisions to the *Guidelines* on January 1, 2024, granting a four-year exemption to recognize other states’ qualified testing programs.⁵ Under this exemption, the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Court Interpreter Certification was approved as an accepted testing entity for ASL court interpreters for a minimum of four years. At present, the Texas BEI remains the only testing entity in the United States that tests for ASL court interpreter certification. Additionally, Judicial Council directed CIAP to revise the *Guidelines* and develop a recommendation for an ASL court interpreter

¹ See *Guidelines for Approval of Certification for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons (2024)*, <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2024-05/Guidelines%20for%20Approval%20of%20Certification%20Programs%20-%20Jan%202024.pdf>.

² The [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf](#) is a leading organization in best practices and professional development for ASL interpreting services. Its mission is to establish national standards of quality for interpreters and transliterators. RID previously offered the SC:L credential to certify interpreters with specialized expertise in legal settings.

³ More information on the moratorium is available at <https://rid.org/about/certifications-under-moratorium/>.

⁴ The Master List is an online database maintained by the Judicial Council’s Language Access Services Program. It allows courts, attorneys, and members of the public to search for court certified, registered, and enrolled interpreters who are in good standing with the Judicial Council. See <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/court-interpreters-resources/search-interpreter>.

⁵ See Report to Judicial Council, <https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12443593&GUID=86D50238-F331-4F4E-BBA7-A91D30995599>.

certification program approval process that reflects the current interpreter marketplace and testing and certification landscape.

Analysis/Rationale

California continues to face a shortage of qualified ASL court interpreters, even as ASL remains one of the most frequently requested languages in state courts. As of 2020, ASL was the third most requested language in the state, yet the current pool of interpreters cannot meet the growing demand. The *2020 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study* underscores the importance of addressing this shortage to ensure effective language access for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.⁶

The revised *Guidelines* and new *Application* provide California with the flexibility to recognize a broader range of certifying agencies as they become available. This flexibility allows the state to quickly adapt to changes in the interpreter certification landscape while expanding its pool of qualified interpreters. By removing unnecessary procedural barriers and modernizing the language, the updates encourage participation from certifying organizations beyond California without compromising the high standards necessary for court proceedings.

Rigorous certification standards for testing entities will be maintained by requiring the provider to provide links to publicly available documents or specific program information that can be evaluated to verify that the testing entity meets minimum requirements for recognition of an ASL court interpreter testing program (e.g., exam content and description, testing procedures, application and scoring processes, complaint processes, and continuing education requirements). Providers will continue to be required to have Deaf or hard of hearing individuals, including ASL court interpreters, on the test evaluation panel, ensuring input from certified interpreters and Deaf individuals with the necessary knowledge and experience.

Specific revisions include:

- Replace all instances of “shall” with “must” to modernize the language and clarify mandatory requirements.
- Remove unreasonable expectations on noncontracted organizations, including requirements for nondiscrimination statements in every announcement and the mandatory provision of lists and information to the council.
- Broaden the applicability of the guidelines by revising or removing California-specific requirements, such as evaluation panel composition and statewide testing accessibility.
- The *Guidelines* and *Application* were updated to require that the provider’s ASL court interpreter certification exam cover the modes of interpretation commonly required in

⁶ See *2020 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study*, <https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2023-07/2020-language-need-and-interpreter-use-study-report-to-the-legislature.pdf>.

court proceedings: simultaneous, consecutive, and sight translation, aligning the testing criteria with practical certification requirements to reflect current standards and expectations.

Policy implications

Revising the *Guidelines* and creating the related *Application* allows the Judicial Council to recognize a broader range of certifying organizations, including those outside California. This change enables the council to address the shortage of qualified ASL court interpreters and meet the increasing demand for language access services.

The updated *Guidelines* and *Application* will ensure that certifying organizations meet rigorous standards while allowing flexibility to adapt to changes in the interpreter certification landscape. This approach supports the council's ability to provide consistent and reliable language access services for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in California courts.

Comments

This proposal was circulated for public comment from October 17 to November 26, 2024. Two comments were received: one from the Superior Court Los Angeles County and one from the Superior Court of Orange County.

