ARIZONA CODE OF JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION
Part 7: Administrative Office of the Courts
Chapter 3: Court Services Programs
Section 7-301: Continuing Education Requirements for Credentialed Court Interpreters

A. Definitions.

"Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program" (ACICP) means the program for credentialing court interpreters in Arizona as provided in Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order 2016-02.

"Compliance period" means the period of time in which completion of the required credit hours of continuing education for credentialed court interpreters must be completed. Compliance periods begin on January 1st in odd-numbered years and end on December 31st in even-numbered years.

"Credential" means any one of the credentials that are issued by the Arizona Supreme Court's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) under the ACICP that qualifies the individual to perform the duties of a credentialed court interpreter in Arizona courts.

"Credentialed court interpreter" means a person to whom the AOC has conferred any one of the credentials available under the ACICP.

"Credit hour" means an increment of continuing education determined by division staff to constitute one credit toward continuing education requirements. In most instances, 60 minutes of education equals one credit hour.

"Division staff" means personnel employed by the AOC in the work unit overseeing the day-to-day management of the continuing education requirements described in this section.

"Review Board" means the subcommittee of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC) responsible for deciding questions of compliance with the continuing education requirements described in this section.

B. Purpose.

1. Interpreting for limited-English-proficient (LEP) persons and court personnel is fundamentally related to the swift, effective, impartial, and meaningful administration of justice. Court interpreters are required to demonstrate a basic level of competence in all modes of interpreting to become credentialed in Arizona. Ongoing, continuing education is a means to ensure credentialed court interpreters maintain continuing competence in the field of court interpreting after becoming credentialed. Continuing education also provides opportunities for credentialed court interpreters to stay abreast of developments in the court interpreting and legal professions and the Arizona justice system.

2. This section establishes continuing education requirements for interpreters credentialed by the ACICP, provides direction to ensure compliance with those requirements, and provides for the equitable application and enforcement of the continuing education requirements.

C. Requirements for Compliance.

1. All credentialed court interpreters must attend and complete at least twenty credit hours of approved continuing education every two years, between the period of January 1st in odd-numbered years and December 31st in even-numbered years. Credit hours are not transferable to compliance periods other than the one in which the participation occurred. Credit hours earned in excess of the minimum required for a compliance period cannot be rolled over to subsequent compliance periods.

2. Of the twenty credit hours of continuing education required per compliance period, at least two credit hours must be categorized as approved ethics training specific to court interpreters. Ethics training that is not specific to court interpreters does not satisfy the ethics requirement.

3. This section does not increase the number of continuing education credit hours required under section 1-302. Credentialed court interpreters may request that continuing education completed pursuant to this section be applied toward their annual COJET requirements, pursuant to (E)(4) of this section.

D. Applicability.

The continuing education requirements described in this section apply to all interpreters who have been granted a credential for any tier designation under the ACICP, regardless of their working language or status as a staff or freelance interpreter.

E. Responsibilities of Credentialed Court Interpreters.

1. It is the responsibility of each credentialed court interpreter to ensure compliance with continuing education requirements, maintain documentation of completion of continuing education, and provide documentation upon the request of division staff.

2. Upon request of division staff, a credentialed court interpreter must provide any additional information requested by staff who are reviewing continuing education applications, affidavits, and documentation.

3. Continuing education not recognized for credit does not in any way relieve the credentialed court interpreter of the responsibility to complete the required number of credit hours of continuing education for the compliance period.

4. Continuing education completed pursuant to this section may dually qualify for COJET credit. To request COJET credit, the interpreter must follow their court's policy and may need to submit a COJET credit request form to the designated person at their court.

