

Judicial Council of California

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INVITATION TO COMMENT

SP26-04

Court Interpreters: Revised Credential Review Procedures

Invitation to Comment Details

Proposed Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes

None

Action Requested

Review and Submit Comments by
July 13, 2026, to invitations@jud.ca.gov

Proposed by

Hon. Maurice Sanchez, Chair
Ms. Anabel Z. Romero, Vice-Chair
Court Interpreters Advisory Panel

Proposed Effective Date

January 1, 2027

Contact

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(This proposal has not been approved by the Judicial Council and is not intended to represent the views of the council, its Rules Committee, or its Legislation Committee. It is circulated for comment purposes only.)

Executive Summary and Origin

The Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) proposes amendments to the *California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures* to incorporate a standardized skills assessment process for addressing skills-based complaints and to authorize the issuance of disciplinary letters, when warranted, as an intermediate corrective action. The proposal integrates a structured, third-party skills assessment into the credential review process when a complaint is received and a court interpreter's competence or performance is in question. The proposed updates would also authorize the Judicial Council's Court Interpreters Program (CIP) to issue a disciplinary letter to an interpreter, when appropriate, as an intermediate step before further action is taken. These updates are intended to improve consistency, objectivity, and proportionality in the evaluation and resolution of complaints.

The proposal stems from ongoing Judicial Council efforts to strengthen the credential review procedures and enhance accountability—including CIAP’s work and collaboration with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC)—to develop a validated skills assessment process.

Background

The existing Credential Review Procedures (see Link A) establish a process for reviewing complaints including allegations of misconduct against California certified and registered spoken-language court interpreters.¹ While the procedures allow for investigation and formal discipline through a proceeding with the Office of Administrative Hearings, they historically lacked:

- A standardized method for objectively evaluating interpreter competence; and
- A clearly defined intermediate corrective option short of formal disciplinary action.

As reflected in the proposed revisions, skills-based complaints, particularly those involving alleged gross incompetence, require a more structured and reliable evaluation tool. Additionally, not all violations warrant formal proceedings, creating a need for proportionate corrective measures as an intermediary step.

The Proposal

From 2022 to 2025, the council contracted with the NCSC to support the development and refinement of diagnostic tools (e.g., intake instruments, observation tools, and checklists) and related resources to assist in assessing interpreting knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) when a complaint is filed regarding an interpreter’s performance.

The skills assessment will be conducted virtually and will include prepared audio recordings, scripts, and interpretation scenarios that mirror typical court interactions. The skills assessment will be recorded. It shall be evaluated by a minimum of two evaluators using an approved scoring rubric. The virtual assessment will be used to identify court interpretation skills and areas for improvement. The skills assessment process is not intended to be a pass/fail assessment and will not be used as the final determination of an interpreter’s credential.

This proposal would update and revise the *California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures* to incorporate the standardized skills assessment process (see Attachment A for the revised credential review procedures, where proposed changes have been highlighted). The amendments would also authorize the use of disciplinary letters issued by CIP when warranted as

¹ The Judicial Council’s Credential Review Procedures apply only to certified or registered spoken-language court interpreters listed on its Master List of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters (see Link B). Individuals on this list have either passed the required California examinations or qualified through reciprocity and have completed the Judicial Council’s application process to become certified or registered court interpreters in California. American Sign Language (ASL) court interpreters on the Master List are credentialed through either the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or the Texas Board for Evaluation of Interpreters prior to applying to California, and those organizations are responsible for receiving complaints about individuals who hold their credentials.

intermediate corrective action. The amendments integrate a structured method for evaluating interpreter competence when performance-related complaints are received and provide additional tools to resolve matters in a more proportionate and efficient manner.

Judicial Council staff worked in collaboration with CIAP and its Professional Standards and Ethics (PSE) Subcommittee to develop these revisions. On May 13, 2026, CIAP approved the proposal for circulation for public comment. The updated procedures retain the overall structure of the existing framework but introduce new provisions to address gaps related to competence evaluation and disciplinary responses.

