



**STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR GUIDELINES**  
**NEVADA CERTIFIED COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### **State Statutory Policy**

[NRS 1.510](#) requires the State Court Administrator, subject to available funding, to establish a program for the certification and registration of court interpreters and enumerates the activities this responsibility covers.

### **State Court Administrator's Policies**

Purpose of the Policies - The purpose of these policies is to carry out the statutory requirements and to provide interpreters, courts, and interested persons information on:

- Ethical requirements of all interpreters working in Nevada courts
- The Nevada Certified Court Interpreter Program
- Court Interpreter Credential Renewal Requirements
- Continuing Education Requirements for Nevada Court Interpreters

### **Modifications to the Guidelines**

There will be modifications to these guidelines as necessary.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

Definitions with an asterisk (\*) were taken from *Court Interpretation: Model Guides for Policy and Practice in the State Courts*, authored by William E. Hewitt, National Center for State Courts, Williamsburg, VA, 1995.

**Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)** – The central administrative support office for the judicial branch under the direction of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the State Court Administrator. The AOC administers the examinations (written and oral) required of Credentialed Interpreters within the State of Nevada. The examinations are developed by the National Center for State Courts, Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC), formerly called the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts.

**Consecutive Interpreting\*** – Consecutive interpreting is rendering statements made in a source language into statements in the target language intermittently after a pause between each completed statement in the source language. In other words, the interpreter renders an interpretation after the speaker has stopped speaking. When using this mode of interpreting, it may be necessary for the interpreter to signal a speaker to pause to permit a consecutive interpretation when the length of the utterance approaches the outer limits of the interpreter's capacity for recall. During consecutive interpreting, the interpreter should take notes to assist him/her in rendering the interpretation.

**Contact Hour** – 50 to 55 minutes of instruction are considered one credit. 25 minutes of instruction is equal to one-half credit. This includes only the time materials are being presented or instruction is taking place.

**Continuing Education** – activities, such as workshops and courses, in which the interpreter engages after successfully passing the certification examination. Full attendance of a session is required to obtain continuing education credit.

**Continuing Education (CE) credits** – Continuing education credits as recognized by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

**Interpretation\*** – Interpretation means the unrehearsed transmitting of a spoken message from one language to another. Interpretation is distinguished from "translation," which relates to written language. Court interpreters use three modes of interpreting in court – "simultaneous", "consecutive", and "sight translation". "Summary" interpreting should not be used in court settings.

**Interpreter** – Interpreters are considered officers of the court. Interpreters assist the court in ensuring that court proceedings and court support services are accessible and function efficiently and effectively. They also interpret communications between the court and limited English proficient (LEP)/non-English speaking participants.

**Modes of Interpretation** – Three basic modes of interpretation are used in the Nevada courts:

- *Simultaneous Interpretation* is used to interpret proceedings and instructions to and from the (LEP)/non-English speaking participants. In simultaneous interpreting, the interpreter is listening to one language and interpreting it, simultaneously, into another.
- *Consecutive Interpretation* is used to interpret witness testimony and other matters for the record. This mode is used when only one voice should be heard for accurate record. The interpreter listens to the question posed and interprets the question from one language to another. The interpreter listens to the answer given by the speaking witness and then interprets the answer.
- *Sight translation* is used when the interpreter reads a document written in one language and then orally interprets it into another language.

**National Center for State Courts (NCSC)** – The National Center for State Courts is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides leadership and administrative assistance to state courts. The Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) is comprised of states who utilize standardized test instruments in different languages to credential court interpreters. The State of Nevada became a member of the original Council in November 2001 and utilizes the CLAC's tests to credential its court interpreters.

**Nevada Certified Court Interpreter** – A Nevada Certified Court Interpreter possesses all the following credentials:

- Completed the Written Orientation Workshop for Court Interpreters in the Nevada Courts.
- Passed the NCSC Written Exam with a minimum score of 80%.
- Completed the Oral Orientation Workshop for Court Interpreters in the Nevada Courts.
- Passed the NCSC Oral Examination with a minimum score of 70% in all sections.
- Provided verification of Nevada courtroom observation (40 hours in total for previous 12 months).
- Submitted a Nevada Court Interpreter Certification or Registration Status Request to the Administrative Office of the Courts.
  - Submitted one fingerprint card for a background check and successfully passed the criminal history check. Has sworn to the oath set forth in [NRS 50.054](#) and the Canons set forth in the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in Nevada Courts

**Nevada Certified Court Interpreter with a Master-Level Designation** – A Master Level designation is given to Nevada Certified Court Interpreters who have achieved the above credentials, and additionally the interpreters have:

- Achieved a score of 80% or higher on the NCSC Written Exam and achieved a score of 80% or higher on all three parts of the NCSC Oral Exam; or Passed the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination.

**Nevada Conditionally Approved Court Interpreter Designation** – To be considered for the classification of the Conditionally Approved status, a candidate must:

- Completed the Nevada Written Orientation Workshop for Court Interpreters in the Nevada Courts.
- Pass the NCSC Written Exam with a minimum score of 80%.
- Completed the Oral Orientation Workshop for Court Interpreters in the Nevada Courts.
- Pass the NCSC Oral Examination with a minimum score of 60% in all sections or score 7 or Advanced Low level in the Oral Proficiency Interview for candidates testing in a language for which there is not an NCSC Oral Examination.
- Submit a Nevada Conditionally Approved Status Request.
  - Provide verification of Nevada courtroom observation (40 hours in total for the previous 12 months).

