

Director of State Courts Office

# Wisconsin Court Interpreter Program Policies

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## **1. Scope and Authority**

The Wisconsin Supreme Court is committed to providing language services and access to justice for people of limited English proficiency (LEP). As part of that commitment, the Director of State Courts Office (“the Director”) developed the Court Interpreter Program (“CIP”) to train and test interpreters, educate court officials on compliance with state and federal laws regarding language access and best practices for using interpreters, translate court forms, and address related language access issues. This document outlines the procedures and policies for the recruitment, training, and certification of persons to act as qualified interpreters in a court proceeding and court-related events; and for the coordination, discipline, retention, and training of those interpreters. Policy direction is provided by the Committee to Improve Interpreting and Translation in the Wisconsin Courts (“the Committee”) which has been working on policy and program development since 1999.

## **2. Council of Language Access Coordinators**

Wisconsin is a member of the Council of Language Access Coordinators (“CLAC”) which is a partnership of US states and territories that have pooled financial and other resources to develop, maintain, and administer court interpreting exams to support court interpreter certification programs and other language-access services. The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) through its Language Access Services Section (LASS) houses and provides support for CLAC. The CLAC evolved from its origins as the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts after the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) determined that language access is a vital and fundamental court service. As a result of that determination, COSCA and CCJ voted to establish a subcommittee of the CCJ/COSCA’s joint Access, Fairness, Public Trust and Confidence (AFPTC) Committee. This subcommittee, the Language Access Advisory Committee (LAAC), is comprised of COSCA members and non-voting CLAC liaisons who are dedicated to providing national leadership on language access issues and initiatives affecting court systems.

## **3. Training**

### **3.1 Two-Day Orientation**

The CIP offers two-day introductory orientation programs in Milwaukee and other locations throughout the state. This orientation is designed to give interpreters an overview of the needs and expectations of the court, and is appropriate for both spoken and qualified sign language interpreters. The program covers ethical conduct, protocols for court interpreting, legal terminology and procedure, and basic interpreting skills. The orientation program lasts fourteen (14) hours over a two-day period. Attendance on both days is a mandatory first step for all interpreter candidates. Training materials are provided by the CIP via a DropBox link or flash drive

All interested participants must submit an application detailing their personal contact information, interpreting experience, qualifications, and interest. Participants must be at least 18 years old to attend. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters must hold a Certificate of Interpretation (CI) and a Certificate of Transliteration (CT) or NIC (National Interpreter Certification) from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) Advanced or BEI Master, or an equivalent credential from an approved entity, and be licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) to be eligible to attend orientation training.

Walk-ins are not allowed and no one will be admitted without payment. Children or guests are not permitted to attend unless a valid reason for attendance exists and a request is made to the program manager prior to the start of training. Complete fee refunds may be allowed if the request is received by the CIP at least five (5) business days prior to the training date. All other requests for refunds will be considered individually and may include a refund less a \$50 late cancellation fee to cover the costs of catering and printing. The CIP may cancel an orientation if a minimum number of applicants have not registered by the corresponding deadline. In the event an orientation is cancelled, individuals who have registered will be given the opportunity to apply the fee to the next scheduled session or receive a complete refund.

### **3.2 Skills-Building Workshops**

The CIP may offer additional language-specific or language-neutral skills-building workshops for interpreters. The purpose of the workshops is to improve interpreting skills, build vocabulary, and learn techniques for self-assessment. Interpreter candidates who have attended the two-day orientation and begun the testing process are eligible to attend. Space is generally limited and preference will be given to interpreters who are eligible to take the oral examination and who demonstrate a commitment to court work. Complete fee refunds may be allowed if the request is received by the CIP at least five (5) business days prior to the training date. All other requests for refunds will be considered individually and may include a refund less a \$50 late cancellation fee. The CIP may cancel a skill-building workshop if a minimum number of applicants have not registered by the corresponding deadline. Complete refunds will be issued to individuals in the event of a cancellation by the CIP.

### **3.3 Accommodations at Trainings**

An individual with a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) who requires a reasonable accommodation to participate at a training must submit a request with the application. The program manager will consider timely requests and advise the applicant of the accommodation that can be provided. ASL interpreters will be available at the Milwaukee orientation location.

## **4. Interpreter Record-Keeping**

The CIP maintains an interpreter database which stores and tracks individual information on each person who is registered with the CIP, provides services to the courts, participates in the program, or whose certification is recognized by the CIP through reciprocity. An interpreter candidate's personal information will be entered into the application which automatically assigns a number to each candidate serving as his or her Wisconsin interpreter identification (ID) number. The CIP is responsible for upkeep of the database which is maintained by regularly entering test scores, results of background checks, roster status, continuing education courses, and all other relevant information. Contact information and changes in credentialing status serve as the basis for information listed on the roster of interpreters so information will be entered in a timely manner by the CIP.

### **4.1 Registration with the CIP**

Any individual working through an agency or independently who is providing interpreter services to the courts and who has not participated in the CIP certification program must complete a "New Interpreter Registration Form" detailing contact information, date of birth, agency affiliation if applicable, and a signed affirmation that he or she will abide by Wisconsin's Code of Ethics for Interpreters.

## **5. Certification and other Credentialing**

The Director through the CIP is the only entity in the state that offers certification and credentialing for court interpreters of spoken languages. The CIP offers two tracks of credentialing: 1) Certified languages track and 2) Authorized languages track.

### **5.1 Certified Languages Track**

Interpreter candidates who speak the following languages must follow the Certified Languages track in order to obtain their certification: Arabic, Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian (BSC), Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Marshallese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, and Vietnamese. Certified interpreters hold the highest credentials for court interpreting in the legal system.

### **5.2 Authorized Languages Track**

Interpreter candidates who speak the following languages may follow the Authorized Languages track in order to obtain their credentials: Afrikaans, Akan-Twi, Albanian, Armenian, Assyrian, Azerbaijani, Baluchi, Bengali, Bulgarian, Burmese, Cebuano, Chavacano, \*\*Chechen, Czech, Danish, Dari, Dutch, Finnish, Ga, Georgian, German, Greek (Modern), Gujarati, Hausa, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Ilocano, Italian, Iraqi, Japanese, Javanese, Kazakh, Kikongo-Kongo, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Krio, \*\*Kurdish-Kurmanji, Kurdish-Sorani, \*\*Lingala, Malay, Malayalam, Mandingo-Bambara, Mongolian, Nepali, Norwegian, Pashto, Persian Farsi, Punjabi, Romanian, \*\*Sindhi, Sinhalese, Slovak, Swahili, Swedish, Tajik, Tamil, Tausug, Telugu, Thai, Turkish, Turkmen, Uighur, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, Wolof, Yoruba, and Zulu.

## 5.3 Other Languages

The CIP may use other test instruments for assessing qualifications of interpreter candidates who speak a language not included in either the Certified languages or Authorized languages track.

## 6. Testing

The CIP uses written and oral test instruments that have been developed and are maintained by the NCSC or other valid test instruments developed by approved organizations as part of its credentialing process. The CIP abides by test administration standards and protocols developed by the NCSC when using its test instruments that are outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding on State Court Interpreter Testing.

