

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Are Required to Be a Qualified Foreign Language Court Interpreter?

Foreign language court interpreting demands high levels of knowledge and skills. If you want to perform as a qualified foreign language court interpreter, you must develop the skills described below:

An educated mastery of both English and a second language;

Knowledge of the general and the procedural components of civil, criminal, and juvenile cases;

Knowledge in legal terminology used by judges and lawyers;

Ability to perform the three modes of court interpreting, and using each when appropriate:

Sight interpreting (also called sight translating)--oral translation of documents written in English and/or a foreign language;

Consecutive interpreting--interpreting questions from judges or lawyers from English to a foreign language, and interpreting an individual's answers from a foreign language into English; and

Simultaneous interpreting--interpreting simultaneously what is being stated during a proceeding from English to a foreign language.

Ability to perform each mode of court interpreting in a manner that:

Accurately (without change, omission or addition) transmits the message as expressed; and

Accurately preserves the tone and level of the message expressed.

Ability to deliver foreign language interpreter services in a manner faithful to all canons of the Code of Professional Conduct for Interpreters, Translators, and Translators, and to all other policies regarding court interpreting promulgated by the Judiciary.

Ability to speak English in a manner that is readily understood by judges, attorneys, and jurors;

Ability to speak as quietly as possible when interpreting simultaneously; and ability to speak with a solid speaking voice when interpreting consecutively.

Ability to focus and concentrate on communications, screen out distractions, and position oneself where necessary to effectively interpret and communicate;

Ability to monitor and make corrections of interpreting errors when appropriate;

Ability to protect the integrity of the interpreter's work;

Ability to use effective note-taking techniques to enhance the accuracy of interpretation, especially when interpreting in the consecutive mode;

Ability to effectively work with other interpreters when team interpreting is required; and

Ability to use specialized equipment that may be required for delivering effective interpreter services.

2. What are the differences between a "certified" court interpreter; a "qualified" court interpreter; and a "registered" court reporter?

A "certified" court interpreter is an interpreter who has successfully registered and achieved one or more of each of the following certification levels: *Journeyman, Certified, or Certified-Master Level*. It is the Judiciary's policy for the court to use the services of certified interpreters when possible.

A "qualified" court interpreter is an interpreter who has successfully registered and qualified to interpret in a specific matter by the individual court. It is the Judiciary's policy for the court to first use the services of "certified" interpreters when possible.

A "registered" court interpreter is an interpreter who has successfully registered as a court reporter. A registered interpreter may be qualified to interpret in a specific matter by the individual court. It is the Judiciary's policy that the courts first qualify an interpreter from the list of "certified" interpreters.