- Submit one fingerprint card for a background check to be conducted prior to working in Nevada courts and successfully pass the criminal history check.
- Pay filing and processing fee as noted in the current fee schedule.
- A passport photograph.
- Has sworn to the oath set forth in [NRS 50.054](#) and the Canons set forth in the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in Nevada Courts.

The Nevada Supreme Court will invite candidates eligible for the Conditionally Approved level to apply to the Administrative Office of the Courts. Conditionally approved interpreters may work in Nevada Courts and should be called for work “only when there is a finding of a lack of a credentialed resource on the record.”

Candidates designated “Conditionally Approved” may remain in that status no longer than two years from the date the candidate is approved by the Nevada Supreme Court. If the candidate does not attempt to successfully pass the Oral Examinations during that period, their Conditionally Approved designation will not be extended.

- Candidates may have their designation extended at the discretion of the program for an additional two years
- Training Requirements for Conditionally Approved Designation: 6 credits. To be approved by the Nevada Supreme Court, 2 of the 6 credits must include ethics.
- Training Requirements for Conditionally Approved Designation: 6 credits. To be approved by the Nevada Supreme Court, 2 of the 6 credits must include ethics

***Nevada Registered Court Interpreter*** – An interpreter for whom either no oral examination has been developed by the Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) or no oral examination has been offered in his/her language. A Nevada Registered Court Interpreter has successfully satisfied all the following requirements:

- Completed the Nevada Written Orientation Workshop for Court Interpreters in the Nevada Courts.
- Pass the NCSC Written Exam with a minimum score of 80%.
- Completed the Oral Orientation Workshop for Court Interpreters in the Nevada Courts. Underwent the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) by ALTA Language Services (ALTA) or Language Testing International (LTI) and received a score of 8 on ALTA’s testing scale or a rating of “Advanced Mid” classification according to the American Council for Testing of a Foreign Language (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines. The Nevada Certified Court Interpreter Program will permit an interpreter to take the OPI twice in a language within a twelve-month period.
- Provided verification of Nevada courtroom observation (40 hours in total for previous 12 months).
- Submitted a Nevada Court Interpreter Certification or Registration Status Request to the Administrative Office of the Courts.
  - Submitted one fingerprint card for a background check and successfully passed the criminal history check. Has sworn to the oath set forth in [NRS 50.054](#) and the Canons set forth in the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in Nevada Courts.

***Non-English Speaking /Limited English Proficient (LEP) Person\**** – “Non-English-speaking person” is the term used to refer to any person who is unable to communicate in English or “limited English proficiency,” a person who has a limited ability to communicate in English. The terms also apply when language limitation arises due to deafness or being hard of hearing. The terms generally refer to a principal party in interest or a witness in the case.

***Proceedings Interpreting\**** – Proceedings interpretation is for a non-English speaking litigant to make the litigant “present” and able to participate effectively during the proceeding. This interpreting function is ordinarily

performed in simultaneous mode. The interpreter's speech is always in the foreign language and is not part of the record of proceedings.

**Provider** – a person, school, or entity that is preparing and/or presenting an educational class, workshop, or seminar.

**Session** – a portion of an activity as determined and identified by a provider.

**Sight Translation**\* – Sight translation is a hybrid type of interpreting/translating whereby the interpreter reads a document written in one language while translating it orally into another language. In this mode of interpreting, a written text must be rendered orally without advance notice and on sight.

**Simultaneous Interpreting**\* – Simultaneous interpreting is rendering an interpretation continuously at the same time someone is speaking. Simultaneous interpreting is intended to be heard only by the person receiving the interpretation and is usually accomplished by speaking in whispered tones or using equipment specially designed for the purpose of being as unobtrusive as possible.

**Source Language**\* – Source language is the language of the original speaker. "Source language" is thus always a relative term, depending on who has spoken last.

**Target Language**\* – Target language is the language of the listener, the language into which the interpreter is communicating the meaning of the words spoken in the source language.

**Translation**\* – Translation is converting a written text from one language into written text in another language. The source of the message being converted is always written language.

**Witness Interpretation**\* – Witness interpretation is interpretation during witness testimony for the purpose of presenting evidence to the court. This interpreting function is performed in the consecutive mode; the English language portions of the interpretation are part of the record of the proceeding. A variant of "witness" interpreting is assistance provided by the interpreter during communications between the judge or other English-speaking official on the case and a non-English speaking defendant or civil litigant. Typical examples are communications that occur during arraignments, plea or sentencing hearings.

### 3. THE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Nevada Certified Court Interpreters Advisory Committee, as established by [NRS 1.510](#), determined, based on studying similar programs in other states, that there was a need for a Code of Professional Responsibility for all court interpreters. The Committee determined that the NCSC's "Model Code of Professional Responsibilities for Interpreters in the Judiciary" should be used as a baseline in developing a code for Nevada Court Interpreters. [Code of Professional Responsibility with Commentary](#) is also available to review. *Updates or revisions to the Code are considered necessary, and suggestions for changes should be submitted in writing to the attention of the State Court Administrator.*

#### 1: ACCURACY AND COMPLETENESS

The interpreter shall render a complete and accurate interpretation or sight translation, without altering, omitting anything from, or adding anything to what is stated or written, and without explanation.