### 6.1 Written Examination

The written examination is a mandatory screening device all spoken language candidates must take regardless of the track he or she is following and optional for sign language interpreters. It is a multiple-choice test developed by the NCSC that measures candidates' knowledge of the three areas central to the work of a court interpreter at the level of a minimally qualified professional: 1) English language, 2) court-related terms and usage, and 3) ethics and professional conduct.

The written examination is offered approximately four (4) weeks after orientation generally in locations where orientation was held. Upon completion of the two-day orientation training, interpreters may register for the written examination at any location by submitting an application with the fee by the corresponding deadline. The CIP will send a confirmation notice to test registrants at least one (1) week before the testing date by email or US mail if no email address is on file. Test candidates who are unable to take the exam and notify the CIP at least five (5) business days prior to the candidate's test date may be allowed to transfer payment once to the next available testing opportunity or be issued a complete refund of their test fee. Test candidates who notify the CIP less than five (5) business days prior to the candidate's test date may be issued a refund of the test fee less a processing fee. Walk-ins are not allowed. All test candidates must show valid photo identification prior to testing.

A passing score on the written exam is 80%. Test candidates will receive their results within two (2) weeks after the test date via email or US mail if no valid email address is on file.

#### 6.1.1 Retake on Written Examination

If another version of the multiple-choice test is available, the interpreter must wait at least six (6) months before re-taking. An interpreter candidate may take the same version of the test after twelve (12) months, but no candidate will be allowed to take any version of the multiple-choice test more than twice.

#### 6.1.2 Rescore on Written Examination

All scores on the multiple-choice examination are considered final. There is no option for requesting a re-score for the written test.

#### 6.1.3 Waiver of Written Examination

Interpreters who are certified by the US Administrative Office of the Courts (US AOC), other states, or another approved entity who have been granted reciprocity by the CIP may waive the written examination. The requirement to take the written examination will be waived for interpreter candidates who have already passed the test and are retaking orientation per Sec. 10.

## 6.2 Certified Languages Track

### 6.2.1 Oral Certification Examination

Candidates who have passed the written exam and are following the Certified Languages track are eligible to take an oral certification examination. Oral certification examinations are performance tests developed by the NCSC. The level of performance the test measures is the minimum acceptable level for entry into the profession of spoken language court interpretation. The oral exams are developed to measure a

candidate's ability to faithfully and accurately interpret the range of English ordinarily used in courtrooms into another language, and to understand and interpret into English what is said by a native speaker of another language. Every test includes a scoring dictionary and follows one of the two oral performance test models. The "standard model" is the original model used since the initial development of NCSC court interpreter exams and is sometimes referred to as a "full test" or a "whole test." It includes all three sections: sight translation, consecutive, and simultaneous interpretation. The "abbreviated model" includes a simultaneous section and a measure of conversational proficiency in English to be chosen from a list of available standardized tests promulgated and maintained by the LASS.

Interpreter candidates who have passed the written examination and are following the Certified Languages track may register to take the oral certification examination. Open testing periods are generally offered three (3) times per year with registration closing twenty-five (25) business days prior to the first day of testing. To register for the oral certification examination, candidates must contact the CIP to schedule individual appointments. Slots are held on a first come first serve basis. Complete test fees must be received no later than fifteen (15) business days prior to the testing date in order to hold a candidate's slot. Test candidates who are unable to take the exam and notify the CIP at least five (5) business days prior to the candidate's test date may be allowed to transfer payment once to the next available testing opportunity or be issued a complete refund of their test fee. Test candidates who notify the CIP less than five (5) business days prior to the candidate's test date may be issued a refund of the test fee less a \$50 processing fee. Walk-ins are not allowed. All test candidates must show valid photo identification prior to testing.

The passing score is 70% or higher for each of the three sections (Sight Translation, Consecutive and Simultaneous) and an overall score of 70% or higher. For the Sight Translation part, test candidates must score 65% or higher on each individual portion of the Sight Translation with an overall score of 70% or higher. The tests are graded by a team of NCSC-approved test raters. Test candidates will receive their results within six (6) to eight (8) weeks after the test date via email or US mail if no valid email address is on file.

### **6.2.2 Retake on Oral Certification Examination**

If another version of the oral test is available, the interpreter candidate must wait at least six (6) months before retaking it. An interpreter may take the same version of the test after twelve (12) months, but no interpreter will be allowed to take any version of the oral examination more than twice unless the program manager determines a valid reason for doing so exists. For languages where only one version of the oral certification exam exists, no candidate will be allowed to retake the oral certification exam more than four (4) times.

If an interpreter candidate passes one (1) or two (2) parts of the oral examination, he or she may opt to retake only that section or sections the candidate did not pass up to a period of eighteen (18) months from the date the test candidate first took the oral examination. If a test candidate does not pass the remaining section(s) of the oral examination within an 18-month period, he or she must retake the entire oral exam and a new 18-month period will commence.

### **6.2.3 Rescore on Oral Certification Examination**

If a test candidate passes two (2) parts of the oral examination and scores 67% or higher on the third part, an automatic rescore will be done on the failed section. If a test candidate passes one (1) part of the oral examination and scores 67% or higher on the remaining two (2) parts, an automatic rescore will be done on the two (2) failed sections. The CIP will bear the cost of automatic rescoring. The score(s) on any re-rated section will be considered the final score(s) of the candidate. No test candidate may request a rescore once he or she has been notified of the test results.



### **6.2.4 Oral Test Raters**

The CIP uses a team of two (2) NCSC-approved raters who will rate each oral certification examination in accordance with the standards and procedures established by the NCSC. The rating team will identify who will serve as the lead rater. Each member of the team or the lead rater of the team will be required to sign a rater agreement letter with the CIP prior to commencement of the rating.

## **6.3 Authorized Languages Track**

### **6.3.1 Oral Proficiency Interview**

Candidates who have passed the written examination and are following the Authorized Languages track may register for an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) which the CIP offers through Language Testing International (LTI) or other approved provider. An OPI assesses a candidate's proficiency in the non-English language by measuring his or her ability to use the language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations. The OPI does not test a candidate's interpreting skills. A passing score on the OPI administered through LTI is Superior.

### **6.3.3 Scheduling and Fees**

Open testing periods are offered throughout the year depending upon availability of the CIP manager and test proctor. To schedule an OPI, candidates must contact the CIP to set up an individual appointment. Complete testing fees must be received at least fifteen (15) business days prior to the testing date in order to hold a candidate's slot. If an applicant is unable to take the test and provides notice of cancellation within twenty-four (24) hours of the test time and date, the applicant may be provided a full refund upon request. Test candidates who do not cancel within twenty-four (24) hours of the test time and date may be provided a refund less a late-cancellation fee. Walk-ins will not be allowed. All test candidates must show valid photo identification prior to testing.

### **6.3.4 Retake on the Oral Proficiency Interview**

Candidates must wait at least six (6) months before re-taking an OPI.

### **6.3.5 Rescore on the Oral Proficiency Interview**

There is no option for requesting a re-score on an OPI.