Key proposed changes include:

- Establish a formal skills assessment process, including a new section outlining procedures for referral, administration, and use of assessment results;
- Integrate skills assessment into the credential review process, allowing its use during both the initial assessment and investigation phases when interpreter competence is at issue;
- Authorize the issuance of disciplinary letters as an intermediate corrective action when warranted, including required remedial measures such as training, skills assessment participation, or retaking credentialing examinations;
- Expand resolution options by allowing matters to be resolved through corrective actions without the need to initiate formal disciplinary proceedings;
- Improve consistency and objectivity in evaluating interpreter performance by incorporating a standardized, third-party assessment tool;
- Enhance transparency by allowing certain disciplinary outcomes, including the subject of disciplinary letters, to be reflected on the interpreter's public Master List record.

Alternatives Considered

No alternatives were considered. The *California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures* document has not been updated since its adoption by the council in 2020 and does not reflect current practices or recent developments, such as the creation of a standardized skills assessment process to address skills-based complaints. CIAP included this update as a project on its annual agenda, and the proposed amendments are necessary to formally incorporate the skills assessment and disciplinary letter processes into the credential review procedures.

Fiscal and Operational Impacts

The proposal is expected to have minimal fiscal or operational impact on courts, since most of the updates expand upon the existing council process for evaluating complaints. Some additional training for court staff may be required, especially for handling and processing interpreter complaints when court input is necessary under the revised procedures. These impacts are anticipated to be limited and are likely to be offset by improved training, greater efficiency, more consistent outcomes, and a reduced need for lengthy investigations or formal proceedings.

Initially, skills assessments will be available for Spanish only; however, as the program develops, additional trained evaluators for other languages will be added as needed. Funding for the skills assessment program will come from the Judicial Council Language Access Services program budget and will be supported by neutral third-party evaluators selected by the council. Strengthening the credential review process will enhance public protection, preserve the integrity of the court interpreter profession, and support timely identification and resolution of interpreter performance issues.

Request for Specific Comments

In addition to comments on the proposal as a whole, the advisory committee is interested in comments on the following:

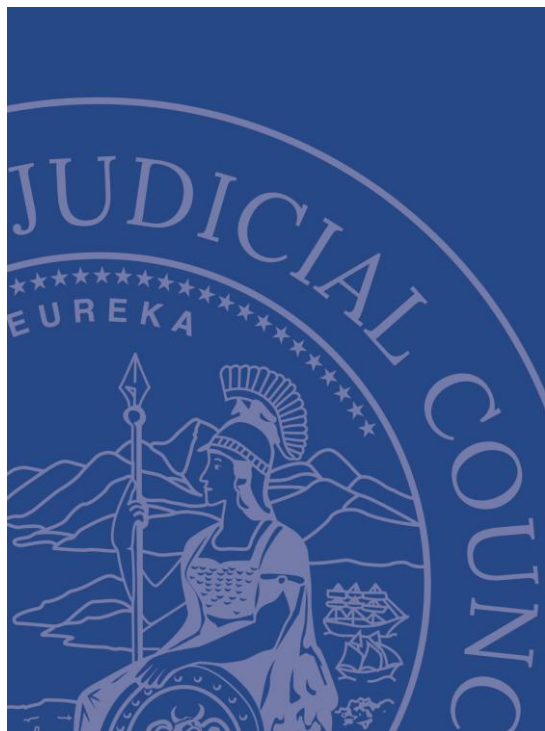
- Does the proposal appropriately address the stated purpose?
- Are the procedures regarding participation in skills assessment clear and appropriate?
- Does the disciplinary letter provide an effective and proportionate intermediate corrective option?
- Are the proposed public disclosure provisions for the subject of disciplinary letters appropriate?

In addition to the above questions, the advisory committee seeks comments from courts on the following cost and implementation matters:

- Would the proposal provide cost savings? If so, please quantify.
 - What would the implementation requirements be for courts—for example, training staff (please identify position and expected hours of training), revising processes and procedures (please describe), changing docket codes in case management systems, or modifying case management systems?
 - Would one to two months from Judicial Council approval of this proposal until its effective date provide sufficient time for implementation?
 - How well would this proposal work in courts of different sizes?
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Attachments and Links

1. Attachment A: Draft of revised *California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures* (January 2027 – TBD)
2. Link A: [California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures](#) (Jan. 2020)
3. Link B: [Judicial Council Master List of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters](#)