The Superior Court of Los Angeles County expressed agreement with the proposal if modified, suggesting adding ethnicity to the list of nondiscrimination protections, requiring certifying agencies to include the Judicial Council's *Court Interpreter Professional Standards and Ethics* guidelines in their curriculum, and mandating that certifying agencies report disciplinary actions to the Judicial Council. CIAP agreed to include ethnicity as a protected classification but did not adopt the curriculum or reporting requirements, as certifying agencies are external, noncontracted entities. CIAP noted that the Judicial Council has existing requirements for ethics training and compliance for ASL court interpreters, which addresses the commenter's concerns.

The Superior Court of Orange County expressed full support for the proposal. The court highlighted that the streamlined application process and clarified requirements should expand the pool of available ASL interpreters, as more testing providers become available. This increase has the potential to reduce the number of case continuances caused by interpreter shortages.

A chart with the full text of the comments and CIAP's responses is attached **at pages TBA**.

Alternatives Considered

The Judicial Council directed CIAP to revise the *Guidelines* and develop a recommendation for an ASL court interpreter certification program approval process that reflects the current interpreter marketplace and testing and certification landscape. Revising the *Guidelines* and creating the new *Application* accomplishes this goal and ensures that the Texas BEI can continue verifying its compliance with council requirements every four years. It also creates a pathway for new certifying entities to apply for recognition, addressing the interpreter shortage while maintaining rigorous certification standards.

Fiscal and Operational Impacts

The proposed revisions to the *Guidelines* and new *Application* will impose no cost to the courts or the Judicial Council. Staff resources required for the Language Access Implementation Unit to revise and implement the updated *Guidelines* and *Application* form will be minimal.

Attachments and Links

1. Chart of comments, at pages TBA
2. Attachment A: Proposed changes to *Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons*
3. Attachment B: *Application to the Judicial Council for ASL Court Interpreter Certification Programs*
4. Link A: *Guidelines for Approval of Certification for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons* (2024),
<https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2024-05/Guidelines%20for%20Approval%20of%20Certification%20Programs%20-%20Jan%202024.pdf>
5. Link B: Report to the Judicial Council,
<https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12443593&GUID=86D50238-F331-4F4E-BBA7-A91D30995599>
6. Link C: *2020 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study*,
<https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2023-07/2020-language-need-and-interpreter-use-study-report-to-the-legislature.pdf>

ITC SP24-09

Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
1.	Superior Court of Los Angeles County by Robert Oftring, Director of Communications & Legislative Affairs	AM	<p>The following comments are representative of the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles, and do not represent or promote the viewpoint of any particular officer or employee.</p> <p>In response to the Judicial Council of California’s “ITC SP24-09: Court Interpreters: Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons,” the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles (Court), agrees with proposal if the listed modifications below are incorporated.</p> <p>The Court believes the proposal appropriately addresses the stated purpose. Courts need additional certification opportunities for American Sign Language Interpreters. The only approved certification entity in California is the Texas Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) and it is only temporarily approved. This proposal seeks to expand the number of available ASL court interpreters for Courts by increasing the eligible entities that may be approved by Judicial Council to provide California ASL interpreter certifications.</p> <p>While the proposal removes the requirements for the composition of the evaluating board to include a majority of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and a member of the state bar or judicial officer, the guidelines still require input from certified ASL interpreters and persons who</p>	CIAP thanks the Superior Court of Los Angeles County for its comment.

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

ITC SP24-09

Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p>are deaf or hard of hearing for the evaluating process. There should be a requirement to communicate discipline or revocations from the various approved programs to the JCC, and JCC’s Court Interpreter Program should communicate changes of certifications for Interpreters to CA Courts. Requiring the certifying agency to also offer a public complaint process related to certification review could cause gaps in communication as to certification status if these complaints do not first get submitted through the JCC’s existing program. The Court also has questions on the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should sections 1B and 2A include ethnicity in the list of protected classifications against discrimination for programs certifying interpreters for California? • Under 2E for the program requirements, should certification curriculum also include general review and understanding of the Court Interpreter Professional Standards and Ethics guidelines published by the JCC? <p>The Court believes the proposed application process streamlines and simplifies the approval procedure for certifying organizations while maintaining high standards. Removing the diversity of location for testing requirements for each program could also increase the number of eligible programs.</p>	<p>The committee discussed the suggestion to require certifying agencies to communicate disciplinary actions or certification revocations to the Judicial Council. While CIAP recognizes the importance of transparency, such requirements cannot be imposed on independent, non-contracted entities. Effective January 1, 2024, all ASL court interpreters must attest to being in good standing each year under the annual court interpreter renewal and compliance process. The committee encourages CIP to engage in collaboration and information-sharing between certifying agencies and the Judicial Council whenever feasible.</p> <p>Regarding the inclusion of ethnicity in sections 1B and 2A, the committee agrees with this suggestion and has incorporated it into the amendments being recommended for adoption. This change aligns with the Judicial Council’s goals for access, fairness, diversity, and inclusion.</p> <p>Regarding section 2E for program requirements, the committee discussed the suggestion to include a review of the council’s <i>Court Interpreter Professional Standards and Ethics</i> guidelines in the certification curriculum but does not recommend this addition. Effective January 1, 2024, all new ASL court interpreters on the Judicial Council Master List, similar to spoken language interpreters, must take the required ethics course within their first two years, as well as an ethics refresher course every subsequent two years. As certifying agencies are external entities not contracted with California courts, the Judicial</p>

