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# **Delaware Court Interpreter Continuing Education Handbook**

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## **COURT INTERPRETER CONTINUING EDUCATION HANDBOOK**

### **1. Goal of this handbook**

This manual was developed to answer frequent questions, provide information and offer examples to help interpreters better understand the Delaware Continuing Education policy included in the Administrative Office of the Courts Court Interpreter Program Policy Directive. **Additionally, as of January 1, 2021 interpreters must self-track their Continuing Education (CE) credits and submit all certificates, along with a compliance form, to the Coordinator two months before the end-date of the compliance period. Step-by-step instructions on how to report Continuing Education Units (CEUs) can be found in Section 6, "Reporting."**

### **2. Purpose of Continuing Education**

The purpose of CE and compliance requirements for court interpreters is:

1. To ensure that court interpreters listed in the Registry maintain and improve the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform their duties in a competent, effective, and fair manner;
2. To promote adherence to the highest principles of personal and professional conduct as stated in the Court Interpreter Code of Professional Responsibilities; and
3. To assist interpreters in preserving the integrity, impartiality, and efficiency of the judicial system.

### **3. Scope and Continuing Education Unit requirements**

All spoken language interpreters who are registered with the Delaware Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) must complete a minimum of twelve (12) hours of CE every two (2) years. Of these twelve (12) credits, at least three (3) must be in ethics and three (3) in skills building-modes of interpretation.

All spoken language interpreters registered with the AOC must complete the CE requirement every two (2) years to remain registered with the AOC and provide services in the Delaware Courts.

For example, a two-year CE term would begin January 1, 2020 and end December 31, 2021. The following term would begin January 1, 2022 and end December 31, 2023. The twelve (12) hours of CE must include at least three (3) hours of training/education in court interpreter ethics and three (3) hours of training/education in skill building-modes of interpretation (such as training to improve sight, consecutive, and simultaneous interpretation skills.) For information regarding online courses, see Section 4, "Approved Continuing Education and the Approval Process- Online Courses."

### **4. Approved Continuing Education and the Approval Process**

CE credits may be obtained through programs approved by the AOC, such as, the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts Certification Skills Building Workshops, NAJIT and ATA conferences, educational programs offered by colleges or universities, and training programs offered by other Consortium member states (Example: The Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts). Interpreters must submit course information for approval from the Coordinator of the Delaware AOC Court Interpreter Program (CIP Coordinator) at least thirty (30) days prior to registering/attending the course to ensure the proposed course meets CE requirements and for which category (e.g., ethics, skills building).

**It is in an interpreter's best interest to plan, request approval from the CIP Coordinator and take CE courses throughout the year rather than to wait until the deadline is near to request approval of courses. The CIP Coordinator's email address is [court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov](mailto:court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov)**

Requests for approval must be sent to the CIP Coordinator at least thirty (30) days before attending and must include:

- The name of the institution that provides the course;
- The name of the instructor;
- The title of the course and its description;
- The date and location of the course;
- If interpreter plans to attend a conference, interpreter must submit conference's full agenda with class descriptions and duration of each class;
- The CE training/education program should provide a certificate upon completion of the course for interpreters to submit to the CIP Coordinator. See below for information on how to report CEUs to the AOC. Note that reporting has changed as of 1/1/21.
- Interpreters may attend any CE course they wish. However, interpreters must understand that not all training/education may be eligible for CE credits. Therefore, it is in the interpreters' best interest to contact the CIP Coordinator in advance to find out if a course is approved for Delaware CEUs and in which category, if any.
- The Delaware Court Interpreter Program will only grant credits for education and training classes/courses/programs approved by the CIP Coordinator in advance.
- Delaware does not have a formal pre-approval process for CE course providers. However, the CIP Coordinator may occasionally approve a course or conference in advance and notify the provider and/or interpreters as a courtesy to interpreters.

Interpreters who attend CE programs regularly and plan to attend yearly conferences are usually successful in fulfilling their CEU requirements. Interpreters who wait until the two (2) -year deadline is near to search for available courses and request approval may be at risk for removal from the Registry due to noncompliance with the CE Policy. A copy of the CE Policy is provided to interpreters upon registration with the AOC. To request a copy of the CE Policy, please contact the CIP Coordinator.

