

Overview of the New Jersey Judiciary *Registry of Interpreting Resources*

Introduction

Vicinage Coordinators of Interpreting Services and other employees of the New Jersey Superior and Tax Courts may purchase contract interpreting services **only** from the interpreters and agencies listed herein, except for interpreting needs that cannot be met by the resources in this *Registry*. This *Registry* constitutes the approved vendor list for contracting interpreters, whether directly with individual private contractors or agencies, whether for services to be delivered on site or by telephone within the New Jersey Judiciary. It is highly recommended that the Municipal Courts use this *Registry* when purchasing contract interpreting services; but unlike the Superior and Tax Courts, they are not required to do so.

The *Registry* has the following major sections:

Section of <i>Registry</i>	Content
1. Overview	Description of the contents of the <i>Registry</i> and how to use it
2. Registry of Interpreting Resources (Freelancers and Agencies)	A listing by language of interpreting services available from individual contract interpreters and agencies, with contact information*
3. Registry of Agencies Registered to Provide Telephone Interpreting	A listing by language of the agencies that are registered to provide telephone interpreting
4. Language Identification Guide	A listing of all languages for which any interpreting resource is identified in the <i>Registry</i> with information to help identify the exact language

*** As of November 13, 2009, the number of languages under which any freelancer or agency is listed in the *Registry* will be limited to six language options. Agencies that provide interpreters in more than six languages may choose “Any Language” as one of the language options. Agencies that select the “Any Language” option are listed at the back of the *Registry*, as well as being listed under other chosen language options.**

I. WHAT INCLUSION IN THE *REGISTRY* MEANS: INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETERS

Every registered interpreter has satisfied the following requirements:

1. Interpreters who registered after January 1, 2005, have completed a written exam,
2. Completed the NJ Judiciary's one-day *Orientation Seminar for Prospective Court Interpreters*,
3. Submitted a registration form to the Language Services Section (LSS) at the Administrative Office of the Courts,
4. Registered with NJ START,
5. Registered as a business with the NJ Division of Revenue, and
6. Completed whatever testing requirements have been established for a particular language:
 - a. *Interpreters who work in one of the languages for which there **is** a court interpreting oral exam* are either Master (tested accuracy of 80% or higher in each part of the exam), Journeyman (tested accuracy of 70% or higher in each part of the exam) or "conditionally approved"¹ (tested accuracy of 50% or higher in each part of the exam) interpreters. Conditionally-approved interpreters have tested at a trainee level of competency and are allowed to work at the Superior or Tax Court level when a Master or Journeyman is not available. Conditionally-approved interpreters may work in Municipal Courts without any similar limitations.
 - b. *Interpreters who work in a language for which there **is no** court interpreting oral exam* are classified according to the same categories above, but they are considered "registered" interpreters. This is because there has been no objective demonstration, through a valid and reliable test, of their court interpreting skills. All such interpreters have been classified according to three criteria:
 - i. Professional experience as an interpreter (translation experience is sometimes considered as well),
 - ii. Professional training in the fields of interpreting and translating, and
 - iii. Any other testing that may have been involved (i.e., certification as a translator by the American Translators Association).

¹ The New Jersey Judiciary does not "certify" court interpreters but instead approves or conditionally approves interpreters and refers to them as such. However, some interpreters may actually be "certified" elsewhere and may appropriately refer to themselves as "certified." The persons who may refer to themselves as "certified" fall into three groups: sign language interpreters certified by the *Registry* of Interpreters for the Deaf, Spanish interpreters certified by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, and interpreters in a number of languages who have been certified by another state judiciary.

In addition, all such interpreters *for which there **is no** court interpreting oral exam* who registered after January 1, 2005, have also met the additional criteria:

- iv. Completion of a written examination that measures knowledge of the English language, legal terminology, court procedure, and professional ethics and protocol; and
 - v. Completion of an oral examination that measures spoken English proficiency, including pronunciation, formation of sentences, and fluency.
 - vi. As of July 1, 2015, completion of an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).
7. This *Registry* includes approved or registered individual court interpreters who reside in or near enough to New Jersey to provide interpreting services to New Jersey's courts on a regular basis. Persons who reside a distance from New Jersey are generally ineligible.

Most of the individual interpreters included are self-employed contract interpreters. However, some employees of the Municipal, Superior and Tax Courts have chosen to register in order to obtain outside employment on their own time in the Municipal Courts and other venues. Court employees are listed as Staff Superior Court.

II. WHAT INCLUSION IN THE *REGISTRY* MEANS: AGENCIES

Agencies are included in the *Registry* when they have met the following requirements (to see all of the pertinent documentation, go to the "Registering an Agency" page of the LSS website at <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/agency.htm>):

1. Attendance by an official representative at the Orientation Seminar for Prospective Court Interpreters,
2. Submission of a registration form to the LSS,
3. Signing of an affidavit in support of their registration,
4. Registration with NJ START, and
5. Registration as a business with the NJ Division of Revenue.