#### 2: REPRESENTATIONS OF QUALIFICATIONS

The interpreter shall accurately and completely represent his or her court interpreter credentials, training, and pertinent experience. The court should reassess the interpreter's qualifications each time the interpreter is engaged to interpret in court for a non-English speaking party or witness.

**3: IMPARTIALITY AND AVOIDANCE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

An interpreter shall refrain from conduct that may give an appearance of personal bias or conflict of interest. The interpreter shall disclose to the court, or attorney, any real bias or interest in the parties or witnesses in a case, or any situation or relationship that may be perceived by the court, any of the parties, or any witnesses as a personal bias or interest in the parties or witnesses in a case. This disclosure shall not include privileged or confidential information. The court shall then determine if the appointment of a different interpreter is necessary, thereby releasing the interpreter from the interpreter's obligation in the case. If the court and all parties agree that the interpreter may serve in the case, the interpreter may remain appointed to the case.

**4: PROFESSIONAL Demeanor**

Interpreters shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the dignity of the court and shall be as unobtrusive as possible, maintaining a respectful and professional demeanor at all times.

**5: CONFIDENTIALITY**

Interpreters shall understand and follow the rules of privileged and other confidential information and shall protect the confidentiality of all privileged and other confidential information.

**6: RESTRICTION OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

Interpreters shall not publicly discuss, report, or offer an opinion concerning a matter in which they are or have been engaged, even when that information is not privileged or required by law to be confidential.

**7: SCOPE OF PRACTICE**

Interpreters shall limit themselves to interpreting or performing sight translation and shall not give legal advice, express personal opinions to individuals for whom they are interpreting or engage in any other activities that may be construed to constitute a service other than interpreting or translating.

**8: ASSESSING AND REPORTING IMPEDIMENTS TO PERFORMANCE**

Interpreters shall, at all times, assess their ability to deliver their services. When interpreters have any reservation about their ability to satisfy an assignment competently, they shall immediately convey that reservation to the court.

**9: DUTY TO REPORT ETHICAL VIOLATIONS**

Interpreters shall report to the court any actions by the persons that may impede their compliance with any law, any provision of this code, or any other official policy governing court interpretation and sight translation.

**10: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Interpreters shall continually improve their skills and knowledge and advance the profession through activities such as professional training, education and interaction with colleagues and specialists in related fields.

**Violations of the Code**

Nevada courts place critical reliance on the skills, performance, and integrity of the interpreter in performing duties for the court, the opportunity to provide interpreter services to the Nevada courts is at the complete and continuing discretion of the Nevada AOC as an agent of the Supreme Court whether the interpreter is credentialed or non-credentialed. The complete disciplinary policy for interpreters in Nevada courts is contained in Appendix I.

## 4. NEVADA CERTIFIED COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM

The following section details the Nevada Certified Court Interpreter Program requirements. An interpreter may have passed all exams, and still not have completed other requirements. All certified or registered interpreters will be provided with relevant documentation.

### **Orientation Workshops for Court Interpreters in Nevada Courts**

The orientation workshops cover the fundamentals of court interpretation (modes, ethics, and role of the interpreter) as well as an introduction to Nevada's court system. This is available all year, as a self-paced online virtual format.

### **Examinations**

The AOC uses interpreting tests developed by the NCSC in a multi-state collaborative effort to share interpreting tests for the credentialing of court interpreters. For information on exam opportunities visit the [Become a Court Interpreter](#) site for current schedule. These testing instruments consist of:

#### **Written Exam**

The written examination is provided by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and conducted twice a year in both Northern and Southern NV. A minimum passing score of 80% on the written exam is required to qualify for the oral examination or the oral proficiency interview (OPI).

- The written test consists of three stand-alone sections:
  - General English Language Vocabulary - *sentence completions, synonyms, antonyms, and idioms.*
  - Court-Related Terms and Usage - *sentence completions, multiple-choice questions, and sequence questions.*
  - Ethics and Professional Conduct- *multiple choice questions and scenarios*

#### **Oral Exam**

The oral examination is provided by the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and conducted twice a year in both Northern and Southern NV. A minimum passing score of 70% on all three sections of the exam is required to qualify to request certification.

- The Oral Exam consists of three sections:
  - A two-part oral sight translation skills test
  - An oral consecutive skills interpreting test
  - An oral simultaneous skills interpreting test
- Candidates must pass the oral exam or oral proficiency interview within 7 years of passing the written exam, or they may be required to retake the written exam.
  - To become eligible for retesting on the written exam, those candidates who failed the written exam or who did not pass the oral exam or OPI within 2 years of passing the written exam may be required to attend the Nevada Orientation Workshop, as approved by the Nevada Certified Court Interpreters' Program.
- Candidates will not be allowed to take the oral exam in Nevada more than twice per calendar year, and no candidate shall be permitted to take the same version of the exam more than twice.
- Fees for examinations and other credentialing events will be set by the State Court Administrator with the fees for out-of-state residents being set at a rate that is at least twice what is charged to Nevada residents.

### **Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Exam**

The oral proficiency interview is provided by ALTA Language Services, Inc. (ALTA) or Language Testing International (LTI). A minimum passing score of 8 on [ALTA's testing scale](#) or a rating of "Advanced Mid" classification on the [ACTFL Proficiency Scale](#) that LTI is required to qualify to request registration.

- To set up an OPI Exam contact the [Program directly](#).

### **Reciprocity**

Only the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Exam (consisting of all three modes of interpreting and administered in a single testing cycle) is accepted as equivalent to passing the skills portions of the NCSC exam for the purposes of obtaining a Nevada Court Interpreter credential.