When the Delaware Court Interpreter Program approves a course for CE credit(s), the course is approved for Delaware CEUs only. If an interpreter plans to present a certificate of attendance to a different state for credit, the interpreter should contact that specific state for information.

Online Courses: Originally, interpreter continuing education was almost exclusively face-to-face and on-site in the form of instructor-led programs in classrooms and conference halls. Face-to-face events provide interpreters with an opportunity to ask questions in real time, interact with colleagues, and contribute experience to the group. Over the years, interpreter continuing education options have expanded to include online education. Online education includes real-time (live) instructor-led classes. Some sessions are playbacks of recorded material, which are beneficial and convenient, but are not adequate as the sole source of interpreter CE. Therefore, of the twelve (12) hours of CE required every two (2) years, the minimum of three (3) hours in court interpreter ethics and three (3) hours in skill building-modes of interpretation must be obtained by attending instructor-led classes imparted in real time (live). If travel or on-site education is not possible, real time participation via a remote conferencing system may be accepted.

## 5. Definitions

- CEU means Continuing Education Unit, often also called Continuing Education credit (CE credit).
- Unless otherwise indicated, each sixty (60) minutes of class will count as one (1) CEU or CE credit.
- Three (3) hours of CE in ethics and three (3) hours in skill building-modes of interpretation must be obtained every two years by attending instructor-led live classes in person or via remote conferencing system.
- CEUs do not carry over once the 2-year term ends (4 years for ASL interpreters).

- Duplicate courses: Courses taken more than once within the same 2-year period will be counted as one (1) course only.
- A compliance period is a two-year period determined by the AOC Court Interpreter Program during which interpreters must attend training and education to maintain or improve their job performance.

Although it is not mandatory at this time, interpreters should obtain a minimum of ten (10) hours of court interpreting experience per year.

Delaware requires mandatory minimum hours of training in court interpreter ethics and skill building- modes of interpretation. Therefore, for the purpose of tracking interpreters' CE, the Delaware Court Interpreter Program will classify CEUs as **Ethics**, **Skills-Building**, or **General**.

Acceptable "Ethics" CE includes:

- Ethics for court interpreters
- Ethical challenges workshops
- Courtroom protocol
- The role of the interpreter in the courtroom

Acceptable "Skills building-modes of interpretation" CE includes:

- Consecutive, simultaneous, and sight translation: language specific or language neutral □ Note-taking skills
- Conference interpreting workshops
- Language development- specialized/technical vocabulary
- Translation-transcription

Acceptable "General" CE includes:

- Education in civil or criminal procedure
- Vicarious Trauma awareness
- Interpreter health and wellbeing (hearing loss awareness, voice training)
- Freelance business management (starting an LLC, tax preparation)
- Accent reduction
- Remote interpretation technology

The following will NOT be eligible for CE credits:

- Court Interpreter Orientation Seminars
- Time preparing for, or taking tests
- Testing-tip courses
- Shadowing or court observation
- Medical interpreter ethics or other non-judiciary ethics programs
- Time spent interpreting or preparing for assignments
- Teaching or presenting
- Receptions, lunchtime, or networking events
- Duplicate courses
- Unapproved programs
- If a minimum number of interpreting-hours should be required to remain registered with the AOC, those hours will not count as CE.

## 6. Reporting

To receive CE credit, interpreters must submit proof of successful attendance to the CIP Coordinator before the end-date of the 2-year compliance period. Suitable proof of attendance includes certificates of successful completion that contain:

- Full name of the organization (for example, Delaware Valley Translators Association)
- City and state in which the course took place or the word "online" if interpreter participated remotely. ALL online courses must be identified as live instructor-led OR a replay (replays are not live instructor-led and sometimes also called "recorded" courses).
- Date interpreter attended the course
- Interpreter's full name, as listed with the AOC
- Duration of each class in hours (for example, 1.5 HR), or number of approved CEUs (for example 1.5 CEUs)
- Name and signature of the instructor or representative of the organization.