## **6.4 Accommodations for Tests**

A test candidate with a disability under the ADA may request an accommodation by submitting a timely written request. Requests for an accommodation during the written exam must be submitted on the form entitled "Documentation of Accommodation for the Court Interpreter Written Exam" at least fifteen (15) business days in advance of the written testing date. (See Appendix A) Requests for an accommodation during the oral exam must be submitted on the form entitled "Documentation of Accommodation for the Court Interpreter Oral Certification Exam" at least thirty (30) business days in advance of the oral testing date. (See Appendix B) Requests for an accommodation during the OPI must be submitted in writing at least fifteen (15) business days in advance of the testing date. The request for an accommodation during the OPI should document the disability, the specific accommodation being requested and be signed by a professional. The program manager will consider all timely requests and advise the applicant of the accommodation that can be provided.

## **7. Reciprocity of Equivalent Test Scores**

Reciprocity refers to recognition of an applicant's score on the NCSC oral examination that was administered in a different state or recognition of an applicant's score on an equivalent performance examination administered through an approved entity.

### **7.1 Spoken Language**

The CIP recognizes any of the following as equivalent: :

- Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination (FCICE); NCSC's oral examination administered in another state or territory with a score of 70% or higher on each section (Sight Translation, Consecutive, and Simultaneous) and an overall score of 70% or higher within one state or territory. Verification must be provided to the CIP that the candidate did not take the same version of the examination more than two times and did not retake the test more than once in a 10-month period; National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) examination.

## 7.2 Sign Language

- RID's Special Certificate: Legal (SC:L) or Conditional Legal Interpreting Permit-Relay (CLIP-R) from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID);
- BEI Court Interpreter Certification (CIC)

Test scores from other non-NCSC examinations offered by approved entities may be considered by the CIP for purposes of reciprocity.

Certified interpreters from other jurisdiction who are seeking reciprocity with Wisconsin must submit an "Application for Reciprocity and Roster Status" form with supporting documentation to the CIP. The CIP will notify the interpreter via email if his or her application for reciprocity has been approved or denied within twenty (20) business days of receipt by the CIP.

## 8. Out-of-State Test Candidates

Out-of-state candidates who did not begin the certification process in Wisconsin but are seeking to test only in this state may be given the opportunity to do so at the discretion of the CIP manager. Wisconsin candidates will be given priority for testing slots over out-of-state candidates. For the oral exam, candidates in this category are required to sit for the entire test and must comply with the mandatory 6-month waiting period between testing.

## 9. Requirements for Certification

To be considered certified by the Director, an interpreter must meet all requirements listed below:

### 9.1 Spoken Language

- Complete two-day orientation; and
- Pass the NCSC's multiple choice examination at 80% or higher; and
- Pass an oral certification examination with a score of 70% or higher on each section: Sight Translation, Consecutive, and Simultaneous; and
- Successfully complete a character and fitness screening which includes a criminal background check; and
- Complete at least two (2) hours of circuit court observation with verification submitted on form CS-254; and
- Submit a notarized Oath of Office form to the CIP; and
- Maintain current contact information with the CIP which includes mailing address, telephone number(s), email address, and name changes; and

### 9.2 Sign Language

- Hold RID's SC:L, CLIP-R, or CDI; or BEI CIC; or other credential deemed to be an equivalent; and
- Complete two-day orientation; and
- Pass the NCSC's multiple choice examination at 80% or higher; and
- Successfully complete a character and fitness screening which includes a criminal background check; and
- Submit a notarized Oath of Office form to the CIP; and
- Maintain current contact information with the CIP which includes mailing address, telephone number(s), email address, and name changes

## 10. Deadlines and Requirements for Interpreter Candidates

### 10.1 Spoken Language

Spanish interpreter candidates have a 2-year deadline to attain certification. Beginning January 1, 2016, all Languages Other Than Spanish (LOTS) candidates have a 5-year deadline to attain certification or achieve roster status. The two (2) or five (5) year period begins when the candidate first attends orientation and ends either on October 1<sup>st</sup> of the two (2) or five (5) year period which the candidate began orientation if the candidate attended orientation during the first half of the calendar year; or April 1<sup>st</sup> of the year following the two-year or five-year period when the candidate began orientation if the candidate attended orientation during the last half of the calendar year. See table below for examples:

| Language | Date Attended Orientation  | Deadline to Get Certified |
|----------|--|---------------------------|
| Spanish  | Candidate attends orientation between January 1-June 30 of 2018  | October 1, 2020           |
| Spanish  | Candidate attends orientation between July 1-December 31 of 2018 | April 1, 2021             |
| LOTS     | Candidate attends orientation between January 1-June 30 of 2018  | October 1, 2023           |
| LOTS     | Candidate attends orientation between July 1-December 31, 2016   | April 1, 2024             |

If a Spanish interpreter candidate does not achieve certification within two (2) years of attending orientation; or if a LOTS interpreter candidate does not achieve certification or roster status within five (5) years of attending orientation, he or she must start the process over by retaking orientation once.

### 10.2 Sign Language (Hearing)

Beginning January 1, 2019 new sign language interpreters applying for roster appearance at the Provisional level will have 5 years from the date he or she was added to the roster. Provisional level interpreters listed on the roster as of January 1, 2019 will have 5 years to move up to the Certified level or until January 1, 2024. If a Provisional level sign interpreter does not achieve certification within the 5-year deadline, he or she will be removed from the roster.

## 11. Courtroom Observation

All candidates seeking certification through the Director of State Courts must attend at least two (2) hours of observation in circuit court upon completion of orientation and preferably prior to sitting for the oral certification examination or OPI. Form CS-254 must be completed by the interpreter candidate and submitted to the CIP. For sign language interpreters, court observation is not mandatory but is strongly recommended.

## 12. Interpreter Identification

All certified spoken language interpreters whose credentials were conferred by Wisconsin will be issued identification consisting of a photo identification, plastic cover, and lanyard showing the interpreter's status as a certified interpreter and Wisconsin interpreter ID number. Sign interpreters who attain legal certification and who reside in Wisconsin or work in Wisconsin courts will also be issued the same identification from the CIP once the CIP is notified of the legal credential. Certified interpreters who are working in any court throughout Wisconsin are required to wear this identification at all times and must abide by the terms and conditions associated with the identification established by the CIP. If at any time an interpreter's certification is revoked or suspended, the interpreter must return both the badge and lanyard to the CIP during the pendency of the revocation or suspension.

## 13. Character and Fitness Requirement

In order to protect the integrity of court proceedings and the safety of the public, interpreters are required to meet a character and fitness standard. A court interpreter should be one whose record of conduct justifies the trust of the courts, witnesses, jurors, attorneys, parties, and the public. A record manifesting significant deficiency in the honesty, trustworthiness, diligence, or reliability of an applicant is material to performance as a court

interpreter and may warrant a denial of participation within the certification program or removal from the roster of interpreters.

### **13.1 Criminal Background Check**

The CIP will conduct a criminal background check on all new participants who complete orientation through the Wisconsin Department of Justice Crime Information Bureau (DOJ-CIB) and/or the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access (WCCA) website. The CIP will conduct a criminal background check annually on all interpreters listed on the roster through DOJ-CIB and/or WCCA.