California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

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Table of Contents

Purpose 1

Jurisdiction..... 2

Grounds for Sanctions on Interpreter Credentials 2

Statute of Limitations 3

Submitting a Request for Credential Review 3

Assessment of a Request for Credential Review 4

Investigation of Request for Credential Review and Issuance of Charging Document 5

Skills Assessment..... 7

Resolution Without Issuance of a Charging Document 8

Right to Representation 9

Proceedings Before the Office of Administrative Hearings and Judicial Council Advisory Panel Review 9

Sanction Regarding a Credential 9

Notification of Sanction on a Credential 10

Appeals 11

Reinstatement 11

Confidentiality 11

Attachment A: Skills Assessment Process and Mechanism..... 12

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

Purpose

Court interpreters play a critical role in facilitating accurate communications between the court and limited-English-proficient users. In performing that crucial function, court interpreters are governed by the professional conduct provisions of rule 2.890 of the California Rules of Court.¹ The Judicial Council of California adopts these credential review procedures² in accordance with Government Code section 68562(d), which provides: “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.”

These procedures reinforce the professional standards for certified and registered court interpreters by:

1. Establishing a process for the Judicial Council under its authority to issue court interpreter credentials, and to review allegations of professional misconduct or malfeasance against certified and registered court interpreters;
2. Defining the due process protections and procedures governing the credential review process;
3. Seeing that California certified and registered court interpreters meet and maintain minimum professional standards of practice; and
4. Safeguarding the quality and integrity of credentialed court interpreters in California.

The procedures set forth recognize the distinction between the obligations of the Judicial Council as the credentialing body to ensure interpreters abide by the codes of professional conduct as set forth in rule 2.890, *Professional conduct for interpreters*, and those of the employer to ensure interpreter employees follow workplace policies. Trial courts retain the authority to enforce their local personnel policies, collective bargaining agreements, and contractual agreements with independent contract interpreters.

The credential review procedures do not preclude a superior court—consistent with the court’s applicable memoranda of understanding, personnel policies, and/or local rules—from receiving and investigating complaints, conducting investigations, and taking the necessary disciplinary or

¹ [*Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters*](#), published by the Judicial Council, is based on the principles and requirements set forth in rule 2.890 of the California Rules of Court.

² The *California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures* were first adopted by the Judicial Council in September 2018 for an effective date of January 1, 2019. This revision, effective January 1, 2027, was prepared under the direction of the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel and approved by the council in [Month/Year].

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

corrective action against interpreter employees or contractors who violate a court's rules, policies, and procedures, but rather supplement local court actions.

The credential review procedures are separate from discipline arising from an interpreter's work performance. However, discipline or corrective actions at the court on an employee interpreter may be considered in the credential review process or in regard to actions taken on an independent interpreter's contractual agreement with the court because of an allegation of misconduct or ongoing performance issues.

Jurisdiction

Every certified or registered spoken-language interpreter on the Master List of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters (Judicial Council Master List) is subject to these procedures.³ Jurisdiction over an interpreter to enforce and act under these procedures exists regardless of whether the interpreter resides in California.

Grounds for Sanctions on Interpreter Credentials

As the entity responsible for issuing credentials to court interpreters in California, the Judicial Council of California's Court Interpreters Program (CIP) may impose sanctions on any California court-certified or registered interpreter, up to and including revocation of an interpreter's credential. The grounds for sanctions may include:

1. Violation of rule 2.890 of the California Rules of Court;
2. Gross incompetence, including, but not limited to, a lack of the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the duties of a court interpreter⁴;
3. Deliberate misrepresentation of a certified court or registered interpreter credential, including failure to notify relevant parties of a suspension or revocation of a court interpreter credential;
4. Knowing and reckless disclosure of confidential or privileged information obtained while serving in an official capacity;
5. Fraud, dishonesty, or corruption related to the functions and duties of a court interpreter;

³ American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters may be credentialed by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI). The [Texas Health and Human Services website](#) has more information on filing a complaint against a BEI-certified interpreter. Information on filing a complaint against an RID-certified interpreter is available at the [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf website](#).

⁴ See "[Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Essential for Court Interpretation.](#)"

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

6. Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor;
7. Violation of California or federal law, including discrimination and harassment laws;
8. False or deceptive advertising after receipt of notification to discontinue; and
9. Violation of duties imposed by these procedures.