- Exam Reciprocity. Subject to the discretion of the Court Administrator, persons possessing a certification from a NCSC member state in good standing may be eligible for exam reciprocity pursuant to obtaining a Nevada State Court Interpreter Credential. Reciprocity is contingent on verification of previous test scores from the NCSC member state.
- People eligible for exam reciprocity must meet all other requirements set by these guidelines, and after having been sent a copy of the Code of Professional Responsibility, return an affidavit documenting that they have received and read those items, and a letter of good standing from your registered state. The decision to honor out of state credentialing requirements will be made on a case-by-case basis. Appeals for denials must be in writing to the State Court Administrator within 30 days of determination.
- Interpreters from Nevada and other states who have attended an orientation workshop (covering, at a minimum, the role of the interpreter, ethics, and modes of interpreting), passed the written exam with a minimum score of 80%, passed all three parts of the oral exam with at least a 70% score on the same day (and neither score on the sight translation below 65%), may be considered credentialed in Nevada.

### **Other Requirements**

After successful passage of the Written and Oral examination or OPI, an interpreter planning to become a Nevada Credentialed Court Interpreter must complete the Nevada Court Interpreter Certification or Registration Status Request Form, which includes authorization for release of certain records.

As part of the credentialing process the interpreter undergoes a background check for a criminal history record. This background check may also be done prior to the application process. If a criminal record is found that, in the judgment of the State Court Administrator or designee, is relevant to the performance and professional responsibilities of the court interpreter, the record may be grounds for not issuing the court interpreter credential.

The following may be considered grounds for denial of the credential of certification/registration:

- Failure to provide verification of being a citizen, a lawful permanent resident of the United States or otherwise authorized to work.
- Conviction of a crime against a child or a sexual offense.
- Felony or Gross misdemeanor and simple misdemeanor convictions, if such convictions are 7 years old or less:
  - involving violence/domestic violence
  - requiring registration as a sex offender
  - involving theft, fraud, or dishonesty
  - involving drugs and/or alcohol.
- Any other gross misdemeanor and/or simple misdemeanor convictions, except traffic, not enumerated under subsection D, which are less than 2 years old.

- Any juvenile court adjudication.
- The State Court Administrator or designee may not consider any conviction or juvenile adjudication that has been ordered to be sealed by a court of competent jurisdiction. If the conviction or juvenile adjudication is from a jurisdiction other than Nevada and would be subject to sealing if it had been a conviction under Nevada law, then the State Court Administrator or designee may elect to disregard such a conviction or juvenile adjudication.

**Oath** – In addition to Nevada's Code of Professional Responsibility (described in Section 3 above), an oath shall be administered in accordance with [NRS 50.054](#).

#### **Considerations for Appointing Certified or Registered Court Interpreters Over Non-Credentialed**

Credentialed court interpreters demonstrated through objective testing measures that they possess a minimum knowledge, skills and abilities to provide accurate and complete court interpreting services. Thus, credentialed interpreters should be used first, unless no credentialed court interpreter is readily available to assist. In that case, a court may, for good cause, appoint a conditionally approved court interpreter who should not serve the more complex assignments. Additionally, the judge may appoint an interpreter after completing a *voir dire* on the record.

Weighting of considerations should be left to the discretion of the judge.

## **5. CERTIFIED/REGISTERED COURT INTERPRETER STATUS RENEWAL**

After maintaining credential, an interpreter must renew the Nevada Court Interpreter credential every 3 years. The 3-year effective period for the certification begins upon the date of issuance of the credential.

#### **RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS**

To renew the certification/registration for another 3-year period, the interpreter must:

- Complete an application form to document the current name, address, existence of a Nevada business license number and other information of the interpreter.
- Provide documentation of continuing education credits as required in section 7 below.
- Interpret a total of 120 hours in the 3-year renewal period of in-court proceedings and/or out-of-court legal interviews or depositions and provide documentation of work hours. A minimum of 10 hours of actual court interpreting experience is required. A letter from a court employee confirming the hours have been completed is also acceptable.
- Pay a renewal fee to the AOC.
- Undergo a criminal history record check.
- Provide documentation of continuing education credits as required in section 7 below.
- Send relevant renewal documents at least 60 days prior to expiration to allow for timely processing.

#### **LAPSE OF NEVADA COURT INTERPRETER CREDENTIAL**

A Nevada credentialed court interpreter who does not meet the renewal requirements before the expiration of the interpreter's Certificate of Appointment, but who still wishes to pursue recertification, has 6 months from the expiration date to complete the requirements, subject to pay a late fee, and upon completion may request renewal of his or her credential without having to re-test (written and oral). During this period, the credential will be considered to have expired, and the interpreter will not be credentialed. If the interpreter is unable to complete the requirements within 6 months but can show progress (such as documented enrollment for a future CE class), the interpreter may be given up to 1 year to complete the requirements at the discretion of the AOC. A

reinstatement fee may be imposed unless waived. If an interpreter must take extra time to complete the renewal requirements, the new certification or registration period will extend only from the expiration date of the preceding certification/registration period. In any case, if an interpreter is unable to meet the renewal requirements within 1 year of the expiration of the interpreter's Certificate of Appointment, the interpreter must start the entire credentialing process from the beginning (to include, but not limited to, attendance at an orientation workshop, and written and oral testing).