For new participants, if the CIP finds a criminal conviction that may be material to the candidate's performance as a court interpreter, but the candidate does not intend to pursue certification, no action will be taken. If the CIP finds a criminal conviction that may be material to the interpreter candidate's performance as a court interpreter and the candidate intends to pursue certification, the matter will be referred to the Character and Fitness Sub-Committee. Cause for referral to the Character and Fitness Sub-Committee may include arrests; conviction of a felony; crimes involving dishonesty, deceit, or misrepresentation; crimes requiring registration as a sex offender; arrests or convictions of similar offenses in other jurisdictions; or other illegal behavior. In making a determination whether referral to the sub-committee is appropriate, the CIP manager may take into consideration other factors such as age of candidate when the conviction occurred, length of time from when the crime was committed; nature and seriousness of the offense; and disposition.

For interpreters listed on the roster, any new criminal conviction(s) will automatically be referred to the Character and Fitness Sub-Committee for review. While a character and fitness review is pending, the Director may suspend the interpreter's certification or appearance on the roster if it appears the interpreter's continued practice as an interpreter poses a substantial threat or harm to the public or to the integrity of the court system.

### **13.2 Character and Fitness Sub-Committee**

The Character and Fitness Sub-Committee ("the Sub-Committee") is a permanent group consisting of three (3) rotating members of the Committee. The composition of the Sub-Committee at all times will include at least one (1) judge. The Sub-Committee's charge is to consider all relevant information presented and to make a recommendation to the Director as to whether the interpreter's character and fitness are sufficient to ensure the integrity and competence of interpreting services and the maintenance of high standards in the administration of justice.

### **13.3 Character and Fitness Review Process**

If the matter is referred to the Sub-Committee, the CIP manager will gather relevant information related to the conduct in question. Relevant information may include but is not limited to search results from the DOJ-CIB, records from WCCA, criminal complaint, information, conditions of bond or release, judgment of conviction, and law enforcement investigative reports. The CIP manager will send a cover letter along with a copy of all supporting information via e-mail and US postal service to the individual. The individual will have twenty (20) business days from the date listed on the cover letter to submit a signed written response to the CIP either via email or postal service.

The individual may also request an in-person hearing with the Sub-Committee in lieu of submitting a written response or in addition to submitting a written response. If an in-person hearing is requested, a date, time, and location at which all Sub-Committee members can meet in-person will be scheduled. The CIP will provide the interpreter with written notice of the hearing via email and postal service. The interpreter may be represented by counsel and may present evidence. The Sub-Committee may request or gather additional information at the conclusion of the hearing. All hearings will be recorded and shall be private and confidential.

Within twenty (20) business days of submission of a written response or within twenty (20) business days of the conclusion of the investigation, the Sub-Committee will issue a report and recommendation to the Director as to whether the interpreter candidate possesses the character and fitness necessary to perform the duties of a court interpreter. If the individual did not provide a written response to the Sub-Committee for

consideration, members shall make a recommendation with the supporting information alone. Members may consider the individual's lack of response when making its recommendation.

Upon receipt and review of the Sub-Committee's report and recommendation, the Director will issue a final decision as to whether the interpreter will be allowed to remain on the roster or whether the individual will be allowed to continue with the certification process if he or she is not currently on the roster. A letter shall be sent to the interpreter informing him or her of the Director's decision along with the report and recommendation of the Sub-Committee and copies of any information the Sub-Committee may have considered in making its recommendation.

If an interpreter has been removed from the roster or not been allowed to continue with the certification process, the interpreter may apply for reconsideration after a 2-year period from the date of removal or denial has passed or other specified date as determined by the Director. The review process governing character and fitness evaluations, along with any supporting documents submitted on behalf of the interpreter are confidential and will be shared only with the interpreter and court officials involved. The outcome of the review is public.

## **14. Disciplinary Policy**

The opportunity to provide interpreter services to the courts under the direction of the Director of State Courts office is at the Director's complete and continuing discretion because of the critical reliance the courts must have on the skills, performance, and integrity of the interpreter in performing duties for the court. Any interpreter who is registered with the CIP is subject to discipline from the Director's Office for ethics violations

### **14.1 Possible Reasons for Discipline**

Possible reasons for discipline include:

- (a) Violation of the Code of Ethics for Court Interpreters;
- (b) Conviction of any felony or misdemeanor; in particular, crimes involving moral turpitude, fraud, corruption, dishonesty, misrepresentation, or false statements;
- (c) False or deceptive advertising after receipt of notification to discontinue;
- (d) Knowing and willful disclosure of confidential or privileged information obtained while serving in an official capacity;
- (e) Gross incompetence;
- (f) Non-compliance with the program's policies and procedures;
- (g) Incapacity to perform the duties of a court interpreter which may include but is not limited to medical incapacity or incarceration;
- (h) Engaging in action that calls into question the interpreter's ability to work effectively in court.

### **14.2 Complaint Process**

Any person may initiate a complaint against an interpreter by filing it with a judge, clerk of court, District Court Administrator (DCA), or CIP. All complaints must be in writing, must be signed, and must describe the alleged inappropriate conduct. Within twenty (20) business days of receipt of a complaint, the CIP manager will commence review of the complaint to assess its merit.

If the CIP manager determines the complaint is insufficient or the Director does not have jurisdiction to review the complaint, the CIP manager will send a written notice informing the complainant that no further action will be taken. The interpreter will not receive a copy of the complaint.

If referral to the Sub-Committee is required, the interpreter will be provided with a cover letter and a copy of the complaint with any supporting documentation. Any response to the allegation must be received by the CIP within twenty (20) business days of the date listed on the cover letter.

Upon receipt of the interpreter's response, the CIP manager will forward the complaint, response, and any supporting documentation to the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee shall confer within twenty (20) business days to determine whether further action is required. Members of the Sub-Committee may consider

information obtained from sources other than the complaint and response. If the complaint is found to have no merit, the complaint shall be dismissed and the complainant and interpreter shall be notified in writing that no further disciplinary action will take place.

If it is determined by the Sub-Committee that an ethical violation probably occurred, or if no response is filed by the interpreter, members of the Sub-Committee may determine what further action is required. The Sub-Committee may set a hearing to review the complaint, or review the matter by considering all information as submitted. If no hearing is set, the Sub-Committee will issue a recommendation to the Director as to a possible disposition and proposed sanctions, if any.

If a hearing is set, the interpreter shall be notified by mail of the time and date of the hearing, which shall be set no later than twenty (20) business days after a determination that probable cause exists. The interpreter shall receive a copy of any additional materials the Sub-Committee may have considered in making a determination that an ethical violation probably occurred.

While a disciplinary proceeding is pending, the Director may suspend the interpreter's certification or appearance on the roster if it appears the interpreter's continued practice as an interpreter poses a substantial threat or harm to the public or to the integrity of the court system.