F. Authorized Continuing Education Activities.

1. Continuing education is designed to provide an understanding of current developments, knowledge, skills, abilities, protocols, or procedures related to the practice of interpreting. Continuing education must address the areas of proficiency, competency, and performance of interpreting and impart knowledge and understanding of the profession of interpreting, the Arizona judiciary and legal processes, and increase the participant's understanding of the responsibilities of a credentialed court interpreter and the interpreter's impact on the judicial process. A credentialed court interpreter may count training in the following subject areas toward the continuing education requirements for a compliance period:

    a. English, including grammar and punctuation, vocabulary and etymology, regional and minority dialects, colloquialisms, idioms, and commonly heard slang.

    b. Foreign language instruction in the language for which the participant is credentialed. Foreign language instruction includes grammar and punctuation, vocabulary and etymology, regional and minority dialects, colloquialisms, idioms, and commonly heard slang.

    c. Legal terminology, presented by subject matter experts, on terminology and concepts commonly encountered by credentialed court interpreters including etymology, substantive law, procedural law, various subdivisions of law (for example, criminal, domestic, juvenile, and civil), and how cases are processed and advocated.

    d. Technical subjects, presented by subject matter experts, with emphasis on terminology, procedures, and concepts commonly encountered by credentialed court interpreters (for example, medical terminology, automotive terminology, accident reconstruction, drugs and alcohol, chemistry, fingerprint analysis, DNA analysis, serology, construction, workman's compensation, and products liability).

    e. Court interpreting, translation, and transcription technology, including wired or wireless equipment, video remote interpreting (VRI) equipment and solutions, computer assisted translation (CAT) skills, CAT equipment, hardware and software, and transcription-related computer equipment, skills, hardware, and software.

    f. Modal skills training, presented by subject matter experts, in the modes of interpretation (sight translation, consecutive interpreting, and simultaneous interpreting), translation, and transcription. Modal training may be either language-neutral or language-specific as long as the language of instruction is a language in which the interpreter is credentialed.

    g. Ethics for court interpreters, including the roles and responsibilities of credentialed court interpreters and the Arizona Court Interpreter Code of Conduct established by Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order 2015-98.

h. Ethics for court employees, including the roles and responsibilities generally applicable to court personnel and the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees pursuant section 1-303.

i. The Arizona court system, including the state and federal constitutions, branches of government, Arizona court jurisdiction and responsibilities, and Arizona tribal courts; resource materials, including the Arizona Revised Statutes, Arizona Rules of Court, case law, administrative orders and directives; and current issues in the Arizona court system.

j. Research skills, including utilizing reference materials, libraries, and research techniques, including those that emphasize proper terminological research and equivalency of translations.

k. Management issues, including public relations and customer service, accounting, ergonomics, time management, cooperation with lawyers, judges, court staff, and fellow credentialed court interpreters.

2. COJET Accredited Courses. Courses accredited for COJET for general ethics, the Arizona court system, and network security are recognized as being of particular importance for interpreters, particularly those working in court staff positions, and such courses are approved for purposes of the continuing education requirements under this section. Division staff may approve requests to count other COJET course offerings toward a credentialed court interpreter's compliance with this section if the course relates to the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of credentialed court interpreters, meets the criteria in (F)(11), and is not excluded by (G). A credentialed court interpreter should not rely solely on the COJET catalog of courses to satisfy the continuing education requirement under this section. Credentialed court interpreters must make efforts to seek out trainings that are relevant to the profession of interpreting and the field of court interpretation as set forth in (F)(1).

3. Trainings and Providers Approved by Other State Court Interpreter Programs. All trainings and providers of interpreter training which have been accredited for continuing education units by another state's administrative office of the courts, or equivalent, for interpreter continuing education requirements are deemed accredited for purposes of the continuing education requirements under this section.

4. Conferences. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours for attendance at a conference relevant to the profession of interpreting or the field of court interpreting. Continuing education hours will only be credited for the actual number of learning hours. There is no limit on the number of continuing education credit hours earned from attendance at a conference that can be applied to satisfy the continuing education requirements under (C)(1) and (C)(2). Introductory remarks, breaks, meals, business meetings, general sessions, and social events of the conference do not qualify as continuing education hours.