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

ITC SP24-09

Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p>Currently the Court spends up to \$950 for a full day of an Independent Contractor’s rate due to a shortage in certified ASL interpreters (\$332-\$950 full day; \$166-\$450 half day). This Court’s Language Access Services division has found that with some pushback we are often able to bring down rates when negotiating if the interpreter knows the market is getting flooded with more interpreters being able to provide the service. For example, when we first started to utilize Spanish Independent Contractors there were rates as high as \$600 for a full day and now, we are able to contract for rates much closer to the JCC rate.</p> <p>If there are more certifying agencies, this could result in the potential to increase ASL certified interpreters. Another issue we would like to request consideration for is the common request by the ASL interpreter for a CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreter) when they determine the deaf or hard-of-hearing litigant does not know ASL.</p>	<p>Council does not have the authority to mandate curriculum requirements. However, the committee encourages certifying organizations to align their training programs with the highest standards of professionalism and ethics.</p> <p>The comment regarding the common request for a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) when an ASL interpreter determines that a litigant does not know ASL is noted. The committee finds the comment unclear in its current form and is unable to provide a specific response at this time. Further clarification would be necessary to address this issue fully. At present, the council does not include CDI interpreters on the Master List unless they also hold a legal certification. Persons may search for a CDI through the public RID database.</p>
2.	Superior Court of Orange County by Alma Guzman, Language Access Services Manager	A	<p><i>Does the proposal appropriately address the stated purpose?</i></p> <p>Yes, the proposal addresses the stated purpose by removing unreasonable expectations and applying the <i>Guidelines</i> to a broader range of certifying bodies. Although the Texas BEI is the</p>	<p>CIAP thanks the Superior Court of Orange County for its comment. The committee appreciates the court’s support for the proposed revisions and its acknowledgment of the importance of streamlining the application process while maintaining high standards for ASL court interpreter certification.</p>

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

ITC SP24-09

Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p>only testing entity in the US for ASL court interpreter certification, the revisions facilitate the application process for other entities that might enter the testing landscape for ASL court interpreters.</p> <p><i>Are the proposed revisions to the Guidelines sufficient to ensure flexibility and responsiveness in approving new certifying agencies while maintaining high standards for ASL court interpreter certification?</i></p> <p>Yes, the proposed revisions do not diminish the requirements to maintain high standards for certification testing and test content. Removing the requirement related to working with a relay interpreter is reasonable as most cases do not involve relay interpreters.</p> <p><i>Does the proposed application process streamline and simplify the approval procedure for certifying organizations while maintaining high standards?</i></p> <p>Yes, the application process has been streamlined by removing three unnecessary requirements, and by revising the remaining two requirements to be clearer and more concise.</p>	

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated

ITC SP24-09

Court Interpreters: Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

All comments are verbatim unless indicated by an asterisk (*).