## 6. FEES

According to [NRS 1.520](#), the AOC may impose fees and associated costs on certified or registered court interpreters' requisite to reimbursing the State for the cost of administering the certification program, including examination, certification and renewal fees – see [Court Interpreter Administration Fees](#).

[NRS 1.520](#) also allows the AOC to collect fines associated with any violations of the State Court Administrator Guidelines for the Nevada Certified Court Interpreter Program.

## 7. CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

The following continuing education (CE) requirements are mandatory to assist the interpreter in fulfilling Canon 10 of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Nevada Courts regarding professional development. Any exceptions to the following need to be approved by the State Court Administrator, or Designee

- All continuing education requirements apply to all interpreters seeking renewal of their credentials.
- Documentation of continuing education credits should be provided to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) in the renewal application.
- An interpreter must obtain at least 3 CE credits in ethics.

The following are areas in which an interpreter may obtain CE credits:

- Language-specific Interpreting and Translating Education.
- Non-language-specific Interpreting and Translating.
- Education Related to Law.
- Education Related to the Enhancement of the Profession and Further Development of Relevant Interpretation Skills.

### **REQUIRED CREDITS, MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM BY TYPE OF EDUCATION**

To satisfy the requirements for retaining the Nevada court interpreter credential, each interpreter must earn 26 CE credits every 3 years, as a condition of renewal. The 26 continuing education credits must include a minimum of 3 credits on ethics.

#### **Deadline for Earning CE Credits**

All CE credits must be earned prior to the expiration of the certification credential. Expiration is calculated 36 months from renewal date and must include a minimum of 3 credits on ethics.

#### **Limitation on Credits Earned Per Year**

No less than 6 and no more than 12 CE credits earned during a 12-month period may be counted toward the required 26 CE credits.

### **Limitation on Carrying CE Credits Forward into Next Reporting Period**

No CE credits earned during one reporting period may be carried forward to the next reporting period.

### **Limitation by Type of Education**

No more than 8 credits in a non-interpreter/translator-oriented or non-legal course from universities and colleges, or adult education providers may be used for a reporting period.

### **Minimum Interpretation Requirements**

A total of 120 hours of interpretation is required during the 3-year renewal period. While out-of-court legal interviews and depositions may be counted toward this requirement, a minimum of 10 hours of actual court interpreting experience is required. Supporting documentation is required.

## **RECORD KEEPING AND SUBMISSION**

### **Records**

The interpreter must keep his/her own record of hours of observation or interpretation of in-court proceedings, or out-of-court legal interviews or depositions under the supervision of a court assignee. Letters or similar documentation from a court or attorney meeting this requirement may be accepted. If there is a question, contact the Program Administrator.

### **Submission**

The interpreter will retain the documents and proof of attendance related to the credits claimed and provide them to the program when applying for renewal.

To verify compliance, related documentation required includes, but is not limited to:

- Official transcripts from accredited colleges and universities
- Certificates of participation/completion, and
- Attendance verification documentation.

## **CREDITS AWARDED**

CE credits are awarded for contact hours of participation in pre-approved organized educational programs, given under responsible sponsorship with capable direction and qualified instruction, or for alternative-study programs of study groups of two or more people. Recreational programs are not eligible for credits. No CE credits will be awarded for programs that are less than 30 minutes in length.

### **Credits Awarded by Type of Program**

Language-specific Interpreting and Translating Education and/or Alternative Study

- Language-specific interpreting or translating skills programs other than alternative study programs or formal academic programs, provide one CE credit for each contact hour of participation. Limit 7 hours per day.
- Out-of-state or abroad programs that are language-specific related to interpreting and translating education (e.g., advance, or comparative grammar of English and target language course) may be eligible for CE credit. Abroad programs must be related to interpreting and translating. Foreign travel alone may not be used for credit. CE credits may be awarded for participating in activities (i.e., workshops or courses) offered in other states or in another country. Activity must be recognized and approved by the program.

### **Approved Alternative Study Courses**

The program will review for approval and credit value of the alternative study courses.

### **Teaching or Facilitating Approved CE Programs**

Teaching or participating as a small group facilitator or leader in any course or program listed above may provide up to 5 CE credits per one teaching activity for the instructor or small group leader with a maximum of 10 per year. The program will evaluate the credits requested by instructors or small group leaders on a case-by-case basis. The instructor or small group leader can obtain up to 2 CE credits for re-teaching a class previously taught.

### **PRE-APPROVED PROVIDERS OF WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, AND CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**

Any workshop, compulsory or optional, sponsored and/or sanctioned by the Nevada Certified Court Interpreters Program, may be used to fulfill CE requirements.

The following providers are pre-approved as providers of CE programs:

- Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).
- Upper Division University and college courses approved or recognized by the program.

### **COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY, AND SPECIALIZED INSTITUTE INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATING COURSES**

#### **Language-Specific Interpreting and Translating Courses**

Language-specific interpreting and translating courses offered by colleges, universities, and specialized institutes, in which the interpreter earns a letter grade of "C" or better, if students are graded, or "pass" if only pass/fail grades are offered up to 15 CE credits per semester or 10 CE credits per trimester or quarter.

#### **Non-language-specific Interpreting and Translating Courses**

Non-language-specific interpreting and translating courses offered by colleges, universities, and specialized institutes, in which the interpreter earns a letter grade of "C" or better, if students are graded, or a "pass" if only pass/fail grades are offered up to 8 CE credits per semester or 5 CE credits per trimester or quarter.

