



National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators  
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Dear Dr. Martin and Ms. Werner:

Congratulations on your office's remarkable strides in addressing critical issues within your court interpreter program. A responsive administration, informed by the insights of the professionals it relies upon, lays a solid foundation for a robust and enduring program, marking a substantial enhancement for your language access program.

We appreciate your willingness to engage with NAJIT and consider our diverse perspectives, rooted in our experience collaborating with multiple states to develop and implement best practices within the Trial Court. In this collaborative spirit, we offer a few additional suggestions for your consideration.

**Suggestion 1: Testing Policy**

Determine whether candidates must pass all three sections of the oral performance exam in one sitting or if retesting of failed section(s) is permitted. The NCSC endorses both options (see p. 18, "Carrying Over Scores on Test Sections," in NCSC Court Interpreter Testing Desk Reference Manual, [https://www.ncsc.org/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/74513/FINAL-NCSC-State-Court-Interpreter-Testing-Desk-Reference-Manual-rev-07-27-2023.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/74513/FINAL-NCSC-State-Court-Interpreter-Testing-Desk-Reference-Manual-rev-07-27-2023.pdf))

**Suggestion 2: Retesting Policy**

Develop a policy on the frequency of retesting for candidates and establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure compliance, following NCSC recommendations (for written exam, see p. 18, "Carrying Over Scores on Test Sections," in Court Interpreter Written Exam, [https://www.ncsc.org/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0022/38083Written-Examination-Overview-for-Candidates-5-22-20.pdf](https://www.ncsc.org/__data/assets/pdf_file/0022/38083Written-Examination-Overview-for-Candidates-5-22-20.pdf); and for oral exams, p. 18-20 in Desk Reference Manual, cited in Suggestion 1)

**Suggestion 3: "Master" Certification Tier**

Consider the possibility of introducing a "Master" certification tier for court interpreters who achieve a score of 80% or higher on the NCSC exam or hold an AOUSC certification (available only in Spanish). This suggestion aims to establish a higher benchmark aligned with federal standards and to promote career advancement within the field.

**Suggestion 4: Written Examination Requirement**

Consider mandating the NCSC's Court Interpreter Written Examination for all aspiring interpreters, with a minimum 70% score on each section covering English proficiency, court terminology, and ethics.

**Suggestion 5: Job Opportunity Descriptions**

Ensure job descriptions for staff court interpreters align with Court Interpreter I requirements, including sight interpretation as a mode of interpretation.

**Suggestion 6: Exam Development**

Engage an external expert in court interpreter certification testing to assess the reliability and validity of internally developed exams, leveraging insights from successful state programs (cf. the independent study conducted by an external entity on how the NCSC exams compare to California's internally developed exams, available at <https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/ALTAReport.pdf>).

**Suggestion 7: Policy Document Review**

Conduct a comprehensive review of policy documents to ensure accuracy and internal consistency, addressing discrepancies such as outdated certification information. Following are some reference examples that reflect some opportunities for improvement:

- (i) In an email sent on May 2 by Mr. Ambrosino to per diem interpreters, the trial court administration asked interpreters to consider obtaining federal certification in Haitian Creole and Navajo even though the AOUSC has suspended both exams since 1993.
- (ii) Section 2.27 of your Standards and Procedures and some other sources inaccurately state that the NCSC certifies court interpreters. The NCSC does not have a certification program; rather, it simply provides testing resources to state judiciaries to support the states' certification programs.

In conclusion, we believe these recommendations will significantly enhance your court interpreter program. By implementing these measures, you will further solidify your commitment to excellence in language access and ensure the delivery of equitable judicial services to all. We remain dedicated to supporting your efforts and look forward to continued collaboration in advancing the field of court interpreting.

Sincerely,  
The NAJIT Advocacy Committee  
On behalf of the NAJIT Board of Directors.