### **14.3 Informal Resolution**

Efforts to resolve the complaint informally may be initiated by the interpreter and the complainant at any time. Any resolution reached must be submitted in writing to the Sub-Committee for approval. Upon approval of any resolution reached informally, or subsequent to any review without a hearing, the Sub-Committee will notify the complainant and the interpreter of its written approval of the informal resolution.

### **14.4 Voluntary Resignation of Certification by the Interpreter**

An interpreter who desires not to contest or defend himself or herself against an allegation of unethical conduct may at any time voluntarily resign his or her certification in lieu of further disciplinary proceedings. The allegations against the interpreter are presumed to have been proven for purposes of considering reinstatement.

### **14.5 Hearings**

All hearings will be recorded and shall be private and confidential. The Sub-Committee may, in its discretion, call witnesses, consider, or clarify any evidence presented, giving such evidence the weight it deems appropriate. The interpreter may be represented by counsel, and shall be able to testify, comment on the allegations, and call witnesses. All testimony taken shall be under oath.

### **14.6 Recommendation by the Sub-Committee to the Director**

Within twenty (20) business days of the hearing, the Sub-Committee will issue a recommendation to the Director as to a possible disposition and proposed sanctions if members find the interpreter committed any of the actions outlined but not limited to those listed in Sec. 14.1.

### **14.7 Final Determination by the Director**

Upon receipt and review of the Sub-Committee's recommendation, the Director will issue a final determination as to whether the interpreter committed any of the actions described in Sec. 14.1 or other infraction. A written letter shall be sent to the interpreter with the decision and proposed sanctions if applicable with the report and recommendation issued by the Sub-Committee along with all supporting material the Sub-Committee or the Director may have considered in making their decision. The complainant will receive a copy of the decision letter and if appropriate, the report and recommendation of the Sub-Committee. In cases where a private reprimand is issued, the complainant will receive a decision letter informing him or her that a private reprimand was issued against the interpreter.

### **14.8 Possible Sanctions**

Possible sanctions the Sub-Committee and the Director may consider include but are not limited to one or more of the following:

- a. Private or public reprimand (see Sec. 14.10 Notification to the Courts and Other Entities)
- b. Imposition of costs and expenses incurred by the Sub-Committee related to the proceeding;
- c. Restitution;
- d. A requirement that specified education courses be taken;
- e. A requirement that one or more parts of the oral certification examination be retaken;
- f. A modification of or suspension from the list of interpreters eligible to work in court;
- g. A requirement that work be supervised or monitored over a period of time;
- h. A suspension of certification for a specified period of time;
- i. Permanent revocation of certification;
- j. A refusal to confer certification to a non-certified interpreter for a specified period of time or under certain circumstances, permanently;
- k. Denial of state payment to a county or counties where interpreter's services are used for a specified period of time or under certain circumstances, permanently;
- l. Notice to the affected court for possible contempt action;
- m. Referral to law enforcement or district attorney for prosecution where appropriate

The specific disciplinary action and the degree of discipline to be imposed will depend upon factors such as the seriousness of the violation, the effect of the improper activity on others or on the judicial system and the existence of aggravating or mitigating factors.

Aggravating factors may include prior disciplinary action against the same interpreter; experience as an interpreter; intentional, premeditated, knowing, grossly incompetent or grossly negligent act; bad faith or obstruction; a pattern of misconduct, multiple offenses; failure to cooperate during disciplinary proceeding; refusal to acknowledge conduct; vulnerability of victim; or illegality of conduct.

Mitigating factors may include absence of prior disciplinary action; good faith effort to rectify consequences of misconduct; nature of conduct and likelihood of reoccurrence; isolation of event; experience as an interpreter; implementation of remedial measures to mitigate harm or risk of harm; self-reporting; voluntary admission of violation; or temporary circumstances outside of interpreter's control.

### **14.9 Reinstatement by the Director**

A court interpreter whose certification or roster status has been suspended or revoked may apply in writing to the Director for reinstatement pursuant to any timeframes established in the final decision. This request shall explain why the applicant believes reinstatement should occur. The Director shall have the sole discretion whether to grant or deny reinstatement or to impose conditions upon reinstatement as deemed appropriate.

### **14.10 Notification to the Courts and Other Entities**

If an interpreter has been disciplined for an ethical violation, the CIP manager may notify all clerks of circuit court and DCAs of the results. The CIP manager may also notify municipal courts, federal courts, or any other agency deemed appropriate by the Director of the results including the NCSC if the interpreter is listed on the National Database of Court Interpreters.

### **14.11 Duty to Self-Report**

An interpreter who has been sanctioned for discipline by the Director has a duty to report the disciplinary outcome within twenty (20) business days of the imposition of the sanctions to all other states and jurisdictions where the interpreter's certification may be recognized. Failure to self-report may be considered by the Director when determining if reinstatement is appropriate.

## **15. Roster of Interpreters**

The CIP maintains a statewide roster of certified or otherwise qualified court interpreters for use by judges, clerks of court, attorneys, law enforcement, social service agencies, and others needing legally-trained interpreters. The roster is a searchable application available on the court's public website. The roster shows language, name of the interpreter, phone number(s), e-mail address, city, and state of residence, and the counties in which an interpreter is willing to work. When using the roster, the Director strongly recommends:



- Certified interpreters should always be the first choice for legal work either in-person or if appropriate, remotely.
- Provisional and Provisional-B interpreters may be considered a second choice for legal work either in-person or if appropriate, remotely if no certified interpreter is readily available.
- Authorized interpreters should be the next choice for legal work either in-person or if appropriate, remotely.

The purpose of the roster is to help courts and other law-related agencies hire well-qualified interpreters on a freelance basis. The fact that an interpreter is listed on the roster does not indicate an employment relationship with the Wisconsin Supreme Court or any circuit or municipal court. Court interpreters working on an individual contract basis or for agencies are not employees of the courts. Interpreters listed on the roster may request inactive status by contacting the CIP. Interpreters may reactivate at any time upon notification to the CIP manager provided other program requirements have been met. The general criteria for all spoken and sign languages are listed below:

- Complete the CIP’s 2-day orientation; and
- Successfully complete a character and fitness screening which includes a criminal background check; and
- Submit a signed oath of office which is kept in the interpreter’s individual file with the CIP; and
- Maintain current contact information with the CIP which includes mailing address, telephone number(s), email address, and any name changes; and
- Comply with continuing education requirements, if applicable.

