



## Certification Exam for Court Interpreters

### Certification Exam Information

March 15, 16, 17, 2023

Minnesota Judicial Center

St. Paul, Minnesota

The Minnesota Court Interpreter Program is pleased to offer registration for the Somali Court Interpreter Certification Exam.

*Advanced and experienced* interpreters who want to specialize in court work are encouraged to take the Certification Exam to become a Minnesota Certified Court Interpreter. The courts are required to appoint certified interpreters first.

To be certified, an interpreter must first complete all of the following prerequisites:

- Be listed on the [Minnesota Court Interpreter Roster](#)
- Be at least 18 years old;
- Be of good character and fitness as evidenced by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) report (a criminal background check); and
- Receive a passing score on a court interpreter certification exam developed by the National Center for State Courts that is administered or approved by the State Court Administrator's Office.

Minnesota participates in the National Center of State Courts Council of Language Access Coordinators which develops rigorous certification exams using legal and forensic terminology in English and another language. Different parts of the exam evaluate simultaneous, consecutive and sight interpretation skills. To pass the oral certification exam, interpreters must possess **mastery of English and the target language at the level of a highly educated native speaker**; and have a thorough understanding of legal concepts and forensic terminology in both languages. In addition, interpreters must be proficient in the specialized cognitive and motor skills required to interpret in the simultaneous, consecutive, and sight interpretation modes; and be able to convey messages accurately, completely, and promptly.



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### Certification Exam Description

Candidates are required to take **all three modes of interpretation** for the Certification Exam.

Simultaneous interpreting skills: This part of the exam consists of listening to a CD recording in English, which represents an attorney's opening or closing statement to a judge or jury. It is recorded at a speed of about 120 words per minute and it is approximately 900 words in length. The speech continues for about 7 minutes *without stopping*. The examinee listens to the recording through earphones, and **while listening, simultaneously interprets** all statements into the target language. While being recorded, the examinee must *continuously* interpret aloud throughout the duration of the speech. The simultaneous part of the test takes approximately 10 minutes including instructions, preparation, and test recording.

Consecutive interpreting skills: During the consecutive part of the test, the examinee hears a CD recording of an English-speaking attorney questioning a non-English speaking witness. The examinee listens to one speaker at a time, and takes notes. After each speaker has stopped, the examinee orally interprets the question or answer into the opposite language while being recorded. The questions and answers are of various lengths ranging from one word to a maximum of 50 words. The consecutive part of the exam takes about 20 minutes.

Sight interpretation skills: For the sight interpretation part of the test, the examinee is asked to read a document written in English, and then interpret it orally into the target language; and to read a document written in the non-English language, and then interpret it aloud in English. Each document is about 225 words in length, and the examinee is allowed 6 minutes per document to review the content and accomplish the sight interpretation while being recorded.

### Determining if you are ready

#### Resources:

Click on [Overview of the Oral Performance Examination](#) to read more about the certification exam. Learn if you are ready to take the certification exam with the [Certification self-assessment](#). Glossaries and additional practice resources are available on the [Court Interpreter Website](#).



## **Certification Exam for Court Interpreters**

### **Registration Procedure**

1. The Court Interpreter Certification Exam in the Simultaneous, Sight and Consecutive modes will be administered by individual appointment that will last approximately 90 minutes. Examinations will be administered **by appointment only** between the hours of 8:30 am - 4:00 pm March 15, 16, and 17, 2023. Please review and follow the steps below to participate in the certification examination.
2. Complete the Registration Form (please see page 4 of this letter) and return with the required **non-refundable and non-transferable registration fee** to the MN Court Interpreter Program **no later than February 17, 2023**.
3. **The exam candidate will be contacted by the Court Interpreter Program the week of February 27th to schedule a specific 90-minute appointment date and time within the testing period of March 15, 16, 17, 2023.** Appointments will only be issued to those candidates who have submitted a registration form and fee in compliance with Step 1 above. Appointments will not be issued prior to this period and will only be adjusted after this period to accommodate the exam proctors due to limited Court Interpreter Program staffing and resources. Appointment times are 8:30-10:00am, 10:30-12:00pm, 1:00-2:30pm, and 3:00-4:30pm.
4. **Prepare, study and study more!**
5. **Take the certification exam at the individually appointed time.**
6. Examinations are sent to the qualified raters for grading. The scores will be reported back to the Minnesota Program Coordinator when grading is complete.
7. Examinees can expect to receive their scores approximately 6 weeks after the test. Examinees who pass the full test will have their status updated to “Certified” on the roster.

Feel free to call the Minnesota Court Interpreter Program at 651-297-5300 with any questions regarding the Court Interpreter Certification Exam.

**If you need accommodations to participate, please email**  
**[MNCourtInterpreterProgram@courts.state.mn.us](mailto:MNCourtInterpreterProgram@courts.state.mn.us) by March 1st, 2023.**



## Certification Exam for Court Interpreters

### Registration Form

**The registration form with payment of \$400 fee must be received by Feb 17, 2023.**

Please make check or money order payable to: **MN Court Interpreter Program.**

Send payment and Orientation Program Registration form to:

Court Interpreter Program, Room 105  
Minnesota Judicial Center  
25 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Once applications are accepted, candidates will receive email confirmation. The registration fee is non-refundable and non-transferable; it cannot be used for future Court Interpreter programs. Appointments will only be issued to candidates who have followed the registration procedure,

**Please fill in following information:**

**First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Middle Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**County:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Exam Language** \_\_\_SOMALI\_\_\_

**Questions? Contact the Court Interpreter Program at**  
[MNCourtInterpreterProgram@courts.state.mn.us](mailto:MNCourtInterpreterProgram@courts.state.mn.us).