



ARKANSAS JUDICIARY

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Phase III - Oral Proficiency Exam for Court Certification (OPECC)

Languages for Certification

Testing is available for the following languages: Arabic, Bosnian /Serbian/ Croatian, Cantonese, French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Ilocano, Khmer, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin, Marshallese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Turkish, Vietnamese.

Oral Proficiency Exam for Court Certification

An applicant who successfully completes an Orientation, achieves a passing score on the English Language Assessment Exam, the OPIIC (foreign language) or the Sight Translation Foreign Language Assessment and passes the background check will be eligible to take the Oral Proficiency Exam for Court Certification (OPECC).

The OPECC is an objective test developed under the auspices of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). The OPECC measures language knowledge and fluency in both languages and 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 are:

- simultaneous interpreting, from English to the applicable foreign language;
- consecutive interpreting, English to the applicable foreign language and applicable foreign language to English; and;
- sight translation of documents, (two parts) (1) an English document into the applicable foreign language and (2) a document in the applicable foreign language into English.

In order to qualify to interpret in Arkansas courts a person must successfully complete Section I, step 8 by demonstrating proficiency in the three modes of interpretation.

An applicant must score at least 70% in each mode to qualify as an Arkansas Certified Court Interpreter. For Arkansas scoring purposes, parts one and two of the sight translation mode are combined for one score; however, if one part of the sight translation is below 65%, even if the combined score is more than 70%, the section will not be considered as passing. To achieve a passing score, an applicant must successfully complete all three sections of the exam in one sitting.

Registration Fee

The fee for taking the OPECC is \$250.00, which must be submitted upon registration. The registration fee is non-refundable. Examinees will be notified in writing of a pass or fail result. Testing dates and locations will be announced in advance.

No person shall use the title "certified" interpreter in conjunction with his or her name without a valid Court Interpreter Certification issued by the AOC.

Testing Limits for the OPECC

For some languages, several versions of the NCSC OPECC exist. If multiple versions are available, the Candidate will take a different version of the exam each time the Candidate tests. The first testing cycle will begin the year the Candidate completes the requirements for court interpreter certification.

Candidates may retake the certification exam a maximum of four (4) times within a period of three (3) years. Candidates must wait a minimum of 6 months between tests.

Candidates for certification whose language has only one version of the **OPECC** or an abbreviated exam must wait at least 12 months before retaking the exam. The one version of the exam or abbreviated exam can be taken a maximum of three times within a three year period. If a new version becomes available while a Candidate is eligible to test, the applicant must wait at least 6 months before taking the new version. The three year testing limit applies.

Candidates who do not obtain certification within the three year time limit may apply in writing to begin the process again.

Study Materials

From the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) site:

[Resources for court interpreters](#) [1]

[Self-assessment and study tools](#) [2]

From the ACEBO site:

[ACEBO: Becoming a Certified Interpreter](#) [3]

[Recommended Reference Works](#) [4]

[Spanish-English Products: Court Interpreting Products](#) [5]

[Products for Other Languages: Court Interpreting Products](#) [6]

Attachment

| | Size |
|---|-------------|
|  Background Check Request Form [7] | 229.9 KB |
|  Overview of the Oral Proficiency Examination for Court Certification (OPECC) [8] | 977.88 KB |

Source URL: <https://www.arcourts.gov/administration/interpreters/ope>

Links

[1] <http://www.ncsc.org/Education-and-Careers/State-Interpreter-Certification.aspx>

[2] <http://www.ncsc.org/Education-and-Careers/State-Interpreter-Certification/Self-Assessment-Tools.aspx>

[3] <http://www.acebo.com/pages/becoming-a-certified-interpreter>

[4] <http://www.acebo.com/pages/recommended-reference-works>

[5] <http://www.acebo.com/pages/spanish-english-products>

[6] <http://www.acebo.com/pages/products-for-other-languages>

[7] https://www.arcourts.gov/sites/default/files/tree/2016_Background%20Check%20Request%20Form.pdf

[8] https://www.arcourts.gov/sites/default/files/tree/Pkt4_2016_OVERVIEW_OPECC.pdf