5. Self-Study and Asynchronous Instruction. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours for self-study and asynchronous training activities, including completing webinars, video and audio tapes, and other methods of independent learning. A credentialed court interpreter cannot receive continuing education credit hours for simply reading books, seminar materials, or other printed materials. The maximum number of continuing education credit hours earned in a self-study or asynchronous format cannot exceed 50 percent of the total number of continuing education credit hours required for a compliance period.

6. Mentorship. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours for mentorship activities conducted as part of a mentorship program approved by the ACICP. A credentialed court interpreter serving as a mentor may receive continuing education credit hours for activities that promote the development and improvement of a mentee's knowledge, skills, and abilities as court interpreters. To qualify, the interpreter must be officially enrolled in the mentorship program and be assigned to mentor another interpreter. The maximum number of hours of continuing education credit hours earned for mentorship cannot exceed 50 percent of the total number of continuing education credit hours required for a compliance period. Shadowing time where the mentor is engaged in official proceedings as a paid court interpreter do not qualify for continuing education credit hours. Mentorship hours cannot be counted as self-study hours.

7. University, College, and Other Educational Institution Courses. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours for a course provided by a university, college, or other institutionally accredited educational program if the interpreter successfully completes the course with a grade of "C" or better or a "pass" on a pass/fail system. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours if the course is relevant to the interpreting profession and may receive credit up to two times the number of credit hours awarded by the educational institution. Continuing education credit hours earned from educational course work may only be applied to the compliance period in which the coursework was completed. The maximum total hours of continuing education credit hours earned from educational course work cannot exceed 50 percent of the total number of continuing education credit hours required for a compliance period.

8. Authoring or Co-authoring Articles. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours for authoring or co-authoring an article directly related to court interpreting if the article is published in a state or nationally recognized professional publication of court interpreting or law and the article is a minimum of 1,000 words in length. A credentialed court interpreter may receive a maximum of three continuing education credit hours per compliance period for an article or articles published during that compliance period that were authored or co-authored by the credentialed court interpreter. A credentialed court interpreter cannot receive continuing education credit hours for articles published in prior compliance periods. A credentialed court interpreter cannot receive duplicate continuing education credit for an article published in multiple publications or republished in later editions.

9. Faculty Credit. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit hours for serving as an instructor, speaker, panel member, or faculty of a continuing education course or seminar directly related to the profession of court interpreting. A credentialed court interpreter may receive continuing education credit at the rate of two-for-one of actual instructional time. A credentialed court interpreter may also receive one credit hour of faculty credit, up to a maximum of four credit hours per compliance period, for each hour spent developing curriculum. The total continuing education credit hours earned as faculty credit cannot exceed 50 percent of the total number of continuing education credit hours required for a compliance period. A credentialed court interpreter cannot receive duplicate credit hours for serving as an instructor, speaker, panel member, or faculty or developing curriculum for the same course or seminar more than once during the compliance period.

10. Minimum Time. Each continuing education activity must consist of at least 30 minutes of "actual clock time" spent by a credentialed court interpreter in actual attendance at or completing an approved continuing education activity. "Actual clock time" means the total number of hours attended, minus the time spent for introductory remarks, breaks, meals, networking, and business meetings. After completion of the first 30 minutes of a continuing education activity, credit will be recognized in 15-minute increments.

11. Accreditation of Other Programs. A credentialed court interpreter or sponsor of continuing education programs for court interpreters may request accreditation of programs not previously identified in this section by submitting a request to division staff using a form provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts for this purpose. An interpreter or sponsor requesting accreditation of a continuing education program should strive to receive accreditation before the program is held and must submit to division staff, upon request, all additional information required to review the accreditation request, including, but not limited to agendas, outlines, supporting materials, attendee lists, compiled participant feedback from evaluations, handouts, or other resource materials.

