



**ARKANSAS SUPREME COURT
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
COURT INTERPRETER SERVICES**

CERTIFICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Certified Foreign Language Interpreter in the State of Arkansas. The process of certification is set forth by the Arkansas Supreme Court; therefore, all the steps need to be completed. Please familiarize yourself with each step as listed below.

Certification Process:

I. Personal Information Form for Arkansas Court Interpreters

II. Background Check

III. Candidate Assessment Exam: Achieve a passing score (80%) on **Parts I & II**, combined, and a score of Advanced High on **Part III, the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)**.

IV. Orientation: Attend and complete successfully the Orientation Seminar and achieve a passing score (80%) on **Part IV** of the Candidate Assessment Exam.

V. Oral Exam for Certification: Achieve a passing score (70%) on the **Oral Exam** for Certification.

I. Personal Information Form for Arkansas Court Interpreters:

- a) Fill out and sign **Form**.
- b) Have **Form** notarized.
- c) Attach a recent **photo** (taken within the last 3 months) of yourself that is passport style.
- d) Include proof of education (copy of G.E.D.; High School Diploma; or College Transcript)

II. Background Check:

- a) Fill out and sign **Release Form**.
- b) Have Release Form notarized.
- c) Attach \$25 payment (made out to Arkansas Supreme Court Foreign Language Interpreter Fund)
- d) Mail to the Administrative Office of the Courts
625 Marshall Street Little Rock, AR 72201
Attn: Court Interpreter Services

III. Candidate Assessment Exam Information:

**Be advised that this is NOT the Oral Exam for Certification.*

- a) **Part I: English Language Skills** consists of 75 Multiple Choice questions covering Sentence Completion, Synonyms, Synonyms in Context, Antonyms and Idioms.
- b) **Part II: Ethics** consists of ten multiple choice questions based on the Arkansas Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Judiciary.
- c) **Part III: The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)** is a standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability. It measures how well a person speaks a language by comparing their performance of specific language tasks, as set forth in the criteria for each of ten proficiency levels established by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). The Oral Proficiency Interview is administered remotely by a private testing provider contracted by the AOC.
- d) You must **pre-register** for the written exam by the **deadline date**. The exam fee is **\$75.00** and is non-refundable. Checks must be made out to the Arkansas Supreme Court Foreign Language Interpreter Fund. You are permitted to test only once in a 12-month period. Pay careful attention to the deadlines for each testing date. You will receive a letter of confirmation from our office upon receipt of your Registration.
- e) **Identification:** When you appear for the test, you will be asked to produce official, photo identification with the same name that appears on your registration form. Acceptable forms of identification include a VALID driver's license, an official state identification card for unlicensed drivers, or a current passport.
- f) Candidates must achieve a combined score of **80%** on **Parts I and II** and a score of Advanced High on the **Part III (OPI)** must be achieved to be eligible to attend the Court Interpreter Orientation.

IV. Orientation Information:

- a) The Orientation is a multiple day workshop which includes the introduction of the Role of the Interpreter in the Judiciary, Ethics, the Modes of Interpreting, Legal Terminology and a Mock Trial. Participants must pay a registration fee of \$50 to cover cost of meals and materials.
- b) **Part IV: Court Related Terms and Usage** portion of the Candidate Assessment Exam will be administered at the end of the Orientation. Candidates must achieve a score of **80%** on **Part IV** to be eligible to pursue certification.
- c) Upon achieving a passing score, Candidates are introduced to the resources that are available to study for the Oral Exam for Certification, which is offered within six months to a year of the Orientation.

V. Oral Exam for Certification Information:

- a) The Oral Exam for Certification is an objective test developed under the auspices of the National Center for State Courts, designed to determine whether candidates possess the minimum levels of language knowledge and interpreting skills required to perform competently during court proceedings.
- b) The test measures language knowledge and fluency in both languages and the ability to successfully render meaning from target to source language in each of the three modes of interpreting that are required of court interpreters. The three modes of interpreting include:
 - simultaneous interpreting;
 - consecutive interpreting;
 - sight translation of documents.
- c) The candidate must score at least a **70%** on **each** of the **three parts** of the oral examination in order to pass.

Visit our website at www.ArkansasCourtInterpreterInfo.com and choose the tab “Requirements for Court Interpreters” to view the necessary documents to begin your pursuit in becoming a Court Certified Interpreter.

Please do not hesitate to call our office at (501) 682-9400 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Jessica D. Bowen
Executive Assistant
Administrative Office of the Courts
Court Interpreter Services
Telephone: (501) 682-9400
Email: Jessica.Bowen@arkansas.gov

Enclosures:

- *Personal Information Form for Arkansas Court Interpreters*
- *Background Check Release Form*
- *Registration for Candidate Assessment Exam*
- *Overview of the Candidate Assessment Exam*
- *Requirements for Certification*
- *Arkansas Code of Professional Responsibility for Interpreters in the Judiciary*