

Becoming a Certified Court Interpreter

Step One

Complete orientation.

Step Two

Pass a written exam.

Step Three

Pass an oral certification exam. (If you speak a language where no oral certification exam exists, you may be eligible to take an Oral Proficiency Interview or OPI.)

Other Requirements:

Complete a character and fitness screening.
Observe court.
Sign an oath of office form.
Maintain current contact information.
Participate in continuing education.

Fees:

Orientation: \$195
Written Exam: \$50 (1st time); \$25 (subsequent times)
Oral certification exam: \$250; or
Oral Proficiency Interview: \$139

Note: Sign language interpreters must hold credentials through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and are exempt from taking the written and oral exams.

Sample Orientation Agenda

Day 1

Lecture: *Introduction to Court Interpreting & Overview of the Court System*

Lecture: *Code of Ethics for Interpreters*

Discussion: *Code of Ethics*

Lecture: *Modes of Interpreting*

Small Group Practice: *Sight Translation Mode*

Day 2

Lecture: *Criminal Terminology & Procedure*

Small Group Practice: *Simultaneous Mode*

Small Group Practice: *Consecutive Mode*

Lecture: *Juvenile, Family, Civil Terminology & Procedure*

Lecture: *Certification, Testing & Business Practices*

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For more information visit the Director of State Courts Interpreter Program website at: www.wicourts.gov/services/interpreter/index.htm

Wisconsin Court Interpreters

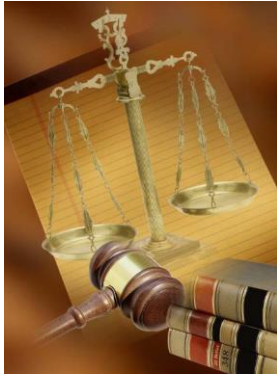


Ensuring Justice for All

If you are fluent in English and another language and are seeking a career in the legal arena, court interpreting may be the profession for you.



Interpreter Needs



In 2015, the Wisconsin Court system used interpreters in over 55 different languages. While Spanish, Hmong and American Sign Language (ASL) were the top three languages requested by the courts, interpreters were needed regularly in Arabic, Mandarin, Burmese and Russian.

Court interpreters who complete the certification process generally possess language skills equivalent to an educated, native-like speaker; are able to interpret in three modes: sight translation, consecutive and simultaneous; and adhere to a professional Code of Ethics. While legal interpreting is a challenging profession it comes with great rewards.

Frequently Asked Questions

How are court interpreters hired and how much can they make?

Court interpreters typically work as independent contractors hired directly by the county circuit courts. As contractors, the amount of interpreting hours will vary by language need, geographic location and credentials. Contract interpreters may earn anywhere from \$30-\$75 per hour. Some interpreters work independently while others opt to take assignments through an agency.

Who pays for the interpreters?

For court proceedings, it is the responsibility of the courts to provide and pay for the interpreter regardless of the limited English speaker's financial ability. The State reimburses circuit courts for qualified services at rates set by statute.

What is the Roster of Interpreters and how do I get listed on it?

The Roster of Interpreters is a registry of certified or qualified individuals maintained on the court's public

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website that entities use to locate and hire interpreters with legal training.

Interpreters who complete orientation, pass a written exam, achieve requisite scores on an oral exam, complete a character and fitness screening, and meet other program requirements are placed on the roster.

Besides the courts who else hires court interpreters?

Court interpreters can work in a variety of settings outside of court hearings such as in jails, police departments, attorneys' offices, (district attorneys and public defenders included) and administrative legal hearings.