



New Mexico Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing

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Court Interpreter Standards

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Background and Authority

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has the statutory responsibility of determining the qualifications and payment rates for all spoken language interpreters working in District, Metropolitan, and Magistrate courts throughout New Mexico (§38-9-7). The New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NMCDHH) has the statutory responsibility to work in collaboration with the AOC to determine the requisite qualifications for signed language interpreters, and to provide the AOC with a list of signed language interpreters who are qualified to work in court settings (§38-9-3). All of the requirements for spoken and signed language interpreters can be found here: <https://nmcenterforlanguageaccess.org/cms/en/court-interpreter-certification/about-cic>. The following standards apply to interpreters working in all courts in New Mexico.

Levels of Qualification

There are three levels of signed language interpreter qualification. They are:

- Certified Interpreter: Legal Specialist
- Certified Interpreter: Legally Qualified
- Certified Interpreter: Legal Apprentice

The criteria for each category are on the next page. Interpreters must meet the established qualifications, pass a background check, and comply with continuing education and credential verification requirements.

Municipal, Tribal, and Federal Courts

Courts that are not under the AOC jurisdiction coordinate their own interpreters, and may request a list of interpreters who meet the established qualifications from NMCDHH or from the AOC.

Becoming a Court Interpreter

Interpreters who are interested in working in the courts should contact Lisa Dignan, Director of Community Engagement at NMCDHH for more information: Lisa.Dignan@cdhh.nm.gov

Categories and Standards

Court interpreter categories and standards are listed on the next page.

Categories and Standards	
Certified: Legal Specialist - \$65 per hour	
Deaf Interpreters	Hearing Interpreters
Conditional Legal Interpreting Permit: Relay (CLIP-R)	Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L) or BEI Court Interpreter Certification
Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI)	
New Mexico Community License	New Mexico Community License
BA Degree or alternative pathway	BA Degree or alternative pathway
AOC Application	AOC Application
Background check	Background check
Introduction to the New Mexico Courts Seminar	Introduction to the New Mexico Courts Seminar
20 hours (2 CEUs) legal training in each 4-year RID CMP cycle	20 hours (2 CEUs) legal training in each 4-year RID CMP cycle
Certified: Legally Qualified - \$54 per hour	
Deaf Interpreters	Hearing Interpreters
Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI)	RID Generalist Certification
New Mexico Community License	New Mexico Community License
Legal Training sufficient for SC:L Written test	Pass SC:L or NCSC Written Test
BA Degree or alternative pathway	BA Degree or alternative pathway
AOC Application	AOC Application
Background check	Background check
Introduction to the New Mexico Courts Seminar	Introduction to the New Mexico Courts Seminar
Documentation of 20 hours of in-court experience, observation, and/or mentoring	Documentation of 20 hours of in-court experience, observation, and/or mentoring
20 hours (2 CEUs) legal training in each 4-year RID CMP cycle	20 hours (2 CEUs) legal training in each 4-year RID CMP cycle
Certified: Legal Apprentice - \$43 per hour	
Deaf Interpreters	Hearing Interpreters
CDI Training sufficient to take CDI Written test	RID Generalist Certification
New Mexico Provisional License	New Mexico Community License
BA Degree or alternative pathway	BA Degree or alternative pathway
AOC Application	AOC Application
Background check	Background check
Introduction to the New Mexico Courts Seminar	Introduction to the New Mexico Courts Seminar
20 hours (2 CEUs) legal training in each 4-year RID CMP cycle	20 hours (2 CEUs) legal training in each 4-year RID CMP cycle
No trials or jury	No trials or jury