

PA Courts Interpreter Certification Program

Frequently Asked Questions:



What is the order of the steps to certification?

The certification process consists of -Initial Registration and Language Screening, - Self-Guided Orientation, Written Exam, Skill-Building workshop, and Oral Exams. The process varies for ASL and Reciprocity candidates, please see those pages on the website for more information. The steps for certification must be completed IN ORDER.

How long does certification take?

We recommend taking 1-2 years to complete your certification. Candidates should proceed as they are prepared and avoid rushing.

Is there a deadline for finishing your certification?

If candidates are inactive with the program (make no progress or attempted progress) for more than two years, they will be considered inactive and must restart from the beginning. Otherwise, candidates can proceed at their preferred pace.

What if I work in more than one Non-English language?

Interpreter candidates who work in multiple languages should start with whichever is their strongest language. To test in another language later, they will go back and begin with the language-specific steps in their secondary language. By passing a language screening OPI, they will be eligible to take the oral exams in their next language.

They will not need to repeat the language neutral requirements (self-guided orientation, written exam).

How can I prepare to succeed in the Certification process?

Exposure to court (for example, by attending public hearings), practicing the modes of interpretation under simulated test experiences, and regularly recording and assessing their own interpretation are some of the best ways for interpreter candidates to set themselves up for success. See also our [Resources](#) page where candidates and Rostered interpreters alike can find education and skill-building opportunities.



Where are the registration forms for the exams and workshops?

Registration for the orientation modules, written exams, skill-building workshops, and oral exams are not public. Only eligible candidates who have completed the mandatory prerequisites will be invited to progress to the next step. Candidates who are new to the program must introduce themselves by completing the [Initial Registration](#) and taking a language screening OPI, if applicable. Then, the ICP will direct the candidate to their next step.

Once I'm on the roster, how do I accept work?

In Pennsylvania Courts, certification is authorized by the Interpreter Certification Program. Interpreters are hired for court assignments directly by individual districts.

Upon successful completion of the steps of certification, interpreters will report their availability (geography, time, and modality) to be published on the roster. Most districts use the Interpreter Dashboard to search for interpreters who meet their language and scheduling needs, offer the job, and the first interpreter to accept will be assigned. Hiring practices may vary from district to district.

What is the frequency of work available in court?

Frequency of work depends heavily on the language and region of that interpreter. Generally speaking, demand for interpreters is higher than supply across most languages in PA courts. Many interpreters have the equivalent of full-time work, while others, particularly in lower distribution languages, consider court work supplemental.

Are staff positions available?

Staff positions are frequently available for Certified interpreters and will be posted and hired directly by the districts.

With other questions, contact InterpreterProgram@pacourts.us