    To receive accreditation, a program must meet the following criteria:

    a. The program must be related to the job duties of a court interpreter or to the justice system;

    b. The program must constitute an organized program of learning with significant intellectual or practical content;

    c. The program must be intended to improve the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies of credentialed court interpreters;

    d. The program must meet the minimum time requirements stated in Section F(10);

    e. Participants must be given the opportunity to evaluate the program's effectiveness;

f. Participants must receive materials such as handouts, manuals, study guides, flowcharts, substantial written outlines, or other relevant resources; and

g. Credentialed court interpreters and program sponsors requesting program accreditation must keep attendance records for five years and, upon request, forward attendance records, relevant program materials, and program evaluations to division staff.

12. Fees for Accreditation. No fees may be assessed to interpreters or sponsors of continuing education programs for requests to accredit trainings attended or offered.

G. Non-Qualifying Activities.

1. The following activities, regardless of whether the activity is approved for COJET credit, do not qualify as continuing education for credentialed court interpreters under this section:

   a. Foreign language instruction in a language for which the participant is not credentialed;

   b. Language-specific modal trainings in a language other than that in which the participant is credentialed;

   c. Attendance or participation at professional or association business meetings, general sessions, elections, policymaking sessions, networking sessions, social functions, or program/employee orientation; and

   d. Serving on committees, councils, or as an officer in a professional organization.

2. Repeat of an Activity. Continuing education activities repeated during a compliance period will not be awarded duplicate credit.

3. A credentialed court interpreter must attend a continuing education activity for its entire duration to receive credit. If a credentialed court interpreter only attends part of a continuing education activity, the credentialed court interpreter cannot claim partial credit.

H. Documentation of Attendance or Completion.

1. When attending or completing a continuing education activity, each credentialed court interpreter must obtain documentation of attendance or completion from the sponsoring entity. At a minimum, the documentation must include the following:

   a. The name of the sponsor;

   b. The name of the participant;

   c. The title of the activity;

   d. The number of hours attended, or the number of credit hours awarded by the sponsor;

e. The date and location of the activity; and

f. The signature of the sponsor, or an official document from the sponsoring entity that evidences proof of completion or attendance.

2. For self-study activities, a credentialed court interpreter must maintain a log of activities completed, including:

a. The date the activity was completed;

b. The start and end times for the activity;

c. The type of activity performed; and

d. Resources, text, or other materials used during the activity.

3. For mentorship activities, a credentialed court interpreter serving as a mentor pursuant to (F)(6) must maintain a log of activities completed, including:

a. The date the activity was completed;

b. The start and end times for the activity;

c. The type of activity performed;

d. Resources, text, or other materials used during the activity; and

e. The name of the mentee with or for whom the activity was completed.

4. A credentialed court interpreter must keep and maintain all documentation of attendance or completion, any self-study logs, and any mentorship logs for at least six months after the close of the compliance period.

I. Compliance and Non-Compliance.

1. Affidavit of Compliance. A credentialed court interpreter may submit an affidavit of continuing education compliance at any time after which the interpreter has completed the continuing education requirements for the compliance period, but affidavits must be submitted no later than December 31st in even-numbered years. The credentialed court interpreter must submit the affidavit on the form made available by the Administrative Office of the Courts for this purpose. No fee may be assessed to the credentialed court interpreter to submit an affidavit of continuing education compliance.

2. Additional Documentation. Division staff may request documentation or additional information from a credentialed court interpreter to verify compliance with the continuing

education requirements. If the credentialed court interpreter fails to provide the requested documentation or additional information, division staff may deem the affidavit incomplete, and the interpreter may be deemed non-compliant for the applicable compliance period until such time as the requested documentation is received by division staff.

3. Random Audits of Compliance. At the end of each compliance period, division staff may randomly audit up to ten percent of affidavits of compliance submitted by credentialed court interpreters for that compliance period. Division staff must notify the credentialed court interpreters selected. Credentialed court interpreters notified must submit to division staff all documentation and information supporting the affidavit of compliance with the continuing education requirements within 30 calendar days of the audit notification. If the credentialed court interpreter refuses or fails to provide the requested documentation or information, division staff will deem the affidavit incomplete, and the interpreter will be deemed non-compliant for the applicable compliance period.

