



OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
Court Language Access Services

Certification Information Packet

Thank you for your interest in the Oregon Certified Court Interpreter Program. Court interpreters are a vital part of the administration of justice. Certified court interpreters are highly skilled professionals who can perform well in the three modes of interpretation: simultaneous, consecutive and sight.

Court interpreters must be educated speakers of English and another language and be able to interpret all levels of discourse in court proceedings. A court interpreter must have knowledge of court procedures and protocols and maintain the high ethical standards required by [the Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Oregon Courts \(CPR\)](#). Court interpreters must commit to the process of life-long learning as set forth in the CPR and outlined in the [State Court Administrator's Policies for the Oregon Judicial Department's Oregon Certified Court Interpreter Program](#).

Requirements for certification include:

- Passing a criminal history check;
- Achieving a passing score on the Written Examination;
- Achieving a passing score on the Court Interpreting Oral Examination;
- Achieving a passing score on the Ethics Examination;
- Completing and submitting documentation of 20 hours of court interpreting service or observation during the 12 months prior to application. The interpreting service or observation must occur in a court of record in:
 - Oregon, or
 - Another consortium member state, or
 - A federal court, or
 - Any proceeding where the interpreter is sworn, and the record is admissible in court;
- Completing the application process;
- Swearing the Interpreter's Oath as administered by an Oregon state judge.

It is not unusual for an interpreter to take the oral exam more than once before passing all three parts. In Oregon, the overall pass rate has been about 18 percent over a 15-year period. A candidate may fail the exam and take it again. You must wait six months before you can test again in Oregon or in any other state.

Program requirements and fees may change from time to time—details are provided at the beginning of each test cycle.

If you feel that you can meet the high standards required of a certified court interpreter, please e-mail your contact information, (name, language(s), address, phone number, and e-mail address) to:

Court.Interpreter.Program@ojd.state.or.us

Oregon Court Interpreter Certification Program FAQ

Is being bilingual enough to meet the standard to interpret court proceedings?

No. Certified court interpreters are highly skilled professionals who can perform well in the three modes of interpretation: simultaneous, consecutive, and sight. A court interpreter must have knowledge of court procedures, protocols and apply ethical standards required by the *Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Oregon Courts*.

What languages do you certify?

You can find a list of languages available for certification on our [website](#).

What if I speak another language?

If you are interested in becoming an interpreter of a non-OJD certified language, please e-mail Court.Interpreter.Program@ojd.state.or.us providing your name, language(s), address, phone numbers and e-mail address.

How do I become a certified court interpreter in Oregon?

Requirements for certification include:

- Passing a criminal history check;
- Achieving a passing score on the Written Examination;
- Achieving a passing score on the Court Interpreting Oral Examination;
- Achieving a passing score on the Ethics Examination;
- Completing and submitting documentation of 20 hours of court interpreting service or observation during the 12 months prior to application. The interpreting service or observation must occur in a court of record in:
 - Oregon, or
 - Another consortium member state, or
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- Completing the application process;
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How do I begin the certification process?

Please contact our office by e-mail (Court.Interpreter.Program@ojd.state.or.us) to be added to our mailing database. Provide your name, address, e-mail address, phone number(s) and language(s). You will be notified periodically of scheduled certification activities and professional development opportunities.

How much does it cost to become certified?

The fees are posted on our [website](#).

NOTE: Fees are assessed each time you register for an exam. For example, if you do not pass the written exam and choose to attempt it again the following year, you must pay the registration fee again.

Can anyone begin testing at any time?

Tests are only offered at certain times per year, and candidates must pass the Written Exam before they can take the Oral Exam. You can find the calendar of events on our [website](#).

What is the written examination like?

The written examination is a multiple-choice exam designed by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts to measure: general knowledge of court interpreting, the English language, court related vocabulary

and usage, ethics and professional conduct. The written exam must be passed with a score of 80% or higher.

What is the ethics examination like?

The ethics examination is a multiple-choice exam taken online that consists of 60 multiple choice ethics and professional conduct questions in English. The ethics exam must be passed with a score of 70% or higher.

What is the Court Interpreting Oral Examination like?

The Court Interpreting Oral Examination is an oral exam designed by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts to measure the candidate’s interpreting skills in the sight, consecutive, and simultaneous modes of interpretation. The oral exam must be passed with a score of 70% or higher on each of the modes of interpretation.

How long does the oral examination take?

The exam takes about two hours to complete. If a candidate arrives late for the exam, they may lose the opportunity to test that year and forfeit the exam fee.