Completion of the 2-day orientation may be waived for certified interpreters from other states who appear on the roster through reciprocity. In addition to the general criteria listed above, specific testing and other criteria for inclusion on the roster are listed below:

### 15.1 Roster Requirements: Spanish

| Requirement              | Classification Level on Roster: Spanish   |   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
|                          | Certified   | Provisional   |
| <b>Written Testing</b>   | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher   | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher   |
| <b>Oral Testing</b>      | Pass all three parts of NCSC oral certification examination at 70% or higher with an overall score of 70%. A passing score on the Sight Translation means 65% or higher on both Sight-Foreign and Foreign-Sight sections. | Score 65% or higher on at least two out of three parts of the NCSC oral certification examination.                                |
| <b>Court Observation</b> | Complete a minimum of 2 hours of court observation  | Complete a minimum of 2 hours of court observation  |
| <b>Duration</b>          | N/A   | Two years to move up to Certified level. A Spanish candidate may only appear on the roster as Provisional for one two-year cycle. |

### 15.2 Roster Requirements: Spoken Languages Other than Spanish (LOTS)

| Requirement            | Classification Level on Roster: LOTS   |   |   |   |
|------------------------|--|---|---|---|
|                        | Certified  | Provisional   | Provisional-B   | Authorized  |
| <b>Written Testing</b> | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher  | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher                                       | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher                                       | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher                             |
| <b>Oral Testing</b>    | Pass all three parts of NCSC oral certification examination at 70% or higher with an overall | Score 65% or higher on at least two out of three parts of the NCSC oral certification | Score 55% or higher on at least two out of three parts of the NCSC oral certification | Achieve a “Superior” level on Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) administered |



|                          |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|
|                          | score of 70%. A passing score on the Sight Translation means 65% or higher on both Sight-Foreign and Foreign-Sight sections. | examination.                                       | examination.                                       | through Language Testing International (LTI)       |
| <b>Court Observation</b> | Complete a minimum of 2 hours of court observation   | Complete a minimum of 2 hours of court observation | Complete a minimum of 2 hours of court observation | Complete a minimum of 2 hours of court observation |
| <b>Duration</b>          | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  | N/A  |

### 15.3 Roster Requirements: Sign Language: Hearing

| Requirement                        | Classification Level on Roster: ASL-Hearing  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
|                                    | Certified  | Provisional   |
| <b>Certification or Credential</b> | RID SC:L; BEI CIC; or other credential deemed to be an equivalent of RID's SC:L                                      | RID NIC, NIC-Master, NIC-Advanced, CSC, or CI/CT; NAD IV or V; or BEI Advanced or Master                                      |
| <b>State Licensure</b>             | Hold a valid license from the WI Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS)                                | Hold a valid license from the WI Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS)   |
| <b>Written Testing</b>             | N/A  | Pass NCSC multiple choice test at 80% or higher   |
| <b>Court Interpreting Training</b> | Complete a total of 120 hours (or 12 CEUs) of court interpreting training  | Complete a minimum of 40 hours (or 4 CEUs) of court interpreting training   |
| <b>Court Interpreting Practice</b> | Complete a total of 100 hours of court interpreting practice under the supervision of a certified court interpreter. | Complete a minimum of 10 hours of court interpreting practice under the supervision of a certified court interpreter          |
| <b>Duration</b>                    | N/A  | Five years to move up to Certified level. An ASL candidate may only appear on the roster as Provisional for one 5-year cycle. |

### 15.4 Roster Requirements: Sign Language: Deaf

| Requirement                        | Classification Level on Roster: ASL-Deaf  |   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
|                                    | Certified   | Provisional   |
| <b>Certification or Credential</b> | RID SC:L, CLIP-R, or CDI; BEI CIC; or other credential deemed to be an equivalent of RID's SC:L, CLIP-R, or CDI | None  |
| <b>State Licensure</b>             | Hold a valid license from the WI Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS)                           | Hold a valid license from the WI Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS)   |
| <b>Court Interpreting Training</b> | N/A   | Complete a minimum of 40 hours of court interpreting training*  |
| <b>Court Interpreting Practice</b> | N/A   | Complete a minimum of 10 initial hours of court interpreting practice under the supervision of a certified court interpreter and a minimum of 10 hours annually thereafter. |
| <b>Duration</b>                    | N/A   | N/A   |

### 15.5 Court Interpreting Training

Court interpreting training includes any training or educational activity that focuses on court procedure, the work of the judicial branch, or enhances the skills needed to perform legal interpreting during court proceedings (civil or criminal) or court-related events. Court-related events may include but are not limited to

hearings in front of court commissioners, administrative law judges, mediations, arbitrations, depositions, and other forms of alternative dispute resolutions.

## **15.6 Court Interpreting Practice**

Court interpreting practice includes on-the-record interpreting during proceedings (civil or criminal) or court-related events measured in clock hours. Sign language interpreters required to complete court interpreting practice must document their time and identify the supervising certified interpreter on a form provided by the CIP. A certified interpreter is an individual who has met the requirement outlined in Sec. 9.2

## **16. Recruitment of Interpreter Candidates**

The CIP will engage in recruitment of promising interpreter candidates through the development of promotional materials as well as targeted outreach to interested individuals, language departments at institutions of higher learning, community based agencies, cultural associations, and other suitable organizations. The CIP may also seek to recruit candidates from other interpreting disciplines such as medical, educational, and social services.

## **17. Multiple Languages**

Interpreter candidates who interpret in more than one language may seek certification or qualification for as many languages as appropriate and may be listed on the Roster for more than one language provided all requirements for inclusion on the roster are met.

## **18. Confidentiality of Test Instruments and Test Scores**

The CIP uses NCSC written and oral test instruments under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding on State Court Interpreter Testing entered into between the NCSC and the Director. The CIP manager is responsible for maintaining the security of all test instruments. No test content may be released in any form to any person who is not authorized to be in possession of the materials.

Written and oral test scores of individual interpreters are maintained internally and are not available to the general public unless the interpreter signs a waiver of confidentiality directing the CIP to release his or her scores to a designated individual or entity. Test scores of individual interpreters may be shared by the CIP manager with an appropriate court official or any CLAC representative in order to evaluate interpreter qualifications for purposes of hiring, training, testing, or reciprocity. The confidentiality of this information must be maintained by the court official or CLAC representative with whom it is shared. Statistical information relating to the test and applicants may be released at the discretion of the CIP manager.

## **19. Oath of Office**

Interpreters who wish to be listed on the roster must sign and return a notarized oath of office form which states that the interpreter “will interpret accurately, completely, and impartially, in accordance with the standards prescribed by law, the code of ethics for court interpreters, and Wisconsin guidelines for court interpreting.” This form will be kept by the CIP as part of interpreter’s file.

## **20. Continuing Education**

All interpreters working in Wisconsin courts are strongly encouraged to seek out additional educational activities and professional development to expand their knowledge and enhance their language and court interpreting skills. All spoken language interpreters who appear on the Roster are required to obtain Continuing Education (CE) credits during a 2-year compliance period in order to maintain their certification or other qualification with the CIP.

### **20.1 Application**

Interpreters subject to CE requirements include:

- a. Certified interpreters whose credentials were conferred through the CIP and who reside in Wisconsin;
- b. Certified interpreters whose credentials were conferred through the CIP and who reside in a state or territory without a CE requirement;
- c. Certified interpreters whose credentials were conferred from another state, territory, or entity who reside in a state or territory without a CE requirement who appear on the roster through reciprocity;
- d. Provisional interpreters in any spoken language other than Spanish; and
- e. Provisional-B and Authorized interpreters

Spoken language interpreters listed on Wisconsin’s roster who reside in a state with a CE requirement must provide proof of compliance with that jurisdiction’s policies and procedures by the applicable deadline. ASL interpreters who appear on the roster as Certified or Provisional must complete CE requirements established by RID or BEI and provide proof of compliance to the CIP at the end of their reporting cycle.