IMPORTANT: Inclusion of an agency in the Registry does not constitute any type of endorsement, approval, or certification of the agency. Inclusion is merely a registration and administrative process that each agency has completed. Likewise, interpreters provided by agencies should not be viewed to be "approved," "certified," or even "registered" by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). Some individuals sent by agencies may be "approved by" or "registered with" the AOC or have similar credentials from other jurisdictions, but experience has shown that a vast majority of interpreters sent by agencies have no credentials at all, not even in languages for which the New Jersey Judiciary has court interpreting examinations.

III. REGISTRATION AS A BUSINESS WITH THE DIVISION OF REVENUE

Pursuant to state law, every vendor who sells a product or service in the State of New Jersey is required to register as a business with the Division of Revenue. All individual contract interpreters and agencies listed herein have completed this requirement.

IV. HOW TO USE THE *REGISTRY*

Understanding the *Registry* Sorting Scheme

Interpreting resources are listed according to the following sorting scheme designed to meet the needs of the Superior and Tax Courts:

1. Language
2. Interpreter classification:
 - a. Master
 - b. Journeyman
 - c. Conditionally Approved
 - d. Registered-Master
 - e. Registered-Journeyman
 - f. Registered-Conditional
 - g. Agencies
3. Interpreter Last Name/Agency Contact Name

Understanding Availability Information

Availability information includes available location(s) – the counties which an interpreter is willing to commute to - and available time(s) – the time of day an interpreter is available for work, such as a.m., p.m., anytime, evening only, etc.

Finding an Interpreter

Employees of the Superior and Tax Court who are seeking contract interpreting services should take the following steps to find freelance interpreters for onsite interpreting:

1. Find the language for which contract interpreting services are needed. Languages are listed in alphabetical order.
2. Select the appropriate freelance interpreter:
 - a. Find the freelance interpreters approved for that language for working in Superior or Tax Court (i.e., “Master/Freelancer” and “Journeyman/ Freelancer.”)

- b. When substantial efforts to find an approved interpreter for that language have failed, find the conditionally-approved or registered-conditional interpreters for that language (i.e., “Conditionally-Approved/Freelancer”). Remember that any interpreter for any language who is conditionally approved or registered-conditional may be used ***only as a last resort***. See Standard 1.3 of the *Standards for Delivering Interpreting Services in the New Jersey Judiciary*.
 - c. When efforts to find an approved or conditionally-approved/registered-conditional interpreter for a specific language and assignment have failed, make arrangements through an agency pursuant to the established procedure (which includes some bidding).
 - d. All of the primary ways of reaching interpreters are included:
 - i. Daytime telephone numbers (Day)
 - ii. Evening telephone numbers (Eve)
 - iii. FAX telephone numbers (FAX)
 - iv. Cellular telephone numbers (Cell)
 - v. E-mail addresses
3. Make the final arrangements with the interpreter or agency and provide the pertinent background information on the assignment(s).

V. TELEPHONE INTERPRETING

All individual interpreters who appear in the *Registry* are presumed to be available to provide telephone interpreting services. Pursuant to the *Operational Standards for Telephone Interpreting* adopted by the Judicial Council in April 2001, any situation where telephone interpreting is warranted should receive that service in the following order of priority:

1. From a staff court interpreter, if available;
2. From a registered freelance interpreter, if available; and, as a last resort,
3. From an agency.

Agencies that have registered to provide telephone interpreting services are included in a separate section of the *Registry*. Coordinators of interpreting services may use any of the registered agencies when no staff interpreter or individual freelance interpreter is available.

VI. MAINTENANCE OF THE *REGISTRY*

The *Registry* is updated regularly and updates are posted on the Judiciary's Internet and InfoNet websites. It is maintained by:

1. Making all required changes in name, address, telephones, etc., when such changes of registered interpreters or agencies are reported;
2. Adding new interpreters and agencies as they are eligible to be included; and by
3. Removing registered interpreters (or agencies) due to the following:
 - a. Failure of an interpreter to qualify on a new exam administered in a language for which the interpreter had been registered and for which there had not previously been any exam;
 - b. Request by the interpreter to be removed due to, for example, retirement, moving out of state, or career change;
 - c. Failure to provide updated information when they become unreachable due to disconnected phones and the like;
 - d. Failure to execute a contract in a new fiscal year;
 - e. A decision by either the individual or the AOC to terminate the existing contract.

Anyone who finds any information in the *Registry* to be incorrect, not working (i.e., a disconnected phone line or an e-mail address that bounces back), or out of date is encouraged to report the problem to Language Services by sending an e-mail to Langsvcs.mailbox@njcourts.gov. The Language Services Section will then take steps to obtain updated information and make whatever updates and revisions are warranted.