A signature on a sign-in sheet and/or proof of payment for an educational activity are not acceptable as proof of attendance.

**To streamline the process of reporting CEUs to the AOC, starting January 1, 2021 interpreters should HOLD their certificates and submit them WITH a copy of the new Continuing Education Compliance Form (CE Compliance Form) to the CIP Coordinator during the month of October, two (2) months before the term ends. Interpreters should no longer send their certificates to the CIP Coordinator after attending each course.**

**A copy of the new CE Compliance Form with an example of how to complete it is enclosed. The CE Compliance Form must be filled out and submitted to the CIP Coordinator along with proof of attendance for each CE course two (2) months before the end-date of each CE requirement period. The Policy will be updated to reflect this change if it becomes permanent.**

**Throughout each two-year compliance period, interpreters should attend CE courses. Beginning January 1, 2021, interpreters will need to self-track their CE compliance. To self-track, interpreters should hold their certificates and use the new CE Compliance Form to log course information. Each two-year compliance period ends December 31 of an odd-numbered year (2021, 2023, and so on). Interpreters must list on their Continuing Education Compliance Form ALL courses taken in 2022 and 2023 and attach ALL certificates. The new term begins January 1 of each even-numbered year (2022, 2024, and so on). Interpreters must report to the CIP Coordinator their CEUs for the entire two-year term two months before the 2-year term ends.**

### **Best Practices for Successful CE Reporting:**

- **Keep good records. Hold your certificates and track the CEUs for the courses you attend throughout the two-year compliance term.**
- **Two (2) months before the two-year compliance term ends (October 2023 for our current term) collect all your certificates and complete the CE Compliance Form. Then, submit everything at once to the CIP Coordinator by email at [court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov](mailto:court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov)**
- **In the email Subject Box, include the phrase "CEU Submittal" followed by your first and last name. In the body of the email, briefly state that you are submitting CEUs and indicate how many attachments are in your message.**
- **If you can, email as few attachments as possible. For example, attach one (1) or two (2) multi-page PDF attachments, at most rather than 12 attachments of individual certificates.**

- If you prefer to mail your paperwork, the mailing address is below. Please note that postal mail may take two (2) or more weeks to be delivered to the CIP Coordinator. Also, if you choose to mail your certificates, please make copies for your records before sending.

Administrative Office of the Courts  
405 N. King St. Suite 507  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
Attention: Jennifer Figueira

- During the month of October of each odd-numbered year, the CIP Coordinator will look for submittals in the email inbox and postal mail deliveries to the AOC and will contact the interpreter to confirm receipt. The CIP Coordinator will review the material and contact the interpreter if there are any issues or notify the interpreter that he/she is compliant.
- If an interpreter who submitted their CEU Form and certificates does not receive confirmation of receipt from the CIP within 14 days, the interpreter should contact the Coordinator.
- If an interpreter is short one (1) or more credits by September 30, 2023 (approaching reporting time), the interpreter should contact the CIP Coordinator in writing to request an extension and include a list of courses taken and a description of the course/s in which the interpreter is enrolled. The CIP Coordinator will evaluate the proposed action plan and may or may not agree or grant an extension. Interpreters who were granted an extension should send their CE Compliance Form and certificates by the new deadline. Please be aware that as per the CE Policy, all CE hours must be completed by the end of the two-year CE compliance term.
- It is in interpreters' best interest to take CE courses throughout the year rather than to wait until the deadline is near and "pack" the courses. Six (6) hours of required CE are topic-specific and should be obtained by attending instructor-led courses, which may require advance registration.
- The only change is in the Reporting of CEUs and the Continuing Education Compliance Form. All other CE requirements, deadlines and processes remain in place.

## 7. ASL

Interpreters for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing must complete the CEU requirements of the RID Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) and submit a Transcript of Professional Development to the CIP Coordinator. For more information on professional development for interpreters for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing please visit the RID website: <https://www.rid.org/continuing-education/earning-rid-ceus/>.

## 8. Registry Status

Failure to complete the required CE credits in the prescribed period of two (2) years for spoken foreign language interpreters and four (4) years for interpreters for ASL interpreters) may result in the removal of the interpreter's name from the Court Interpreter Registry maintained by the AOC.