### **NON-LANGUAGE SPECIFIC COURSES OFFERED BY UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, AND OTHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS**

Courses presented by universities and colleges, community-based adult education providers, and other organizations that provide legal or general education may qualify for the students attending the course to obtain CE credits. To ensure consideration, the interpreter MUST submit course information to the program prior to attending the course so that the program may determine if the course qualifies for continuing education credits. Approval for non-language specific classes or courses is not guaranteed.

### **ALTERNATIVE-STUDY COURSES**

#### **Alternative study programs may be used to obtain CE credits.**

In order for a court interpreter to obtain credits for alternative-study programs, the interpreter must submit the [Alternative Study Course Plan Form](#) and subject to pay an administration fee to the AOC for prior approval.

*The AOC may request a written summary of the alternative-study course (e.g., essay or article about what was learned) to be shared with other interpreters throughout the state.*

- The Alternative Study Course Plan Form should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the program. An alternative-study program will not be evaluated for CE credit after the program has been completed.
- Once a plan and fee are submitted, the program will evaluate whether an alternative study program qualifies for CE credits. The interpreters submitting the plan will be notified in writing whether the alternative-study program is accepted or rejected, and explanation or suggestions for change will be provided.

- At the completion of the alternative-study program, participating interpreters must sign an affirmation of the hours studied and submit a summary or evaluation of the alternative study program. Staff from the AOC may observe an interpreter's alternative-study program at any time, without prior notice.
- Any misrepresentations regarding an alternative-study program disqualify the interpreter from obtaining CE credits from the program in question, disqualify the interpreter from ever obtaining CE credits by participating in an alternative study program, and may be an ethical violation resulting in suspension or withdrawal of the Nevada Certified Court Interpreter's credentials.

### **COURT INTERPRETER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

A certified or registered interpreter may earn continuing education credits by providing uncompensated interpretation services through a nonprofit legal aid organization pursuant to [SCR 216](#) (1). An interpreter may obtain one (1) general continuing education unit for each three (3) full hours of uncompensated translation services performed, for a maximum of five (5) general continuing education credits per year.

To apply uncompensated interpretation services provided in exchange for continuing education credits, the nonprofit organization must submit the [Court Interpreter Volunteer Program form](#) to the program coordinator on behalf of the interpreter yearly or per assignment. The program will confirm volunteer hours submitted and will provide a letter to the interpreter to confirm credits awarded. The certified court interpreter program shall not assess fees for continuing education credits awarded pursuant to this program.

### **PRESENTING A PROGRAM FOR CE CREDIT**

A provider wishing to present a program for CE credit should request approval from the program at least 90 days prior to the beginning of the program. The program will respond to the request within 45 days from the date received. Providers must submit the [Program Approval Form](#). Upon approval, the provider will be notified of the number of CE credits that will be awarded to participants and instructors in the program.

### **SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR CE CREDITS**

Some topics for CE credits may include, but are not limited to:

- Professional Issues: Management, ethics, and leadership.
- Terminology: Legal terms, colloquial, street slang, law enforcement jargon, weapons and ballistics, drugs, gangs, sex offenses, tools, automotive terms, false cognates, business terms, forensic pathology, criminology, fingerprints, profiling, DNA, medical terms, drug and alcohol testing, juvenile proceedings, civil law, family law, real estate, and financial and banking terms.
- Translation: Personal legal documents, medical reports, business correspondence, works of literature, technical documents, theory of translation, contracts, bidding specification, legislation, court decisions, financial documents, comparative grammar, and phonology in target language.
- Tape Transcriptions.
- Language Skills: Grammar, style and composition, literature, speed reading, accent reduction, voice protection, etymology, philosophy, public speaking, vocabulary-building, linguistics, creative writing, phonology, and improvisation techniques.
- The Law: Comparative legal systems, criminal procedures, sentencing procedures, probation/parole, contracts, domestic violence, administration of justice, criminal investigation, juvenile justice, criminal profiling, family law, and torts.
- Cultural Awareness: Intercultural communication, cultural anthropology, comparative religions, comparative cultures, comparative government, folk medicine, and sociology.

## 8. SKILL, PROFICIENCY, & PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The proficiency of Nevada certified or registered interpreter is subject to review as part of an ongoing assessment of skills and to give performance feedback to the interpreter.

These reviews will occur consistent to the AOC policy. Credentials may be suspended during the review process. To determine credential status, the program will rely on timely review and recommendations from the Advisory Committee for the Credentialed Court Interpreters.

## 9. SUPREME COURT, LOCAL COURT RULES, REGULATIONS, & POLICIES

All interpreters working in the Nevada courts must adhere to the rules, regulations, and policies of the Supreme Court, the court in which the services are provided, and the AOC. If an interpreter knowingly violates any of these rules, regulations and policies, disciplinary action may result, up to and including withdrawing credentials – see [NRS 1.510](#).

## 10. CREDENTIALLED COURT INTERPRETER COMPENSATION

### ***Hourly Rate***

Nevada certified and registered court interpreters should be paid a minimum of \$49 per hour or the prevailing rate of the local court, whichever is higher.

### ***Expenses***

Credentialed court interpreters should be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses as consistent with the Nevada Judicial Branch and travel policy per diem rate, or any local policy governing such reimbursements.

### ***Source of Compensation***

If interpreting services by credentialed court interpreters are not provided by the local court, the source of compensation for interpreting services is at the discretion of the presiding judge.

