




Washington Supreme Court Interpreter Program Updates

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The AOC Court Interpreter Program

- RCW 2.43.070 creates AOC Obligation to:
 - Establish testing and certification program for language interpreters
 - Establish certification preparation curriculum and training programs to make interpreters available; work with community colleges, etc., to make courses available in western/eastern WA
 - Establish standards of written and oral proficiency in English and the interpreted language
 - Provide periodic examinations on both sides of the state
 - Maintain and distribute list of currently certified interpreters



Administrative Office of the Courts Legal Interpreter Certification

- CERTIFIED LANGUAGE CREDENTIAL
- REGISTERED LANGUAGE CREDENTIAL
- “QUALIFIED INTERPRETER”

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?



Certified

1. English written exam
2. Orientation class
3. **Oral interpretation exam**
4. Criminal background check
5. Oath
6. Class on ethics & protocol
7. Ongoing training

Registered

1. English written exam
2. Orientation class
3. **Oral language exam**
4. Criminal background check
5. Oath
6. Class on ethics & protocol
7. Ongoing training



Certified Languages

- Arabic
- American Sign Language*
- Bosnian/Serbo-Croatian
- Cantonese
- French
- Khmer
- Korean
- Laotian
- Mandarin
- Marshallese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Vietnamese

* Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Certification; all other certified languages use National Center for State Courts' tests

Registered Languages

Albanian, Amharic, Bulgarian, Burmese, Czech, Dutch, Farsi, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Samoan, Somali, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog*, Thai, Tigrinya, Ukrainian, Urdu and other languages

* Transitioning to Certified in 2016



“Qualified Interpreters”

If good cause is made on the record for using a non-certified interpreter, the Judicial Officer shall make a determination that the proposed interpreter:

1. Is able to interpret accurately; and
2. Understands and will follow the Code of Conduct for Court Interpreters.

- RCW 2.43.030(c)



Policy Changes from the Supreme Court Interpreter Commission 2015

- Commission Oversight of Registered Language Interpreters: GR 11.1
- Immediate Reporting of Criminal Convictions
- Timely Submission of Course Approval Requests
- Court Notice of Certification Non-Compliance
- New Continuing Education Category and Hourly Requirements for Each Category
- Increase In CEU Hours Required for Registered Language Interpreters
- Effective Dates



Supreme Court Rule 11

- **RULE 11: COURT INTERPRETERS**

The use of qualified interpreters is authorized in judicial proceedings involving hearing impaired or non-English speaking individuals.

[Adopted effective July 17, 1987.]



Supreme Court Rule 11.1

- Creates Interpreter Commission to develop policies for the AOC Interpreter Program related to certifying court interpreters but Program does not “certify” ASL interpreters
- Commission is considering its role in developing policies related to ASL interpreters working in legal settings and how the AOC Interpreter Program and Commission oversight intersects with ODHH’s certification program
- New proposed GR 11.1 language will create permanent ASL representative on Commission to provide guidance on oversight policy



AOC and ODHH Collaboration

- Supreme Court Rule 11 envisions use of both ASL and spoken language interpreters in court
- RCW 2.42 creates ODHH's authority to establish standards for fees to be paid to interpreters and to issue list of "qualified interpreters"
- ODHH creates criteria for ASL interpreters to be "court-qualified" by requiring RID certification and sufficient legal training before being listed by ODHH
- Courts get lists from AOC and ODHH and uses criteria or credentials to set fees with individual interpreters



Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Office within DSHS
- Manage the Sign Language Interpreter contract for state executive branch agencies
- Provide system level advocacy and telecommunication services
- Information and Referral



Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)

- National certification body
- New criteria as of 2016, must have BA to qualify for any RID certification test
- For RID's Specialist Certificate:Legal, must have 5 years of work experience as a RID-certified Interpreter



ODHH Criteria

WAC 388.818.530

- Specialist Certification: Legal (SC:L)
- Or passed written part of this exam
- DSHS background screening
- Complete WA Courts training
- Oath



How Do I Find a Certified, Registered, or Other Interpreter?

- AOC Website lists AOC-Certified and Registered Interpreters:
http://www.courts.wa.gov/programs_orgs/pos_interpret/
- AOC Court Interpreter Coordinators Listserv (resources for less common language groups)
- ASL Interpreters: Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, DSHS:
<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/odhh/court-interpreting>
- Washington State Coalition for Language Access:
www.WASCLA.org
- Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society
www.notisnet.org/
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Questions?



Thank You!