



# JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

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COURT LANGUAGE ACCESS  
SUPPORT PROGRAM

## Consortium Test Reciprocity Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is test reciprocity and what does it mean to me?**

If you have taken and passed a bilingual oral interpreting exam developed by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts (Consortium), you may qualify for *test reciprocity* under rules adopted by the state of California.

Test reciprocity means that California will reciprocate (honor) your scores on a Consortium bilingual oral interpreting exam taken outside of California provided the criteria listed below are met. If California grants reciprocity on these scores, you will not have to retake the bilingual oral interpreting exam in the language for which you are seeking certified or registered status<sup>1</sup>. If your scores are acceptable, you would also need to complete the enrollment process specified for all California interpreters, as well as comply with annual renewal, continuing education and professional assignment requirements currently in place.

Please continue reading for a description of the application and enrollment processes.

***→ Please note that the California Court Language Access Support Program will only recognize Bilingual Interpreting Exam standards and scores that meet or exceed the requirements in California.***

### **Who is eligible for reciprocity?**

The California Court Language Access Support Program will grant test reciprocity to interpreters who have passed Consortium bilingual oral interpreting exams in other member states, subject to the following conditions:

- The interpreter passed all four sections (including both sight translation sections) of the Bilingual Oral Interpreting Exam with **70% or higher** in each section; OR
- The interpreter passed the Abbreviated Oral Exam<sup>2</sup> with **70% or higher** on the simultaneous portion and a requisite score on the oral English proficiency section;  
AND
- The interpreter passed all portions of the oral exam in **one** sitting; AND
- The interpreter passed all portions of the oral exam in **one** state.

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<sup>1</sup> When seeking reciprocity for languages that are not recognized as certified languages in California; for which a Bilingual Oral Interpreting Exam is available in another state, and if reciprocity is granted, the interpreter will be listed as registered interpreter on the Judicial Council's Master List of Certified Court and Registered Interpreters.

<sup>2</sup> The Abbreviated Exam is administered in some member states for the following languages: Chuukese; Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian; Marshallese; and Turkish. For more information, please contact [courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov](mailto:courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov).



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#### **How do I apply for reciprocity?**

If you meet the listed criteria above, please email [courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov](mailto:courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov) and request a ***California Court Interpreter Eligibility Verification Form***. Please fill out *all parts* of the form and email it to [courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov](mailto:courtinterpreters@jud.ca.gov). Verification of your eligibility can take between **30-45 business days**. *The Court Language Access Services Program will notify you via email once your eligibility status has been confirmed.*

#### **When will I be able to work in California as a certified or registered interpreter?**

If you meet the eligibility requirements, the Court Language Access Support Program will send you an enrollment packet. The enrollment process requires a completed application, payment of a fee<sup>3</sup>, and the submission of a recent photo.

You will be required to enroll and maintain status as a California certified court or registered interpreter by fulfilling the professional requirements approved by the California Judicial Council. California has a continuing education requirement for all interpreters.

You will be recognized as a California court interpreter **ONLY** after you complete the enrollment process. Your name is then added to the *Master List of Certified Court and Registered Interpreters* used by the California courts to identify, locate, and contract with qualified interpreters. You will also receive a badge showing your status.

#### **What is the difference between certified and registered status in California?**

Your status is based on the language in which you interpret. Currently California offers certification status for the following languages: Arabic, Eastern Armenian, Western Armenian, Cantonese, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Mandarin, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.<sup>4</sup> Interpreters in all other languages can obtain registered status in California. However, reciprocity is granted only to interpreters who have taken and passed a Bilingual Oral Interpreting Exam under the specifications described above.

Certified and registered interpreters receive the same rate of pay. Certified or registered interpreters on California's Master List can work as either independent contractors or as employees of a specific court. Each court maintains its own Human Resources Department. Please contact the individual courts for current employment opportunities or inquire regarding opportunity to serve as an independent contractor.

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<sup>3</sup> Enrollment fees and annual renewal fees are subject to change. For current information, visit the Court Interpreters Program website: <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/courtinterpreters/>.

<sup>4</sup> Bilingual oral interpreting exams are currently not available in California in Japanese or Western Armenian.



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Interpreters seeking work in California under test reciprocity need to **first** complete the application and enrollment processes described above and receive notification **before** contacting the courts.