## 11. CREDENTIALLED COURT INTERPRETER ROSTER

The program compiles and maintains a list of [Nevada Certified/Registered Court Interpreters](#). This list is routinely provided to the state courts. The roster is also routinely provided to other state agencies and organizations. Included in this roster are the interpreter's name, working language, telephone number, and email address as provided by the interpreter on the *Application Form*. Also included in this roster is an indication of whether the interpreter is considered "master level." The interpreter roster is updated regularly.

The AOC recognizes the unique challenges associated with interpreting for the deaf, and will use as guidance Chapter 7, Visual Modes of Communication: Interpreting for Deaf Persons, from the publication "Court Interpretation: Model Guides for Policy and Practice in State Courts." The AOC will not maintain a registry of interpreters for the deaf but may assist the courts in finding such interpreters – see [NRS 656A.100](#).

## 12. POLICY FOR MASTER LEVEL ORAL EXAMINATION RETAKE

The Program must retest anyone who has scored at the certified level and wishes to test up to the Master level after one year has passed since their last testing date. Any section(s) of the test in which a person tested at 80%

or higher is not required to be retested. However, it may be retested at the request of the candidate and if approved by the program. The test may be retaken no more frequently than one time per year.

Warning: Anyone who is retesting to reach the Master level and whose score falls below the certified level on the retest will not have their certified status affected the first time. However, anyone who tests below the certified level two consecutive times will presumptively have his or her classification downgraded to the level demonstrated in the retests.

### **13. CONTACT**

Please refer general program questions/requests to:

*Email: [Courtinterpreters@nvcourts.nv.gov](mailto:Courtinterpreters@nvcourts.nv.gov)*

*Phone: 775.687.9806*

*201 S. Carson Street, Suite 250*

*Carson City, NV 89701-4702*

## **APPENDIX I: DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

### **1. REASONS FOR DISCIPLINE**

Disciplinary complaints may be filed against interpreters who have been certified or registered by the state of Nevada through the court interpreter credentialing program for the following reasons:

- Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, or false statements.
- Fraud, dishonesty, or corruption, that is related to the functions and duties of a court interpreter.
- Continued false or deceptive advertising after receipt of notification to discontinue.
- Knowing and willful disclosure of confidential or privileged information obtained while serving in an official capacity.
- Gross incompetence.
- Failing to appear as scheduled without good cause; or
- Violation of the Court Interpreter's Code of Professional Responsibility or any other judicial department policies or procedures.

### **2. COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Any person may initiate a complaint by filing it with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). All complaints shall be directed to the State Court Administrator or the administrator's designee. All complaints must be in writing on a [Complaint Form](#), must be signed, must be submitted within 180 days from the date of the alleged disciplinary breach, and must describe the alleged inappropriate conduct. Upon receipt of a complaint, the State Court Administrator or the administrator's designee will review the complaint to determine its merit.

- If the complaint has no merit, the State Court Administrator or the administrator's designee may forward a draft finding to the chair of the Certified Court Interpreter Advisory Committee. Upon acceptance of the initial draft finding that there is no merit to the complaint by the chair, the finding dismissing the complaint shall be mailed to the complainant and a copy thereof to the interpreter.
- If further review is required, the interpreter will be provided with written notice of the allegations and asked to provide a written response to the complaint within 21 days of receipt of this notification. Upon receipt of the interpreter's response, the chair of the Committee may appoint a three-member review panel (at least one member of the panel must be a Nevada certified or registered interpreter), which shall meet within 45 days to review the materials received from the complainant and from the interpreter to determine whether further action is required. The review panel may consider information obtained from sources other than the complaint and response. If the complaint is found to be insufficient, the complaint shall be dismissed, and the complainant and the interpreter shall be notified.
- If sufficient cause is found, or if no response is filed by the interpreter, the review panel shall determine what further action is required. The review panel may set a hearing to review the complaint or review the matter by considering the information as submitted. If a hearing is set, the interpreter shall be notified by certified mail of the time and date of the hearing, which shall be set no later than 60 days after a determination that sufficient cause exists.
- Efforts to resolve the complaint informally may be initiated by any of the parties to the complaint at any time. Any resolution reached must be submitted to the State Court Administrator for approval. Upon approval of any resolution reached informally, or after any review without any hearing, the review panel will notify the complainant and the court interpreter of its decision in writing.
- All hearings will be reported or recorded electronically and shall be private and confidential except upon the request of the interpreter facing the allegations. Strict rules of evidence shall not apply. The review panel may, in its discretion, call witnesses, consider or clarify any evidence presented (including affidavits), giving such evidence the weight it deems appropriate. The interpreter may be represented by counsel at his/her own expense, and shall be able to testify, comment on the allegations, present evidence, and call witnesses. Testimony shall be under oath.

- If the review panel finds that there is clear and convincing evidence that the court interpreter has violated the Code of Professional Responsibility for these reasons for discipline as set forth in paragraph 1 hereof, it shall impose such discipline or sanctions as it may deem appropriate.

### **3. POSSIBLE SANCTIONS**

The review panel shall issue a decision, including its findings and the sanctions to be imposed, if any, within 30 days from the conclusion of the hearing. Time limits may be extended by mutual agreement (of the panel and the interpreter) in writing when an extension is necessary to ensure the fairness and/or sufficiency of the process.