Statute of Limitations

Requests for a credential review of alleged misconduct, as identified in the Grounds for Sanctions on Interpreter Credentials section and submitted to CIP by an individual or entity **other than a court** more than 90 days after the alleged misconduct occurs will be rejected as untimely, and no further action will be taken.

If a trial court receives a complaint that may require a credential review, the following time limits apply:

1. Requests for credential review submitted by anyone other than a trial court, or that regard an independent contractor, must be submitted to CIP within 90 days of the alleged misconduct.
2. As the employing entity, a court should locally investigate any allegation of employee misconduct. If the results of the investigation may warrant a sanction on the interpreter's credential, the court must submit a request for credential review within 30 days of the completion of the investigation; or
 - a. If a court requires assistance in conducting an investigation and it is determined a credential review is required, the court must submit the request to CIP within 90 days of the date of the alleged misconduct; or
 - b. If the 90-day period has elapsed, the court must submit the request for credential review to CIP within 30 days of becoming aware of the alleged misconduct, or after addressing an ongoing pattern of conduct that may require a sanction on a court interpreter's credential.

Submitting a Request for Credential Review

Any person or entity, including a court, may submit a request for a credential review to CIP regarding a spoken-language interpreter who is a California certified or registered court interpreter and enrolled on the Judicial Council Master List. The request for credential review:

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

1. Must be submitted using the California Court Interpreter Complaint Form, available on the “Court Interpreters Complaints” webpage of the [California Courts Language Access Services website](#).
2. Must be signed and dated under penalty of perjury. During the credential review process, the confidentiality of a complainant’s identity will be preserved to the extent permitted by law.
3. The request for credential review must include a detailed description of the alleged misconduct including, if known or available, the date, time, location, name of interpreter, the interpreter’s badge number, the case file number of the proceeding interpreted, the names and contact information of any potential witnesses, and any documents or evidence that support the allegations.
4. The request for credential review, including the complaint form and any supporting documentation, must be submitted to CIP or to the local court where the allegation occurred. The request for credential review may be submitted in person, mailed, or sent electronically as follows:

In person or by mail:

Judicial Council of California
Court Interpreters Program
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

By e-mail to: credreview@jud.ca.gov.

Assessment of a Request for Credential Review

Within 30 days of receipt of the request for a credential review, CIP staff will assess the request for credential review and determine whether it is complete, meets jurisdictional requirements, and provides sufficient factual allegations that, if true, would constitute grounds for sanctions up to and including revocation of an interpreter’s credential.

As part of this assessment, CIP staff will determine whether the alleged conduct may constitute a violation of the California Rules of Court, rule 2.890. Allegations involving gross incompetence under rule 2.890 may result in referral to a skills assessment process to evaluate the interpreter’s ability to perform the duties of a court interpreter. Allegations involving other violations of rule 2.890 may result in the issuance of a disciplinary letter from CIP outlining the violation and identifying corrective actions that the interpreter must complete to remain in good standing.

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

1. The complainant will be notified within 45 days of the receipt of the request for credential review informing the complainant that the request has been received and is being reviewed;
or
2. The complainant may be asked to provide additional information for staff to assess the request for credential review. Supplemental information must be submitted within 30 days, or as directed by CIP staff.
3. CIP staff will notify the complainant of the action to be taken regarding the request for credential review, and:
 - a. If the request for credential review meets the jurisdictional requirements, written notice will be provided to the interpreter who is the subject of the request for credential review. The notice will contain a summary of the allegation(s), the date the allegation(s) took place, and the case file number of the case interpreted, if available or applicable. The notice must be sent within 45 days of the receipt of the request for credential review by CIP staff; or
 - b. Assessment of the request for credential review may be deferred if the allegations are related to pending civil or criminal litigation. CIP staff will notify the complainant and the subject interpreter of the deferral, the reasons for the deferral, and its anticipated duration, if known.
4. If the allegations in the request for credential review do not meet jurisdictional requirements that warrant sanctions on an interpreter's credential, the complainant will be notified within 45 days of the receipt of the request for credential review.
5. All requests for credential review and investigations are confidential, except when a final determination is made to impose the sanctions as provided in the Notification of Sanction on a Credential section.
6. The final determination, including the grounds for the sanction(s) may be made accessible to the public consistent with the rules governing public disclosure and California Rules of Court, rule 10.500.