4. Proration of Continuing Education Requirement. A credentialed court interpreter who becomes credentialed for the first time between January 1st and March 31st in odd-numbered years must complete the full twenty hour continuing education requirement for the compliance period, which includes two hours of court interpreter ethics training. A credentialed court interpreter who becomes credentialed for the first time after March 31st in odd-numbered years must complete the continuing education requirements in their first compliance period according to a prorated schedule, as follows:

    a. Credentialed court interpreters with their initial credential issued on or after April 1st but no later than September 30th of odd-numbered years must complete fifteen hours of continuing education (75 percent of the required hours), which includes two hours of court interpreter ethics training.

    b. Credentialed court interpreters with their initial credential issued on or after October 1st of odd-numbered years but no later than March 31st of even-numbered years must complete ten hours of continuing education (50 percent of the required hours), which includes one hour of court interpreter ethics training.

    c. Credentialed court interpreters with their initial credential issued on or after April 1st but no later than September 30th of even-numbered years must complete five hours of continuing education (25 percent of the required hours), which includes one hour of court interpreter ethics training.

    d. Credentialed court interpreters with their initial credential issued on or after October 1st but no later than December 31st of even-numbered years must complete one hour of court interpreter ethics training.

    In subsequent compliance periods, the credentialed court interpreter must complete the full twenty hour continuing education requirement, which includes two hours of court interpreter ethics training.

5. Continuing Education Prior to Credential. A credentialed court interpreter who attends approved continuing education prior to the date of their initial credential, but within their initial compliance period, may credit these continuing education hours toward the continuing education requirements for their first compliance period if the continuing education meets the requirements of this section.

6. Non-compliance. A credentialed court interpreter who fails to complete the required continuing education requirements, or who does not comply with the affidavit requirements in (I)(1) - (I)(3), will be deemed by division staff to be non-compliant. A non-compliant interpreter will be removed from the Public Roster of Credentialed Court Interpreters. The interpreter's profile in the Arizona Court Interpreter Registry will also be updated to reflect the interpreter's non-compliance with the continuing education requirements for the applicable compliance period. The foregoing consequences will remain in effect until the interpreter becomes compliant with the continuing education requirements in future compliance periods.

7. Appeals. Findings of non-compliance pursuant to section (I)(6) are not appealable.

J. Exemption Requests.

1. Under limited circumstances, a credentialed court interpreter may request from division staff an exemption from the continuing education requirements. Requests must be presented to division staff in writing on a form made available by the Administrative Office of the Courts for this purpose. Exemption requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Examples of circumstances that may qualify for an exemption include extended military deployment or prolonged illness.

2. Any exemption granted has the effect of prorating the credentialed court interpreter's required credit hours of continuing education by an amount equal to the portion of the applicable compliance period during which the interpreter had a qualifying circumstance. The interpreter is still required, within the applicable compliance period, to complete all remaining credit hours of the continuing education requirements for which the interpreter did not receive an exemption.

3. A request for exemption must be filed with division staff prior to the close of the compliance period for which the interpreter is requesting the exemption. Exemption requests received after the close of the compliance period for which the exemption is requested will not be considered.

4. Exemption requests cannot span more than one compliance period. Each compliance period requires a separate written exemption request.

5. Exemption requests will be decided by division staff. A credentialed court interpreter must provide any additional information deemed necessary by division staff to review the exemption request. Division staff will notify the credentialed court interpreter of the decision in writing no later than 60 days after the receipt of the exemption request and any

additional information that was requested. If an exemption request is approved, the notification to the interpreter must state the number of credit hours exempted from the interpreter's continuing education requirement and the number of credit hours the interpreter is still required to complete. Exemption decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

Adopted by Administrative Order No. 2022-139, effective November 2, 2022.