## 20.2 Requirements

Interpreters outlined in Sec. 20.1 are required to complete CE credits every two (2) years in accordance with their credential level to maintain in good standing with the CIP.

|   | <b>Number of Credits</b> | <b>Compliance Period</b> | <b>Ethics Requirement</b>                                   |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Certified Interpreters                                  | 16 credits               | Every two (2) years      | Two (2) out of the sixteen (16) credits must include ethics |
| Provisional*, Provisional-B and Authorized Interpreters | 10 credits               | Every two (2) years      | Two (2) out of the ten (10) credits must include ethics     |

*\*Spanish interpreter candidates listed as Provisional on the roster are not required to complete CE credits.*

Every clock hour shall be counted as one (1) credit hour of CE, up to a maximum of eight (8) credit hours per single educational topic. Continuing education credit is approved for a minimum of one (1) hour and is measured in quarter-hour increments.

A maximum of six (6) CE credits earned in excess of the sixteen (16) or ten (10) hour requirement in any compliance period will be eligible to be carried over to the next 2-year compliance period. If an interpreter earns more than two (2) ethics credits in a compliance period, the additional credits may carry over as general credits but will not be counted toward the ethics requirement for the next reporting period.

## 20.3 Compliance Period

The first deadline for interpreters who were certified or added to the roster in 2004 through 2014 to obtain their CE credits will be April 1, 2017. The compliance period for all other interpreters who were certified or added to the roster in 2015 and beyond, will be the 2-year period following the date in which the interpreter became certified or was added to the roster with a deadline of either April 1 or October 1 depending upon whether the interpreter’s certification date was in the first six (6) months of the calendar year or the last six (6) months of the calendar year. See table below for examples:

| <b>Certification or Roster Activation Date</b> | <b>CE Compliance Deadline</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|
| January 1, 2015 through June 30, 2015          | October 1, 2017               |
| July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015         | April 1, 2018                 |

If an interpreter’s compliance deadline is October 1, he or she must complete credits by September 30 and submit the form no later than October 1. If an interpreter’s compliance deadline is April 1, he or she must complete credits by March 31 and submit the form no later than April 1.

## 20.4 Accepted Training

Accepted CE activities are activities approved by the CIP. They may include courses offered at accredited institutions of higher learning, local and national interpreting or translation conferences, workshops sponsored by professional organizations, educational events organized by the CIP, online courses, webinars, activities approved for continuing legal education credit (e.g. teaching a relevant workshop or class), and group or self-study activities approved in advance by the CIP.

Continuing education should reflect a variety of training, and therefore no single educational topic shall be awarded more than eight (8) credit hours. The CIP will maintain a list national, state, and local providers considered preapproved sponsors of CE activities along with approved courses listing the number of general and ethics credits on the court system’s website. This list will be updated regularly as new activities are added.

Other activities or events offered by a provider not yet approved as a sponsor of CE must obtain approval by the CIP before being included on the CE compliance form.

### **20.4.1 Approval Request: Participant**

An interpreter who seeks CE credit for a course or workshop being offered by a provider that is not a pre-approved sponsor may request approval by submitting a form “Continuing Education Approval Request – Participant” at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the event. The CIP manager will inform the interpreter of the result of the request via email which will include the number of CE credits if the event has been approved.

### **20.4.2 Approval Request: Provider**

A provider who is not a pre-approved sponsor who seeks CE credit for an event the provider is offering may request approval by submitting a form “Continuing Education Approval Request – Provider” at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the event. The CIP manager will inform the provider of the result of the request via email which will include the number of CE credits if the event has been approved.

### **20.4.3 Credit for Teaching**

Interpreters who serve as instructors for interpreter-related educational activities sponsored or approved by the CIP are eligible to receive CE credit related to that activity up to a maximum of eight (8) hours per compliance period. Interpreters who serve as faculty for the CIP during orientations may claim working at one (1) orientation as CE per (1) compliance period. Interpreters who serve as a lecturer and a small group leader may claim no more than eight (8) CE credits per orientation while interpreters who serve as a small group leader may claim no more than six (6) CE credits per orientation.

## **20.5 Verification of Compliance**

Every interpreter who is required to comply with CE policies is responsible for completing the CIP’s “Continuing Education Compliance Reporting Form” listing qualifying activities by the appropriate deadline and submitting it to the CIP. The interpreter must maintain supporting documentation to verify compliance with minimum CE requirements for a 3-year period and be prepared to submit to the CIP if requested.

## **20.6 Non-Compliance**

If an interpreter fails to submit a compliance form or proof of compliance from by the 2-year reporting period deadline, then he or she will be deemed out of compliance by the CIP. The CIP manager will inform the interpreter in writing that he or she is not in compliance with the CE requirement. The interpreter will have a 60-day grace period in which to meet CE requirements and provide proof to the CIP. During this 60-day period, the interpreter’s name will be suspended from the roster and will not reappear until the interpreter submits proof of CE compliance and the CIP verifies the evidence. If the interpreter remains in non-compliance at the end of the grace period, it will be treated as an ethical violation and the CIP manager will automatically refer the matter to the Sub-Committee to review and make a recommendation to the Director as to an appropriate disposition.

## **21. Other Program Functions**

The CIP is charged with maintenance of the program’s website, translation of vital court forms, implementation of the Director’s statewide Language Access Plan (LAP), monitoring county LAPs, coordination with other government and non-government agencies to improve interpreter services, overseeing compliance with federal laws governing provision of services to LEP persons in the courts, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), evaluating and improving all program functions, and presenting programs and materials on language access in the courts to various audiences.

## **22. Translation of Vital Documents**

The CIP oversees the maintenance of all translated statewide court forms and is responsible for ensuring the court forms posted on the court’s public website and CourtNet are in compliance with the requirements set forth in SCR 70.155.

Requests for a new translation of an existing court form(s) will be received by the Records Management Committee (RMC) or its staff. RMC will be responsible for determining whether the form should be considered vital and therefore, suitable for translation into the requested non-English language(s). The following criteria should be considered in making a determination that a form is vital:

- required by law to be translated;
- used frequently in a court proceeding or in the context of a court proceeding;
- where the subject of the court action is invoking or relinquishing a constitutional right; or
- where relief from potential violence or abuse is being sought

Other factors may be considered such as the frequency in which the form is likely to undergo changes or whether the form requires multiple narrative responses to open-ended questions.

Once an existing form has been identified by RMC for translation into another language, the CIP will manage the translation process. The targeted non-English languages will be determined by the most current US Census data for the state of Wisconsin.