Investigation of Request for Credential Review and Issuance of Charging Document

1. The investigation may include, but is not limited to:

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

- a. Interviewing the complainant, interpreter, witnesses, and other relevant persons. If the interpreter chooses not to participate or respond to questions, the investigation may continue without the interpreter's participation.
 - b. Reviewing records, documents, case files, and other materials.
 - c. Requesting information and materials from the interpreter and other relevant persons. The interpreter must respond to all inquiries within 30 days of receipt of the request for information or materials unless CIP staff grants an extension upon a showing of good cause. If the interpreter chooses not to respond to the request for information or materials, the investigation may continue without the interpreter's participation.
 - d. Consulting with a subject matter expert on the duties and requirements to serve as a court interpreter.
 - e. When allegations question the interpreter's skill and competence, CIP may request the interpreter to submit to a skills assessment with the interpreter through neutral third-party evaluators selected by the Judicial Council. See the Skills Assessment section below.
2. At the conclusion of the investigation, if grounds for one or more sanctions exist, a charging document is prepared by CIP staff or its legal counsel that provides the evidentiary basis for the conclusions supporting identified sanctions on an interpreter's credential. The charging document will be concurrently (1) served by CIP staff or its legal counsel on the interpreter; and (2) filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), which will thereafter have jurisdiction over the administrative process of pursuing sanctions against an interpreter's credential. CIP staff may, in its discretion, provide advance notice to the interpreter that a charging document will be filed.
 3. Once a charging document is filed and served, the procedures set forth in the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), Government Code section 11500 et seq., will apply and are incorporated herein. The procedures of the APA will apply in pursuing sanctions against an interpreter's credential unless the language in these procedures provides differently, in which case the language in these procedures will control.
 4. The interpreter may request a hearing to contest the charges after engaging in good faith dispute resolution efforts as set out below under subdivision (5). To request a hearing, the interpreter must serve a Notice of Defense on the Judicial Council's Court Interpreters Program office, or its legal counsel, within 30 days of service of the charging document. Upon being served a Notice of Defense, the Judicial Council's Court Interpreters Program office or its legal counsel will schedule a hearing with the Office of Administrative Hearings. Failure to

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

timely serve a Notice of Defense by the deadline will result in the interpreter's default in challenging the proposed sanctions pursuant to Government Code section 11520.

5. Prior to filing a Notice of Defense and requesting a hearing, the interpreter and CIP staff or CIP's legal counsel must engage in informal good faith dispute resolution efforts, such as a phone conference to discuss a potential resolution; formal mediation before a third party is not required. If they are unable to resolve the charges, the case will proceed to hearing.

Skills Assessment

Skills assessment serves as an investigative tool to identify specific performance issues and areas needing improvement. If the skills assessment reflects substantive deficiency, it may be the basis for additional sanctions as outlined in the Notification of Sanction on a Credential section. The assessment results will be shared with the interpreter and considered alongside other evidence gathered during the investigation. More information on the skills assessment process is included in Attachment A.

The skills assessment process may include but is not limited to the following:

1. Referral of the interpreter to complete a standardized third-party skills assessment evaluation process, developed by the Judicial Council and National Center for State Courts in collaboration with court interpreters and subject matter experts.
2. Notice to the interpreter that participation in the skills assessment process is required as part of the investigation when skill or competence is at issue.
3. Administration of the assessment by qualified and neutral third-party evaluators selected by the Judicial Council with subject matter expertise in court interpreter performance standards.
4. Evaluation of performance in relevant modes of interpreting (e.g., consecutive, simultaneous, sight translation), as applicable to the allegations.
5. Review of the assessment results by CIP and Judicial Council staff and, when appropriate, consultation with subject matter experts to interpret the findings.
6. Consideration of the assessment results as part of the totality of evidence in determining whether probable cause exists to issue a charging document.
7. If the interpreter fails to participate in the skills assessment process as directed, the investigation may proceed based on the available evidence. Failure to participate in skills assessment may be grounds for suspension until a decision regarding revocation is

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

determined. The stated justification behind the interpreter's unwillingness or inability to participate in the skills assessment process will be considered when determining a sanction.

Resolution Without Issuance of a Charging Document

With the approval of CIP staff, a request for credential review may be resolved before the issuance of a charging document.