## 9. Contact Information

The AOC CIP Coordinator can be reached by:

E-mail: [court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov](mailto:court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov); Office Telephone: 302-255-0166 << AOC staff continue to work primarily from home as per Covid-19 prevention guidelines; therefore, the best way to contact the CIP Coordinator is via email. If there is an emergency, the Coordinator's cell phone number is: 302-319-8348 >>

Mail: Administrative Office of the Courts  
405 N. King St., Suite 507  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
Attention: Jennifer Figueira

## 10. Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** I am also an accountant. Will the Court Interpreter Program accept the continuing education I take to maintain my CPA license?

**Answer:** No. Just as courses designed for the professional development of court interpreters are not acceptable to renew a nursing or an attorney's license. Each profession has specific continuing education requirements so that professionals in that field can maintain or improve their job performance. Interpreters should submit course information to the Coordinator at least thirty (30) days prior to attending a course to ensure it meets CE requirements.

**Question:** I understand courses in ethics for medical interpreter are not eligible for court interpreter ethics CEUs. Can they be accepted as general court interpreter CEUs?

**Answer:** No. Courses in ethics for medical interpreters are not eligible for any CEUs.

**Question:** Do I have to request approval from the CIP Coordinator if a course is advertised as approved for Delaware CEUs?

**Answer:** Advertisements may contain errors or unclear information for which the Delaware Court Interpreter Program is not responsible. It is in the best interest of interpreters to confirm approval with the CIP Coordinator.

**Question:** What do I do if I submitted the certificate for a class without requesting approval in advance from the CIP Coordinator, and it was not accepted?

**Answer:** Interpreters can benefit from many types of professional development, even from those that grant no CEUs. Interpreters are free to attend any course that interests them; however, not all courses may be eligible for CEUs. Courses that have not been approved in advance may be ineligible for CEUs. Interpreters must submit course information for approval from the CIP Coordinator at least thirty (30) days before attending a course, especially if the interpreter is short on credits.

**Question:** When do the credits expire?

**Answer:** For credits to be granted, the courses must be approved by the Delaware CIP, the interpreter must attend the course within the 2-year term for which interpreter is seeking credit and the interpreter must submit a valid certificate of completion as instructed in Section 5, "Reporting." Credit-hours do not roll over to the following CE requirement period once the requirement period ends.

**Question:** If a course is approved for Delaware CEUs, can I submit those CEUs to another state?

**Answer:** Each state has its own CE requirements and approval process. The Delaware CE policy applies only to Delaware. Interpreters that plan to submit certificate/s of attendance to multiple states should check the CE policy of each state or contact that state's Program Coordinator if they have questions. Likewise, a course approved for CEUs in another state may or may not be eligible for credit(s) in Delaware. It is in an interpreter's best interest to contact Program Coordinators in advance for approval.

**Question:** Do all CE courses required by Delaware have to be taken in Delaware or hosted by a local provider?

**Answer:** No. However, interpreters should request approval in advance to make sure the course is eligible for Delaware CEUs.

You may direct additional questions regarding continuing education to the Court Interpreter Program Coordinator, at [court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov](mailto:court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov).

## Delaware Court Interpreter Program Continuing Education Compliance Form

As of January 1, 2021, all interpreters are required to track their own continuing education (CE) hours. This form and copies of Continuing Education certificates must be submitted at the end of the two-year continuing education compliance period. All interpreters listed in the Delaware Registry must complete every two (2) years a minimum of twelve (12) hours of CE or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) in order to obtain continuing education. Of the 12 CEUs/hours, three (3) must be in court interpreter ethics and three (3) must be in skills building-modes of interpretation obtained from live instructor-led classes. Please review and complete this form with all the requested information. The Court Interpreter Program (CIP) Coordinator must receive copies of all certificates and compliance forms two (2) months before the deadline.

