



**New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts  
Language Access Services  
237 Don Gaspar, Room 25  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504**

**505 827 4853**

## **Court Interpreter Classification & Continuing Education Policy**

### **DEFINITIONS**

#### **1. Interpreters by Classification**

##### **a. Certified Court Interpreters –Spoken Languages**

A New Mexico certified spoken language interpreter is an individual who has received court certification through the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts (including mandatory orientation and all required examinations), the United States Federal Court, or the National Center for Interpretation at the University of Arizona (Navajo only) and has completed at minimum the including mandatory orientation and post-certification workshops as regularly offered by the AOC. Interpreters in languages for which there are no standardized national examinations, must complete the mandatory written examination and Oral Proficiency Interviews per AOC Policy (available by request) to be recognized as New Mexico court certified.

Certified court interpreters in New Mexico must be in compliance with the AOC's Court Interpreter Continuing Education Policy. Those in compliance will be provided an identification badge in January every other calendar year. Should certification lapse due to non-compliance with the Continuing Education Policy,

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an interpreter will be required to retake the certification examinations.

An individual who has passed all parts of the National Center for State Court's interpreter certification written and oral exams may be able to obtain reciprocal certification in New Mexico. An interpreter requesting reciprocal certification by New Mexico must provide sufficient information to allow confirmation of exam results in the other state. The Program Manager will review and confirm the test results. Upon confirmation of the certification exam results and the interpreter's attendance at New Mexico Court Interpreter Orientation, the Program Manager will add the interpreter to New Mexico's Directory of Certified Court Interpreters, indicating the state of certification. The Administrative Office of the Court reserves the right to request re-certification of any interpreter seeking reciprocal certification. Interpreters certified in another state and added to New Mexico's roster must maintain certification by meeting New Mexico's continuing education requirements for Certified Court Interpreters. If a person is denied reciprocal certification, the interpreter may appeal the denial to the Language Access Advisory Committee. The decision of the committee will be final. Reciprocal certification will not be granted if the other certifying entity does not grant reciprocal certification of New Mexico certified interpreters.

### b. Certified Court Interpreters – Signed Language

<b>Certified Interpreter: Legal Specialist</b>	
<b>Deaf Interpreters</b>	<b>Hearing Interpreters</b>
Conditional Legal Interpreting Permit: Relay (CLIP-R)	Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L)
Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI)	
New Mexico Community License	New Mexico Community License
AA Degree or alternative pathway (BA in 2016)	BA Degree or alternative pathway
Introduction to NM Courts Seminar	Introduction to NM Courts Seminar
Background check	Background check
2.0 Legal CEUs in each 4-year RID CMP cycle	2.0 Legal CEUs in each 4-year RID CMP cycle
<b>Certified Interpreter: Legally Qualified</b>	
<b>Deaf Interpreters</b>	<b>Hearing Interpreters</b>
Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI)	RID Generalist Certification
New Mexico Community License	New Mexico Community License
Legal Training sufficient for SC:L Written test	Pass SC:L Written Test
AA Degree or alternative pathway (BA in 2016)	BA Degree or alternative pathway
Introduction to NM Courts Seminar	Introduction to NM Courts Seminar

AOC Application	AOC Application
Background check	Background check
2.0 Legal CEUs in each 4-year RID CMP cycle	2.0 Legal CEUs in each 4-year RID CMP cycle
<b>Certified Interpreter: Legal Apprentice</b>	
<b>Deaf Interpreters</b>	<b>Hearing Interpreters</b>
New Mexico Provisional License	RID Generalist Cert.
CDI Training sufficient to take CDI Written test	New Mexico Community License
AOC Orientation	AOC Orientation
AA Degree or alternative pathway (BA in 2016)	BA Degree or alternative pathway
Introduction to NM Courts Seminar	Introduction to NM Courts Seminar
Background check	Background check
2.0 Legal CEUs in each 4-year RID CMP cycle	2.0 Legal CEUs in each 4-year RID CMP cycle
<b>Limitations of Practice: No trials or jury</b>	<b>Limitations of Practice: No trials or jury</b>

Additional clarification of requirements:

- Signed Language Interpreters will submit the following documents to the AOC annually on January 1 (scanned and submitted via email, no photos of cards or documents): Copy of RID card, Copy of NM Lic, Copy of RID transcripts (legal highlighted, totaling 2.0 CEUS at the end of 4 year cycle)

### **c. Non-Certified Interpreters – Spoken Languages**

#### **i. Justice System Interpreters**

A New Mexico justice system spoken language interpreter is an individual who has successfully completed the Justice System Interpreting course of study with the New Mexico Center for Language Access (NMCLA) or otherwise qualified by the AOC. Interpreters in languages for which there are no standardized national examinations, must complete the mandatory written examination and Oral Proficiency Interviews per AOC Policy (available by request) to be recognized as New Mexico justice system interpreters.