1. A request for credential review may be resolved by:
 - a. Voluntary withdrawal of the request for credential review by the complainant before the issuance of the charging document;
 - b. Voluntary surrender of the interpreting credential by the interpreter and removal of the interpreter from the Judicial Council Master List; or
 - c. A settlement agreement that is signed by the interpreter and the Judicial Council's Administrative Director or their designee. Approval of a settlement by the Administrative Director or their designee constitutes a final decision and is not subject to further review.
 - d. Issuance of a disciplinary letter⁵ by CIP to the interpreter with specific actions that the interpreter must undertake to remain in good standing. The possible actions include, but are not limited to, completing ethics training, undergoing a skills assessment, completing recommended courses to enhance interpreting skills, and/or retaking the credentialing examination(s) to demonstrate competence.
2. Voluntary surrender of the interpreting credential requires the interpreter to provide CIP with written notice of the interpreter's voluntary surrender of the interpreting credential. Upon submission of the written notice to CIP, any credential review and/or administrative hearing process to impose sanctions or revocation on a credential, commenced hereunder will terminate. Upon surrender of the interpreter's credential, the interpreter will be removed from the Judicial Council Master List and will no longer be eligible to interpret in the California courts and be a part of the Court Interpreters Program. The request for credential review and the sanctions arising from the proceedings may be reviewed in the event the interpreter seeks to reinstate his or her credential.

⁵ Possible subjects of a disciplinary letter issued against a court interpreter could include misinterpretation and inaccuracies, lack of proficiency, breach of confidentiality, bias and partiality, conflict of interest, inappropriate behavior, tardiness and absenteeism, failure to prepare, violation of code of ethics, and failure to follow court procedures.

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

3. Sanctions taken on a court interpreter's credential may be posted on the CIP webpage consistent with the rules regarding public disclosure.
4. The subject and terms of disciplinary letters issued by CIP to the interpreter will be posted to the interpreter's public entry in the Judicial Council Master List.
5. At the discretion of CIP, any of the resolutions provided for above may be considered and accepted after the filing of a charging document.

Right to Representation

An interpreter may be represented by legal counsel under these procedures, at the interpreter's expense.

Proceedings Before the Office of Administrative Hearings and Judicial Council Advisory Panel Review

Hearings will be conducted in the OAH before an administrative law judge and will proceed under the procedures and requirements set forth in the APA.⁶

After a hearing before an administrative law judge, the judge shall prepare a proposed decision and order pursuant to Government Code section 11517(c). Thereafter, the proposed decision and order of the administrative law judge will be reviewed by a three-member panel consisting of current members of the Judicial Council's Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) pursuant to Government Code section 11517(c)(2), and the three-member panel may take any action as provided for in that section.⁷

Sanction⁸ Regarding a Credential

1. The type of sanction on an interpreter's credential must include consideration of aggravating and mitigating circumstances, including but not limited to:
 - a. The intent of the interpreter;

⁶ [Administrative Procedure Act](#) and [Gov. Code, § 11500 et seq.](#)

⁷ One member of the three-member panel must be a certified or registered court interpreter member of the Judicial Council's Court Interpreters Advisory Panel.

⁸ Separate from the *California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures*, California certified court and registered interpreters can be suspended or have their certification revoked for failure to comply with annual compliance requirements as outlined in the [Compliance Requirements for California Certified Court and Registered Interpreters](#).

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

- b. The gravity and impact of the harm to the complainant, the court, litigants, third parties, or judicial processes; and
 - c. The interpreter's history of prior discipline, including any pattern of improper conduct.
2. Sanctions on an interpreter's credential may include but are not limited to one or more of the following:
- a. Revocation of a certified or registered status credential that is permanent or temporary.
 - b. Suspension of certified or registered status for a specified period after which the interpreter must make a written request to the Court Interpreters Program for reinstatement of his or her credential.
 - c. Probation for a fixed period of two years or less during which time the interpreter must meet the probationary terms as defined by the final decision and order to maintain credential status.
 - d. A requirement that specific education courses be taken to maintain credential status.
 - e. A public or private reprimand, which may include one of the other sanctions.
 - f. A requirement that the interpreter undergo a skills assessment, which may result in additional sanctions, including suspension of the interpreter's credential and/or the initiation of proceedings for revocation if warranted. Failure to participate in the skills assessment may be considered in any subsequent determination regarding disciplinary action or sanctions.
 - g. If an interpreter does not demonstrate improvement following a subsequent skills assessment and completion of recommended training, the CIP may require the interpreter to retake the credentialing examination(s). In matters referred to the OAH, the OAH may impose the same requirement in its final decision and order.
 - h. A disciplinary letter that will be issued to the interpreter by CIP. The subject and terms of this letter will be posted to the interpreter's public entry in the Judicial Council Master List.