### 23. Forms

All CIP forms are available upon request to the CIP manager and most can be found at <https://www.wicourts.gov/services/interpreter/forms.htm>

### 24. Fees

The expenses for administering the CIP may be paid by program fees as well as from grants and other state funding. The fees are set by the Director’s Office and may be revised as necessary.

| <b>Fee</b>       | <b>Program Service</b>   |
|------------------|--|
| \$195            | Two-Day Orientation  |
| \$50             | Multiple-Choice Examination – First-time test takers   |
| \$25             | Multiple-Choice Examination – Repeat test takers   |
| \$250            | Oral Certification Examination – Entire test   |
| \$100            | Oral Certification Examination – Per section   |
| \$400            | Oral Certification Examination (out-of-state residents who are only seeking to test in Wisconsin and who have begun the certification process in a state other than Wisconsin) |
| \$139            | Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)   |
| No Fee           | Criminal Background Check  |
| \$225-\$275      | Skills-Building Workshop   |
| No Fee (initial) | Certified interpreter identification badge   |
| \$5              | Replacement lanyard and identification badge   |
| \$3              | Replacement badge or lanyard only  |

### 25. Open Records Policy

All records of the CIP are presumptively open for inspection. However, maintaining the confidentiality of certain records for public policy reasons may outweigh this presumption.

### 26. Website

More information on the CIP is found on the court website. This website includes the code of ethics for interpreters working in the Wisconsin courts, and links to training materials. It also includes the Director’s Language Assistance Plan, developed to assure compliance with Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the ADA. The court interpreter website is found at <https://www.wicourts.gov/services/interpreter/index.htm>

### 27. Contact Information

Court Interpreter Program, Office of Court Operations, 110 East Main Street, Suite 410, Madison, WI 53703; phone: 608-266-8635; fax: 608-267-0911; [carmel.capati@wicourts.gov](mailto:carmel.capati@wicourts.gov).



## Appendix A: Documentation of Accommodation for the Court Interpreter Written Exam

This document must be completed by an appropriate professional (doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or education professional) to certify that the applicant's disabling condition requires an exam accommodation.

If there is existing and current documentation of having the same or similar accommodation provided to the applicant in another test situation, it may be submitted instead of having this portion of the form completed.

### Exam Description

The court interpreter written exam is designed to test a candidate's level of English vocabulary, familiarity of legal terminology, and application of interpreter professional standards. There are 135 multiple choice questions on the exam. All questions and answers are in English. The questions are typed in 12-point Times New Roman font. To record answers, candidates will be required to mark with an "X" the appropriate letter response on a separate 1-page answer sheet. Candidates are given two (2) hours and fifteen (15) minutes to complete this exam. Restroom breaks are permitted during the exam, but are controlled so that not too many candidates are outside the testing room at the same time.

For questions about exam content and conditions, please contact Carmel Capati, Court Interpreter Program Manager at [carmel.capati@wicourts.gov](mailto:carmel.capati@wicourts.gov) or 608.266.8635.

### PROFESSIONAL'S DECLARATION

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_\_  
(applicant's name) (date)

As a \_\_\_\_\_ I have diagnosed or evaluated the  
(patient or other professional relationship)

applicant myself and I am not relying upon facts related to me by the applicant.

My diagnosis is \_\_\_\_\_  
(describe medical or other condition)

The applicant's functional limitations due to the disability that lead to the need for an  
accommodation are:

I have reviewed the exam description on pages 1-2. It is my professional opinion that because of the applicant's disability, he/she should be accommodated by providing the following:

- Large print type (font size \_\_\_\_\_)
- An alternate testing area (describe \_\_\_\_\_)
- Extra time (how much and which test section(s)? \_\_\_\_\_)
- A reader
- Other accommodation (describe \_\_\_\_\_)

Additional Comments:

SIGNATURE OF THE PROFESSIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF THE PROFESSIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME OF THE PROFESSIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return the original of this completed form at your earliest convenience to:

Director of State Courts Office of Court Operations  
110 East Main Street, Suite #410  
Madison, WI 53703-3328  
Attn. Court Interpreter Program



## Appendix B: Documentation of Accommodation for the Court Interpreter Oral Exam

This document must be completed by an appropriate professional (doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or education professional) to certify that the applicant's disabling condition requires an exam accommodation.

If there is existing and current documentation of having the same or similar accommodation provided to the applicant in another test situation, it may be submitted instead of having this portion of the form completed.

### Exam Description

The court interpreter oral certification exam is designed to determine whether test-takers possess the minimum levels of language knowledge and fluency in both languages, and the ability to successfully render meaning from one language into another in each of the three modes of interpreting that are required of court interpreters. The three modes of interpreting are:

- Sight translation of documents;
- Consecutive interpreting; and
- Simultaneous interpreting.

Each portion of the exam is administered as follows:

**Sight Translation:** This part of the test simulates an interpreter reading (1) an English document aloud into the non-English language, and (2) a non-English document into English. Each of the two documents is approximately 225 words in length. After instructions are given, the candidate is allowed six minutes to complete the English document, and six minutes to complete the non-English document. The test taker's oral renditions are digitally recorded.

**Consecutive Interpreting:** This is the appropriate form of interpreting for non-English speaking witnesses, and other question-answer situations. During this portion of the test, the test taker listens to an audio recording at normal conversational pace, and interprets English language questions (segments) into the foreign language, and foreign language answers (segments) into English. The test taker may ask to have two of the segments repeated. Candidates are encouraged to take notes to assist their memory. The consecutive script is 850-950 words in length. The test taker is given approximately twenty minutes to complete this portion of the exam, but the precise time depends on the actual number of words in the test version. The test taker's oral renditions are digitally recorded.

**Simultaneous Interpreting:** Simultaneous interpreting occurs when a person interprets what someone is saying, at the same time they are saying it. This is the appropriate mode of interpreting for many situations interpreters encounter in the courtroom, for example, interpreting for defendants during hearings and trials. This part of the exam consists of an audio recording of a simulated attorney's opening or closing statement to a judge or jury. It is approximately 800 to 850 words in length, is recorded at an approximate speed of 120 words per minute, and is approximately seven minutes long. The test taker listens to the prerecorded English passage through over-the-ear headphones and, while listening, interprets aloud into the non-English language. The test taker's oral renditions are digitally recorded.

**Standard Testing Conditions:** The exam is given in its entirety, and typically takes less than one hour to complete. The exam is typically administered in a meeting room, and the test taker will take the exam in the presence of only one proctor.

For questions about exam content and conditions, please contact Carmel Capati, Court Interpreter Program Manager at [carmel.capati@wicourts.gov](mailto:carmel.capati@wicourts.gov) or 608.266.8635.

**PROFESSIONAL'S DECLARATION**

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant's Name) (Date)

As a \_\_\_\_\_ I have diagnosed or evaluated the  
(patient or other professional relationship)

applicant myself and I am not relying upon facts related to me by the applicant.

My diagnosis is \_\_\_\_\_  
(describe medical or other condition)

The applicant's functional limitations due to the disability that lead to the need for an accommodation are:

I have reviewed the exam description on pages 1-2. It is my professional opinion that because of the applicant's disability, he/she should be accommodated by providing the following:

- Large print type (font size \_\_\_\_\_)
- An alternate testing area (describe \_\_\_\_\_)
- Extra time (how much and which test section(s)? \_\_\_\_\_)
- A reader for the sight translation portion
- Other accommodation (describe \_\_\_\_\_)

Additional Comments:

SIGNATURE OF THE PROFESSIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE OF THE PROFESSIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAME OF THE PROFESSIONAL: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

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