**Part I:** Complete all fields.

<b>Interpreter Information</b>	
<i>Last Name:</i> _____ <i>First Name:</i> _____	
<i>Address:</i> _____ <i>City:</i> _____	
<i>State:</i> _____ <i>Zip Code:</i> _____	
<i>Phone:</i> _____ <i>Email Address:</i> _____	
<i>Language:</i> _____	
<i>Credential:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Certified <input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Registered	

This form and all proof /certificates of successful completion must be submitted to the Court Interpreter Program Coordinator two months prior to the deadline of the compliance period using any one of the methods below:

**E-mail:** [court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov](mailto:court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov)

**Mail:** Administrative Office of the Courts, 405 N. King St. Suite 507, Wilmington, DE 19801, Attention: Jennifer Figueira



\*\*\* EXAMPLE\*\*\* Do not submit the example pages to the AOC.

Compliance Period & Summary of CEU Certificates Reported – example –

SPONSOR	DESCRIPTION	DATE	CLASS FORMAT	ETHICS CEUs	SKILLS CEUs	GRAL CEUs	TOTAL CEUs	Check that Certificate is attached
NAJIT	Yearly conference	1/3/2020-1-5/2020	In person-Las Vegas NV	4	6	4	14	✓
DE AOC	Conquering nerves/interpreting at the witness stand, with Tamber Marriot	3/23/2020	Zoom live and instructor-led	1	4		5	✓
NAJIT	Ethical dilemmas court interpreters may encounter	4/8/2020	Zoom live and instructor-led	2			2	✓
MD AOC	Legal Terminology in Spanish with Sandro E. Tomasi	6/23/2020	Live and instructor-led via Zoom		6		6	✓
American Pie	Idioms English-Spanish	8/8/2020	Online recorded (replay)		1		1	✓
		<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28</b>	

I am submitting CEUs for the compliance term that started (date): 1/1/2020 and ends (date) 12/31/2021;

I confirm that the information on this form and the proof enclosed are true representations of the CE hours I earned during this 2-year CE requirement period.

Interpreter Signature and date: Jane Castellanos 10/5/2021

**DEFINITIONS**

**Sponsor:** The entity that organized or presented the course.

**Description:** The name of the course (indicate if language neutral or language specific,) instructor (if known), a brief description if needed to differentiate from a similar class.

**Date:** The date interpreter attended the course. Ranges are acceptable for multi-day conferences, but the conference summary report must list each class individually by name and duration in hours (or CEUs).

**Class format:** Interpreter must indicate if the course was attended in-person or online. If online, interpreter must indicate if class was live and instructor-led via video conferencing system (for example, via Zoom) or if the course was a replay. Replays are defined as pre-recorded courses available on the internet and participant does not have a live interaction with the instructor. Interpreters will not be able to obtain all their CEUs from attending online replays of prerecorded classes.

**Categories:** Determined by the Delaware Court Interpreter Program. Ethics, Skills Building- Modes of interpretation and General. It is in an interpreter's best interest to contact the Delaware CIP Coordinator 30 days before registering for a course to ensure it qualifies for Delaware CEUs and in what category. Interpreters are free to attend any class they wish; however, not all classes may be eligible for Delaware CEUs.

**Totals:** Add of your CEUs vertically and horizontally to obtain accurate subtotals and an accurate grand total. Please check your math several times before submitting the form.

**Check that certificate is attached:** This area is to help interpreters ensure they prepared a complete packet before submitting. Interpreters should review each item on the form and mark that a corresponding proof of attendance is enclosed. Suitable proof of attendance includes certificates of successful completion (must contain the full name of participant, number of CEU hours, name of institution, signature of instructor or institution representative, location of the class). A signature on a sign-in sheet and/or proof of payment for an educational activity are not acceptable as proof of attendance.

**Interpreter Signature and date:** Actual signature of the interpreter and date signed/submitted.

**If you require more lines on Part II of the form,** use an additional blank page 2 of the form. Number each page on the top righthand corner.

**Deadline:** The end of the two-year continuing education compliance period. If the Deadline is December 31, 2023, the compliance form with all certificates must be submitted to the CIP Coordinator October 1 - October 31, 2023.

**The best way to contact the Delaware CIP Coordinator:** At this time, the best way to contact the Coordinator is via email at [court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov](mailto:court.interpreterprogram@delaware.gov).