Notification of Sanction on a Credential

1. CIP staff or its legal representative must notify the complainant, the interpreter, and all relevant courts within 30 days of a final decision and order being issued that specifies a

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

sanction against the interpreter's credential. A final decision and order consist of either the three-member panel's adoption of an administrative law judge's proposed decision pursuant to Government Code section 11517(c)(2)(A)–(D), or issuance of a new decision of the three-member panel pursuant to the procedure described in Government Code section 11517(c)(2)(E).

2. CIP may post information about an interpreter's credential status on the "Court Interpreters Program" webpage consistent with the rules governing public disclosure.
3. If disciplinary letters are issued by CIP or sanctions are issued by OAH after a hearing, staff will add this information to the interpreter's public record on the Judicial Council Master List.

Appeals

The interpreter may appeal the final decision and order as authorized by Government Code section 11523 of the APA.

Reinstatement

An interpreter whose California court interpreter credential has been suspended or temporarily revoked may apply in writing to CIP for reinstatement within the time established in the decision and order that imposed the sanction. CIP will have sole discretion in determining whether the conditions for reinstatement have been satisfied.

Confidentiality

All requests for review, evidence collected, and investigations must be confidential, except when a final decision and order to impose a sanction on an interpreter's credential are reached. In those limited circumstances, the final decision and order, the grounds for the sanction(s) imposed, and the facts cited to support the final decision and order on credential-related sanction(s), up to and including revocation of an interpreter's credential, must be accessible to the public.

A final decision and order exist in accordance with the Notification of Sanction on a Credential section.

Publicly accessible information may be posted on the Judicial Council's "Court Interpreters Program" webpage or may be made available through a public records request to the Judicial Council under Government Code section 68106.2 and rule 10.500 of the California Rules of Court.

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

Attachment A: Skills Assessment Process and Mechanism

In 2021, the Professional Standards and Ethics Subcommittee of the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) explored the feasibility and best available methods for:

1. Development of a legally defensible diagnostic process to assess an interpreter's ability to interpret if a complaint alleging gross incompetence or serious/repeated inaccuracy is submitted against the interpreter and the complaint is deemed to be supported by substantial evidence.
2. Identification of existing and possible development of options and resources that courts can utilize to strengthen an interpreter's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs).⁹

The subcommittee determined that the assessment process should be fair, valid, and reliable, and that it will be based on the KSAs generally expected of court interpreters.

The council anticipates that a well-defined process and mechanism for skills assessment will be a valuable tool for evaluation of an interpreter's current KSAs, primarily serving to pinpoint areas for improvement and identify additional training or resources needed for skill improvement. The evaluation process will be used with an intent to positively impact an interpreter's performance and not to challenge an interpreter's credential unless it becomes necessary to do so. The overall goal of the skills assessment process is to benefit court interpreters by utilizing a valid, reliable, and fair assessment tool that accurately reflects the KSAs being used on the job.

In 2022–25, the council contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to support the development or revision of diagnostic tools (intake instruments, observation tools, checklists, etc.) and supportive resources to assist the council with assessing interpreting KSAs.

The mechanism and process outlined below include the recommended process developed by NCSC to initiate and conduct skills assessments.¹⁰ The mechanism is not static and remains subject to continuous review and improvement.

After the Court Interpreters Program (CIP) has received a complaint and determined that it validly raises allegations and concerns regarding a credentialed interpreter's ability to interpret, the staff will relay the complaint and any supporting information to an outside, neutral vendor to begin the process of an assessment.

⁹ See "[Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Essential for Court Interpretation](#)."

¹⁰ These recommendations do not cover assessment of potential physical, hearing, or visual impairment issues, which are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA requires reasonable accommodations as they relate to three aspects of employment: (1) ensuring equal opportunity in the application process, (2) enabling a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job, and (3) making it possible for an employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment.