All justice system interpreters must complete a one-day Intro to NM Courts Orientation through the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts Language Access Services and the required post-certification training in order to be included on the Registry of Justice System Interpreters. Continued inclusion on the Registry is dependent upon compliance with New Mexico's continuing education requirements for certified court and justice system interpreters.

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If a justice system interpreter fails to comply with the yearly continuing education requirements they will be removed from the Registry. All Justice System spoken and signed language Interpreters who work regularly in the courts, must be actively pursuing court interpreter certification within one year of having been placed on the Registry.

### **Limitations of Practice**

A **non-certified spoken language court interpreter** or **certified legal apprentice** shall not be used for a juror or for the following types of criminal proceedings if incarceration is possible under statute or ordinance:

- An evidentiary hearing;
- A guilty or no-contest plea proceeding; or
- A trial.

A non-certified court interpreter shall not be used for a juror or for the following types of civil proceedings:

- An evidentiary hearing
- A trial.

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#### **SPOKEN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS Continuing Education Requirements For Certified Court Interpreters and Justice System Interpreters**

##### **I. Purpose**

Becoming and remaining a skilled interpreter in the courtroom is an ongoing process that is not completed with certification. Certified interpreters should always be working to improve their legal knowledge, their English language and grammar skills, and their language and grammar skills in their certified language.

In order to promote and enhance this continuing education process the New Mexico Supreme Court Interpreter Advisory Committee has adopted these continuing education rules that apply to all New Mexico interpreters, and all federally certified interpreters who seek reimbursement at the state certified or justice system interpreter rates.

##### **II. Reporting Requirements**

- A. This Continuing Education rule becomes effective January 1, 2009. The deadline for reporting completion of required continuing education will be December 31st each year.
- B. All certified and justice system interpreters must fulfill these continuing education requirements. If these requirements are not met, the interpreter will be reimbursed at the non-certified rate until these requirements are met.
- C. All newly certified interpreters shall have until December 31st of the year after certification to fulfill his or her initial continuing education requirement. After that initial education period, the newly certified interpreter will complete the continuing education each year by December 31st.
- D. The Administrative Office of the Courts will prepare and distribute standard reporting forms to use when reporting continuing education. All continuing education documentation shall be mailed to:

Administrative Office of the Courts  
Joshua M. Kahawai - Language Access  
Services  
Continuing Education  
237 Don Gaspar, Room 25 Santa Fe, NM  
87501

E. The certified interpreter shall provide adequate documentation of successful completion of the continuing education requirement. Documentation may include certificate of completion, transcript or grade report, or proof of membership and meeting attendance.

### **III. Annual Continuing Education Requirements**

#### **Membership in a Professional Interpreter Association**

Each certified interpreter shall belong to at least one professional association related to interpreting. Qualified organizations include:

1. American Translators Association [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org)
2. National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators  
[www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org) or
3. New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association  
[www.cybermesa.com/~nmtia](http://www.cybermesa.com/~nmtia)
4. El Paso Interpreters and Translators Association  
[www.metroplexepita.org](http://www.metroplexepita.org)
5. The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (for signed language interpreters only) [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)
6. Other organizations may be approved by the Interpreter Advisory Committee on a case-by-case basis, including the newly formed Navajo Interpreters Association.

#### **Participation in Interpreter Relevant Education or Training**

In addition to membership in a professional association, each person shall also complete twenty (20) hours of AOC-approved professional education, including at least two hours of ethics related training, every two years, effective January 1, 2011. There are several options available to meet this requirement including, but not limited to:

1. Attend and participate in the New Mexico Interpreters' Annual Conference, an AOC or New Mexico Center for Language Access professional development opportunity, or a nationally recognized interpreter related conference or
2. Successfully complete a relevant course at an accredited community or four year college. This must be a course for credit for at least 3 credit hours and is relevant to interpreting or legal issues or
3. Successfully complete a continuing legal education course approved by the New Mexico State Bar Association of at least three credit hours and relevant to interpreting or legal issues.

A provider of professional education may request pre-approval for New Mexico continuing education hours by providing the AOC with the following information for the course or training event:

1. Topic/s with Content Outline;

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2. Trainer/s Resume;
3. Training Hours by Topic.

Relevant subject matter includes: professional issues, terminology, translation, legal issues, modes of interpreting, and cultural awareness. If a person or organization wishes to receive continuing education credit for courses outside these general areas, the request will be forwarded to the Court Interpreter Advisory Committee for approval.



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Arthur W. Pepin, Director, Administrative Office of the Courts

Rev. 11/12/2010; Effective January 1, 2011