	Commenter	Position	Comment	Committee Response
			<p><i>Would the proposal provide cost savings? If so, please quantify.</i></p> <p>There are no operational impacts that would create specific cost savings. The only perceivable cost savings would derive from having available a more robust pool of ASL interpreters that may result in a reduction in the number of continuances due to unavailability of qualified ASL interpreters.</p> <p><i>Will the proposal expand the availability of qualified ASL court interpreters to serve limited-English-proficient court users?</i></p> <p>Yes, this proposal should increase the pool of available ASL interpreters.</p> <p><u>General Comments</u> None</p>	

Positions: A = Agree; AM = Agree if modified; N = Do not agree; NI = Not indicated



Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

January 1, 2024 2025



Judicial Council of California

Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons

Preamble

Evidence Code section 754 requires that in any civil or criminal action—including any action involving a traffic or other infraction, juvenile court proceeding, proceeding to determine the mental competency of a person, or administrative hearing where a party or witness is a deaf or hard-of-hearing person and that person is present and participating—the proceeding shall be interpreted in a language that the deaf or hard-of-hearing person understands by a qualified interpreter appointed by the court or other appropriate authority. A “qualified interpreter” is defined as “an interpreter who has been certified as competent to interpret court proceedings by a testing organization, agency, or educational institution approved by the Judicial Council as qualified to administer tests to court interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.” (Evid. Code, § 754(f).)

Evidence Code section 754 further requires the Judicial Council to establish guidelines under which it will determine which testing organizations, agencies, or educational institutions will be approved to administer tests and certify court interpreters for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons and provides that an initial approval of testing entities shall occur before July 1, 1992. The Judicial Council, therefore, establishes the following guidelines.

In these guidelines, the term “certified court interpreter” is used to mean a sign language interpreter who is certified to interpret in court proceedings. “Certifying organization” refers to the entity under whose auspices the evaluation of applicant interpreters is conducted. “Evaluating panel/board” refers to the persons who rate the applicant interpreters. Oral interpreting, services to hard-of-hearing individuals such as assistive listening devices, interpreting for deaf/blind individuals, and other forms of communicative assistance to persons with hearing disabilities are not covered by these guidelines.

Guidelines

1. Structure and Administration of Evaluating Panels/Boards

- A. The evaluating panel/board and its processes **must** ~~shall~~ be administratively independent of the certifying organization in the testing and certification of individual applicants—that is, the panel/board **must** ~~shall~~ be free of influence from any external sources on decisions affecting the test results and certification of interpreters.
- B. The certifying organization, in all its processes, ~~shall not discriminate~~ **must have a non-discrimination policy that ensures no discrimination** among applicants for certification

as to age, sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status ~~and shall include statements on nondiscrimination in every announcement of the certification program.~~ The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ provide for access and reasonable accommodation to the testing process for persons with disabilities.

- C. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ possess the knowledge and experience necessary to conduct the testing and certification of court interpreters.
- D. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ have a formal procedure for the selection of evaluating panel/board members. That procedure must include input from certified interpreters and deaf individuals who possess the knowledge and experience required for that purpose.
- E. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ have formal procedures for training of evaluating panel/board members to ensure the consistency of their evaluation over time.
- F. ~~The evaluating panel/board shall include, but not be limited to:~~
 - ~~1. A majority of members who are deaf and possesses the knowledge and experience necessary to evaluate court interpreters for deaf persons;~~
 - ~~2. Certified interpreters who may themselves be court interpreters or intermediary court interpreters (as defined in Evid. Code, § 754) and possess the knowledge and experience necessary to evaluate court interpreters for deaf persons; and~~
 - ~~3. A judge or member of the State Bar of California.~~
- FG.** The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ hold testing at reasonable cost to the applicant interpreter and with sufficient frequency ~~and diversity of location~~ to ensure that there is reasonable opportunity ~~and accessibility~~ for individuals ~~in all parts of the state~~ to be tested and certified.
- GH.** The certifying process **must** ~~shall~~ have and maintain:
 - 1. Competence-based standards of performance;
 - 2. A clear process for determining the pass-fail standard for certification and cutoff scores on tests; and
 - 3. An established procedure for the regular and timely review and adjustment of these standards of performance, utilizing input from interpreters, deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, court personnel, and research sources.
- HI.** The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the testing process, including test materials, scoring information, and other sensitive information. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ have a procedure to regularly update, rotate, reformulate, or alter test materials to guarantee that the confidentiality of test

items, tapes, scripts, and other materials is protected and that the materials are new to those applicants who are being tested.