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

1. In order to obtain additional information regarding allegations or concerns pertaining to an interpreter's interpreting ability, CIP staff may request completion of a standardized questionnaire, developed by NCSC, with court staff and the interpreter who is the subject of the complaint. These questionnaires are designed to gather additional context regarding allegations or concerns pertaining to an interpreter's interpreting ability in order to assist with the assessment. The questionnaire is not the sole basis for a determination as to whether an interpreter requires a skills assessment.
2. Based on the nature of the complaint and information gathered during CIP's fact-finding process, CIP may either refer the interpreter to additional training resources or initiate a live, proctored skills assessment process developed and administered by neutral third-party evaluators selected by the Judicial Council. A skills assessment may be initiated either because of one or more substantiated complaints regarding an interpreter's poor performance or lack of proficiency in the credentialed language. For minor skills-based complaints, CIP may elect to require the interpreter to participate in training resources to achieve needed improvements rather than recommend a skills assessment. CIP retains discretion in making its determinations.
3. The skills assessment will be conducted virtually and will include prepared audio recordings, scripts, and interpretation scenarios that mirror typical court interactions. The skills assessment will be recorded. It will also be evaluated by a minimum of two evaluators using an approved scoring rubric. The virtual assessment will be used to identify court interpretation skills and areas for improvement. The skills assessment process is *not* intended to be a pass/fail assessment and will not be used as the final determination of an interpreter's credential.
4. The two or more evaluators conducting the evaluation shall possess the highest level of court interpreter credentials and/or linguist credentials available and shall have been trained on how to conduct a virtual assessment evaluation using the standardized rating process developed by NCSC.¹¹
5. Once a skills assessment evaluation is completed, its results will be first shared with CIP. At a later date that is identified by CIP, the results will also be shared with the court interpreter and the interpreter's employer court (if the interpreter is court-employed), and the court where the incident(s) that led to the submission of the complaint took place (if not the interpreter's employer court). A follow-up appointment will be scheduled between the outside vendor, CIP staff, and the interpreter to review the results of the assessment and provide guidance for the interpreter. If appropriate, the employer court (if any) and

¹¹ Evaluators must be native speakers of the non-English language and should hold the highest level of applied linguistic credentials available, including court interpreter certification in designated languages.

California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures

CIP will work with the interpreter to identify court interpreter skills-building resources and materials to assist the interpreter with any areas requiring improvement.

6. If appropriate, the evaluator, employer court, and/or CIP may recommend that the interpreter be reevaluated with the skills assessment process at a future date as needed.
7. Depending on the skills assessment results, CIP may also require the interpreter to retake the Bilingual Interpreting Examination (BIE), Written Examination, and/or Oral Proficiency Examination (OPE) in English and the target language. This recommendation would only be made in the unusual circumstances where (1) an assessment indicates that the interpreter appears to lack sufficient proficiency in English and/or their credentialed language; (2) if after an amount of time deemed appropriate, a reevaluation indicates that the interpreter still does not appear to have made the recommended minimum skills improvements necessary to perform the duties of an interpreter; and/or (3) additional skills-based complaint(s) continue to be received by the employer court and/or CIP regarding the interpreter.
8. As a final step, the CIP may request that an interpreter forfeit their credential or, if necessary, initiate a credential review hearing to potentially revoke the credential if any of the following occur: (1) the interpreter's deficiencies in skills and abilities are egregious and not correctable; (2) the interpreter is required to retake the credentialing examination(s) and fails to pass them within twelve (12) months, or within another time period specified by CIP; or (3) the interpreter refuses to retake the required examination(s).
9. For languages of lesser diffusion for which there is no OPE available in the credentialed language, CIP may still administer the assessment as well as require a retest with the English OPE to determine sufficient proficiency in English. If the results from these processes indicate a deficiency in interpreting skills and abilities and/or a lack of proficiency in English, CIP may consider requesting a credential review hearing for the interpreter, or CIP may continue to direct the interpreter to training and resources to help support needed improvements.
10. The Judicial Council will make every effort to identify evaluators in the interpreter's language for assessment. However, there may be languages of lesser diffusion in which evaluators with the requisite credentials to assist with the assessment are not available.