Sanctions may consist of, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Private reprimand.
- Public reprimand.
- Imposition of costs and expenses incurred by the Review Panel in connection with the proceeding, including investigative costs.
- Restitution.
- Requiring specific education courses be taken.
- Requiring that one or more parts of the interpreter certification examination be retaken.
- Requiring that work be supervised.
- Suspension of credentials for a specified period.
- Revocation of credential, to include a determination as to when the interpreter will be allowed to apply for reinstatement of status following a specified period.

The specific disciplinary action and the degree of discipline to be imposed should depend upon factors that include aggravating and mitigating circumstances including but not limited to:

- The gravity of the violation.
- The intent of the interpreter.
- The interpreter's history of prior discipline.
- Whether there is a pattern of improper activity.
- The effect of improper activity on others or on the judicial system.

### **5. NEW EVIDENCE**

A party to the complaint may make a request to the State Court Administrator in writing to re-open a review panel proceeding within 21 days of the decision if new evidence is discovered.

### **6. APPEAL**

The interpreter may appeal against the review panel's decision no later than 21 days after the decision is mailed to the address on file for the interpreter. The appeal shall be directed at the State Court Administrator or the administrator's designee and shall include the interpreter's written objections to the decision. The appeal may be considered by the Nevada Certified Court Interpreters Advisory Committee (minimally a quorum thereof) based upon the record of the hearing to determine whether the decision reached, and sanctions imposed were appropriate. Said record shall consist of the complaint, response, decision, a recording and/or transcript of the hearing, and copies of all items of evidence. The Committee shall meet to consider the appeal within 21 days of receipt of the appeal. The meeting of the Committee to consider the appeal may be conducted by telephone conference call. The complainant and the interpreter shall be notified of the decision on the appeal within 15 days of the meeting. Decisions by the committee regarding appeals shall be considered final.

**7. REINSTATEMENT**

A court interpreter whose status has been suspended or revoked may apply in writing to the State Court Administrator for reinstatement pursuant to the time frames established in the final order. This request shall explain why the applicant believes the reinstatement should occur. The State Court Administrator or the administrator's designee will review the request and provide a notice of reinstatement determination, or to impose conditions upon reinstatement, as it deems appropriate.

## APPENDIX II: GUIDELINES FOR TRANSLATION OF COURT FORMS

Per [NRS 1.040](#) **Written proceedings to be in English language; abbreviations and figures.** Every written proceeding in a court of justice in this State, or before a judicial officer, shall be in the English language; but such abbreviations as are now commonly used in that language may be used, and numbers may be expressed by figures or numerals, in the customary manner.

Translations of court forms are a Nevada Supreme Court priority. Forms and instructions are to be available to the public. The State Court Administrator, in consultation with each Nevada court and in collaboration with the Certified Court Interpreters Advisory Committee (CCIAC), shall determine which court materials will be translated into foreign languages. The CCIAC an administrative arm of the judiciary, developing policies for the improvement of the court system and making recommendations to be considered by the Nevada Supreme Court. The CCIAC has a mission to conduct ongoing assessments of Nevada's Certified Court Interpreter Program to make recommendations to the Court Administrator for improvements to the program.

Translation of all court forms and materials shall be undertaken in consultation with CCIAC, to ensure accuracy and uniformity. The following guidelines will ensure uniformity and efficiency in the translation of court connected materials.

### Choice of Language.

- Nevada Courts will endeavor to translate court forms and materials into the most frequently spoken language in Nevada. The foreign languages selected for translation of documents shall be based on the languages identified in the State Language Access Plan.
- The most prevalent language other than English spoken currently in Nevada is Spanish. Initially, court documents will be translated into Spanish.

### Qualified Translators.

Translations shall be made by Nevada Supreme Court certified interpreters or equivalent credentialed interpreters/translators subject to approval by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). Translated court forms and materials will be submitted to the CCIAC for final approval before statewide distribution. Application materials will be available on the Nevada Supreme Court website.

### Format.

- The format of a translation should correspond to that of the original document being translated. The purpose of a translation is to produce a written document that faithfully and accurately reproduces in the target language the content of the source-language document.
- All non-English forms and materials shall include the title and language of the document in English, for ease of use by all court staff. Monolingual forms are for information purposes only and may not be submitted to the court.
- All non-English forms and materials shall include the date (in English) on which that version of the document was produced.

### Glossaries.

- Legal glossaries will be maintained and shared on the Nevada Supreme Court website. Glossaries will be sourced for frequently used languages to ensure uniformity across Nevada Courts. To reduce the costs of translation, the glossary translations shall be used for all corresponding English words and phrases whenever possible (e.g., "defendant," "Court," "small claims," "restraining order," etc.).
- The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has [several legal glossaries and dictionaries](#).

Disclaimers.

- All monolingual forms must prominently display the following water mark, in English and the foreign language: "This form is for your reference only. Do not submit to the court."
- All bilingual forms must prominently display the following notation, in bold, in the foreign language at the head of the form: "This form must be completed in English. If necessary, you should obtain assistance completing this form in English."

Other notifications.

- All non-English language forms and materials shall be accompanied by a document that includes the following notice in the foreign language: "You have the right to an interpreter for your court event. Please notify court staff immediately if you will need an interpreter in court."
- All non-English forms submitted to the court must include the English version.

Distribution.

- Translated forms and materials must be made available on the Supreme Court website and in Nevada courts. Courts are encouraged to make such forms available on their individual websites. The courts may also include community resource contacts and self-help program sources.
- Upon issuance of translated forms or materials, the Nevada Supreme Court shall endeavor to provide effective notice of the translations.