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## Frequently Asked Questions of the Approval process for American Sign Language Interpreters in the Utah State Courts

### **Q: How do I start the process?**

Go to the Utah State Courts website <http://www.utcourts.gov/resources/interp/> for the Court Interpreter Application. Follow the instructions to fill out and submit the application. This will start the process by authorizing a background check. The fee will be covered by the Utah State Courts.

### **Q: Who will see my background check?**

Only selected authorized personnel with the Administrative Office of the Courts will view and make determinations regarding all background checks.

### **Q: Do I need to follow each step in order?**

No, the only thing you must do first is submit the application. You will be contacted if more information is needed based on the results of the background check. After that you can complete the process in any order.

### **Q: Can I arrange observation hours with an agency or interpreter directly?**

No, you must contact any of the court interpreter coordinators listed on the Utah State Courts website <http://www.utcourts.gov/resources/interp/coordina.htm> to arrange observation hours and receive the verification form.

### **Q: Do I need to take the Written English/Foreign Language Diagnostic test?**

No, because holding an approved certification in good standing is already a requirement.

### **Q: If I am a Certified Deaf Interpreter, will sign language interpreter services be provided for this process?**

Yes. Notify any points of contact during the process that you will need a sign language interpreter.



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**Q: Can other kinds of legal training count for the initial non-language specific orientation workshop requirement?**

No, all interpreters (spoken and sign) are required to complete the same orientation workshop offered by the Utah State Courts.

**Q: Do all of the observation hours need to be in American Sign Language/Spoken English interpretation?**

No. Observation hours should be completed observing the court interpretation process in any language. Because of limited opportunities and out of respect for the privacy of Deaf court patrons, it is best to observe a mix of ASL-English interpreting and spoken language interpreting.

**Q: How are the observation hours calculated?**

Time is calculated from the agreed start time until the case/s with interpreting services are completed. For example, if the Court Coordinator informed you of a case beginning at 9:00 AM, the observation time would begin at your arrival of 9:00 AM. If the case was called at 9:15 AM and lasted until 9:45 AM, a total of 45 minutes would be counted. If there are multiple interpreted cases with the same start time you would count until the last one or until you leave whichever comes first. Remember, a court certified interpreter must witness your observation time and sign your sheet.

**Q: How do I get the Interpreter Oath on file?**

Once you have completed the steps to become court approved, you will receive a letter with the Interpreter's Oath. You must sign the Interpreter's Oath before a Notary and mail it back to complete the process. Notary services are offered at no cost at the Sanderson Community Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Please contact Edie McCormick [emccormick@utah.gov](mailto:emccormick@utah.gov) to make an appointment.

**Q: When is the Orientation Class offered?**

The Orientation Class is offered four times every year through the Utah State Courts. Refer to their website <http://www.utcourts.gov/resources/interp/> for a current list of dates.



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**Q: When an interpreter is placed on the Utah State Courts Approved List for ASL Interpreters are they qualified to accept any court assignment?**

No. The process to be placed on the list is a screening process only and does not imply readiness to work in any legal situation. Interpreters are expected to adhere to the Code of Professional Responsibilities for Court Interpreters as well as the RID Code of Professional Conduct particularly Tenet #2 "Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation."

**Q: When on the approved list will the courts start contacting me directly?**

Yes and no. The Utah Courts are a state agency and thereby must follow state policies. They may only hire through vendors and parties awarded state contracts. Justice and other courts can hire directly. For a current list of parties with state contracts go to <http://www.generalservices.utah.gov/statewidecontracts/ContractSearch.aspx>.

**Q: What do I need to do to remain on the Utah State Courts Approved List for Sign Language Interpreters?**

To remain on the list an interpreter must maintain at least one of the authorized certifications in good standing and complete 15 hours of continuing education in legal training every three years. The 15 hours is a specialty training included in the current total 60 CEH/ 8.0 CEU requirement – not an additional amount.

**Q: Where can I get more information?**

Additional information and updates are available on the Utah Interpreter Program [www.aslterpsutah.org](http://www.aslterpsutah.org) or the Utah State Courts <http://www.utcourts.gov/resources/interp/training.htm> website.