- I. On completion of testing, the certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ issue to qualified interpreters a certificate that clearly identifies the interpreter as certified to interpret in court by this organization and the period of time covered by the certification.
- JK. The certifying organization **must maintain** ~~shall furnish to the Judicial Council~~ a list of those interpreters who are certified to interpret in court proceedings and **must** ~~shall~~ keep this list up to date ~~by immediately informing the Judicial Council of any additions or deletions to this list.~~
- L. ~~If the certifying organization plans to include in this list those interpreters who were certified to interpret in court proceedings by the organization before the effective date of approval by the Judicial Council to certify court interpreters under these guidelines, the certifying organization shall have a clear and reasonable procedure to do so. This procedure must ensure that interpreters so included meet the competency and knowledge requirements of the certifying organization as approved under these Judicial Council guidelines.~~
- KM. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ have an established and reasonable procedure for assuring the continued competency of certified court interpreters through periodic assessment or other means. Such a certification maintenance process must include efforts by the certifying organization to enhance continued competence of the individual. If continuing education is used as a means of ensuring continued competency, the certifying organization may not require interpreters to enroll in its own education or training program.
- MN. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ promptly report certification results to applicants.
- NO. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ have and publicize the existence of a reasonable grievance and appeal process for certification applicants who question the certification or testing process, test results, or eligibility for testing.
- OP. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ have and publicize the existence of a reasonable complaint process for the public to use in addressing discipline of those holding certificates, including revocation of certification for conduct that clearly indicates incompetence, unethical behavior, and physical or mental impairment affecting performance.
- PQ. ~~The certifying organization shall also furnish to the Judicial Council a list of community organizations and contacts that can serve as resources to the court in facilitating the legal process where certified sign language court interpreters are involved.~~

2. Certification Testing and Test Content

- A. The certification process, including tests and testing procedure, **must** ~~shall~~ be objective, fair, and free of test bias (including, but not limited to, bias as to age, sex, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, culture, or class).
- B. The certification process, including tests and testing procedure, **must** ~~shall~~ be directly based on the knowledge and skills needed to function as an interpreter in court proceedings.
- C. Tests and testing processes **must** ~~shall~~ be standardized and nondiscriminatory and **must** ~~shall~~ be shown to be both reliable and valid (particularly relative to the certified court interpreter's subsequent ability to perform in court proceedings) under generally accepted procedures for establishing the validity and reliability of tests.
- D. The certifying organization **must** ~~shall~~ clearly state, and publish in a manner reasonably certain to provide adequate notice to applicants, the certification and testing criteria and the requirements used to certify court interpreters, including information about the competencies required, the level of competency required, and how these competencies are determined.
- E. The certifying process **must** ~~shall~~ be comprehensive in testing for all aspects of the court interpreting process, including:
 - 1. ~~Translation and transliteration~~ **Interpretation** competency, which includes:
 - a. **Consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, and sight translation;**
 - b. American Sign Language competency;
 - c. English language competency; and
 - d. Competency in interpreting language and terminology common to court proceedings;
 - ~~2. The role, function, and understanding of techniques for working with a relay interpreter or other intermediaries or for working as a relay interpreter;~~
 - 23.** Understanding of social, cultural, and linguistic aspects of the local, state, and national communities of deaf people;
 - 34.** The role and function of court interpreters, including court etiquette;
 - 45.** The various court proceedings that commonly and frequently require use of an interpreter or interpreters; and
 - 56.** A code of conduct and professional ethics.
- F. If, in addition to testing for the above, a certifying organization establishes education and training requirements that an interpreter must have before certification (such as a high school diploma or college degree), there must be a direct correlation between these requirements and an interpreter's ability to perform in court proceedings. A certifying

organization may not require an interpreter to take its own education or training program as a prerequisite to testing or certification.

3. Application to the Judicial Council for Approval to Certify Court Interpreters and Maintenance of Standing

- A. ~~The certifying organization shall provide to the Judicial Council all evidence required to document compliance with these guidelines.~~ The certifying organization must submit a completed application to the Judicial Council to document compliance with these guidelines at four-year intervals after initial approval.
- B. The certifying organization **must** will notify the Judicial Council **if it** of any plans to suspend or discontinue testing, either permanently or temporarily.
- ~~B. The certifying organization shall advise the Judicial Council of any substantive changes in the structure and administration of the certification process, including any substantive changes in testing techniques or testing content. The certifying organization, agency, or institution shall provide any information about the certification process to the Judicial Council on request.~~
- ~~C. An approved certifying organization shall provide evidence to the Judicial Council of continued compliance with the guidelines at four year¹ intervals after initial approval.~~
- ~~D. An approved certifying organization shall provide evidence of continued compliance with these guidelines before the mandated four year interval.~~
- CE.** The Judicial Council may suspend or revoke its approval of a certifying organization or place conditions on continued approval, if such action is deemed necessary to ensure the quality and/or integrity of court interpreting or this approval process.

4. Exemptions in Critical or Unusual Circumstances

- A. Effective January 1, 2024, the council approved allowing for exemptions for adherence to these guidelines in critical or unusual circumstances for a period of four years to assure that certified ASL court interpreters are available to provide services in California. This allowance may include recognition of another state's testing program, provided that the council can verify that the testing entity is qualified to administer tests to court interpreters for the deaf or hard-of-hearing.²

¹ On December 15, 2009, the Judicial Council adopted the recommendation to revise guidelines 3.C and 3.D of the *Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons* to require the review of approved certifying organizations from every two years to every four years.

² On November 17, 2023, the council approved a four-year exemption, effective January 1, 2024, to ensure certified ASL court interpreters are available in California. This includes recognizing the Texas Office of Deaf and Hard of

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Hearing Services (DHHS) Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) as an approved testing entity for a temporary period. For more details, refer to the [Judicial Council Report](#). On November 17, 2023, the four-year exemption, effective January 1, 2024, was considered for approval by the council. Under the proposed exemption, the council also considered for approval the Texas Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) as an approved testing entity for ASL court interpreter certification temporarily for a period of four years, effective January 1, 2024.

Application to the Judicial Council for ASL Court Interpreter Certification Programs

Instructions: Please complete the following application to provide information about your American Sign Language (ASL) court interpreter certification program. Each section includes questions designed to ensure your program meets the guidelines set by the Judicial Council of California. Provide detailed responses and include links to supporting documentation where indicated. You can access the full ASL Certification Guidelines [here](#).

Section 1: Contact Information

1. Name of the certifying organization:
2. Contact details (including phone number, email address, and mailing address):

Section 2: Background

1. When did the certifying organization begin testing for the ASL court interpreter certification? (Year)
2. Does the certifying organization have documented processes for both the development and administration of the ASL court interpreter certification exam, as well as for the selection and training of exam raters? Yes No
 - Provide links to the documented processes for exam development and administration, and for rater selection and training (If unavailable, write N/A):
3. Does the certifying organization have a public registry of persons with the ASL court interpreter certification?
 - Yes No
 - Provide a link to the public registry (If unavailable, write N/A):

Section 3: Fairness and Non-Discrimination

1. Does the certifying organization provide reasonable accommodation to the testing process for persons with disabilities? Yes No
 - Provide details or a link to the accommodation policy (If unavailable, write N/A):
2. Is the certification process, including the exam, objective, fair, and non-discriminatory?
 - Yes No
3. Does the certifying organization have a non-discrimination policy?
 - Yes No
 - Provide a link to the non-discrimination policy (If unavailable, write N/A):
 - *The non-discrimination policy should ensure no discrimination based on age, sex, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status.*
4. Does the certifying organization have procedures to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the exam materials and scores? Yes No

- Provide a link to the confidentiality and integrity procedures (If unavailable, write N/A):
- 5. Does the certifying organization have a grievance and appeal process for certification applicants who question the certification or testing process, test results, or eligibility for testing? Yes No
 - Provide a link to the grievance and appeal process (If unavailable, write N/A):

Section 4: Exam Information

1. Does the certifying organization provide publicly available information about the certification process, including exam dates, registration, content, format, scoring, and appeal processes? Yes No
 - Provide a link to this information (If unavailable, write N/A):
2. Does the exam cover the following criteria? (See below).
 Yes No
 - Provide a link to this information (If unavailable, write N/A):

Criteria Covered:

1. Interpretation competency, which includes:
 - a. Consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, and sight translation
 - b. American Sign Language competency
 - c. English language competency
 - d. Competency in interpreting language and terminology common to court proceedings
2. Understanding of social, cultural, and linguistic aspects of the local, state, and national communities of deaf people
3. The role and function of court interpreters, including court etiquette
4. The various court proceedings that commonly and frequently require use of an interpreter or interpreters
5. A code of conduct and professional ethics

Section 5: Certification Maintenance and Complaints

1. Does the certifying organization have a certification maintenance process, including continuing education requirements and fees?
 Yes No
 - Provide a link to the certification maintenance process (If unavailable, write N/A):
2. Does the certifying organization have and publicize a reasonable complaint process for the public to use in addressing discipline of those holding certificates?
 Yes No
 - Provide a link to the complaint process (If unavailable, write N/A):

Section 6: Declaration

I declare that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signature:

Print Name:

Title:

Date:

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Carryover of Bilingual Interpreting Examination Scores

Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP)

December 17, 2024

CIAP Annual Agenda Project

- Explore potential costs, benefits, drawbacks, and operational feasibility of allowing Bilingual Interpreting Examination (BIE) candidates to carryover their passing scores on two or more sections of the BIE for two years, which is a practice followed by other states

Court Interpreter Certified Status In California

Current credentialing steps:

- Pass a Written Examination and score **80%** or higher
- Pass **all four (4) sections** of the BIE with a score of **70%** or higher in **each section** in **one sitting**

The four (4) sections of the BIE are:

- **Sight Translation** (English/non-English Language)
- **Sight Translation** (Non-English/English Language)
- **Simultaneous Interpretation**
- **Consecutive Interpretation**

2023 Study Findings by NCSC

- 20 of 36 states allow carryover of passing scores on individual BIE sections for a period of two years
- Eligibility to carry over scores apply to candidates who passed two or more sections of the BIE
- Candidates who pass all four sections during the two-year period become credentialed in the certified language
- Process aligns with council initiatives, including the CA Court Interpreter Workforce Pilot Program, near-passers trainings, and other targeted educational resources

Testing Pool Data:

- **Interpreter Testing Pool Size:**
 - **Approx. 384 candidates in the certified testing pool**
 - **308 Spanish language**
 - **76 Other Than Spanish languages**

Spanish Only Carryover Scores:

- **36% (111/308) eligible to carryover two or more BIE sections**
- **50% (55/111) eligible candidates can carry 3 sections**

Carryover Scores: Evidence from Data

High Carryover Rates in Specific Languages:

- Spanish has the highest number of candidates (308) and the **highest number of qualified candidates for carryover** (111) at **41%**
- Arabic (Egyptian) has the highest carryover rate at or near 60%
- Filipino (Tagalog), Portuguese, and Punjabi (India) at 50%



Overall Carryover Percentage: 40% (152/384) of all candidates eligible for carryover scores; a substantial portion of the candidate pool benefits from not having to retake all sections

Multi-Year Summary – Carryover Scores 2 or More Sections

In 2022, **52%** or 108 candidates passed two or more sections of the exam

In 2023, **31%** or 89 candidates passed two or more sections of the exam

In 2024, **34%** or 50 candidates passed two or more sections of the exam

* No BIE was administered for this language. For 2024, this chart only covers the administration of Spanish in the spring.

Exam By Language	2022		2023		2024	
	>= 2 (108/209)	>= 3 (45/209)	>= 2 (89/292)	>= 3 (45/292)	>= 2 (50/147)	>= 3 (37/147)
Arabic (Egyptian)	1	1	3	0	*	*
Arabic (Levantine)	0	0	1	0	*	*
Cantonese	3	1	1	0	*	*
Farsi (Persian)	0	0	3	0	*	*
Filipino (Tagalog)	*	*	1	0	*	*
Korean	2	0	1	0	*	*
Mandarin	10	6	12	6	*	*
Portuguese	1	0	1	0	*	*
Punjabi (India)	*	*	1	1	*	*
Russian	1	0	3	2	*	*
Spanish	89	37	61	29	50	23
Vietnamese	1	0	1	0	*	*
Grand Total	108	45	89	38	50	23

Benefits of Carryover Scores

OBJECTIVE: More certified court interpreters serving the public interest

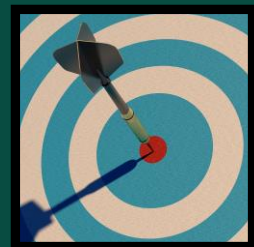


1. Reduced pressure on candidates



2. Encouragement and motivation

3. Efficiency in certification



4. Higher success rates

5. Focused preparation

Next Steps: JC Staff to Determine Feasibility

- ✓ Requires discussions/negotiations with testing vendor on:
 - Exam administration (e.g., taking all four sections, two sections, or one section, depending on candidate)
 - Exam administration fees for different scenarios
 - Rating and proctoring of exam services; training
 - Exam development
 - General exam administration support services (i.e., data collection, exam scores retention, and evaluation)
- ✓ Staff will report back to CIAP on feasibility in 2025





Questions

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