

# THE INTERPRETING PROFESSION

In the United States and Puerto Rico

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The general public often confuses **interpreters** and **translators**; but these are two distinct professions, although interrelated.



**WHAT IS INTERPRETING?**



**INTERPRETERS** work with the **spoken** word, orally converting a message in one language (**Source Language**) into a message in another language (**Target Language**).

**WHAT IS INTERPRETING?**



# WHAT IS INTERPRETING?

**TRANSLATORS**, on the other hand, convert a message in one language (SL) into a message in another language (TL) using a **written** format.



# WHAT IS INTERPRETING?

**Interpreters** must be able to speak and understand at least two languages, whereas **translators** need not speak the languages from and into which they work.



# INTERPRETING FIELDS

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The Interpreting Profession can be sub-classified into four broad specialties:

- ❖ Community Interpreting
- ❖ Medical Interpreting
- ❖ Conference Interpreting
- ❖ Judiciary Interpreting



# INTERPRETING FIELDS

## COMMUNITY

**INTERPRETING** involves direct contact with the parties for whom the interpreter mediates, such as parents and teachers, social workers and clients, government service agencies and members of the public, and so forth.



# INTERPRETING FIELDS

## **MEDICAL INTERPRETING**

requires specialized knowledge of medical terms and concepts, and is done in hospitals, doctors' offices, and anywhere where mediation is needed between a health professional and a patient when they do not speak the same language.





**CONFERENCE INTERPRETING** requires a broad knowledge of subject matters and their specialized terminologies. It is done from a sound-proof booth and generally interpreters work only from their second (B) or third (C) language into their mother tongue (A).



**INTERPRETING FIELDS**



# JUDICIARY INTERPRETING



The most complex and demanding of the interpreting fields is

## **JUDICIARY INTERPRETING.**

It requires interpreting equally well into two different languages.

It demands an encyclopedic knowledge of many subject matters in addition to legal terminology.



**JUDICIARY INTERPRETING**



# *JUDICIARY INTERPRETING*

*involves skills in three  
modes:*

- ❑ **CONSECUTIVE MODE**
- ❑ **SIMULTANEOUS MODE**
- ❑ **SIGHT TRANSLATION**

# CONSECUTIVE MODE

Here, the interpreter takes turns with the speakers, in a question-and-answer format. This skill requires that the interpreter allow one of the speakers to ask a full question or express a complete idea in the **SOURCE LANGUAGE** before rendering it in the **TARGET LANGUAGE**.



# CONSECUTIVE MODE

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- ✘ This interpreting mode requires extraordinary listening skills;
- ✘ Short-term memory retention is critical so nothing is left out or added to the original speaker's message;
- ✘ Note-taking often complements listening and retention skills for the optimal performance in this mode.





# SIMULTANEOUS MODE

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This mode entails the special skill of listening and speaking at the same time... in TWO different languages.



# SIGHT TRANSLATION



This mode combines a written document as the source message, with an oral rendition of that message.



There is no room for mistakes in judiciary interpreting, because people's lives, freedom, and property are at stake.



It is the only interpreting specialty in which the interpreter is sworn to interpret **FAITHFULLY** and **ACCURATELY**.



# CODE OF ETHICS

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The profession abides by codes of professional conduct promulgated by individuals courts, as well as the Code of Ethics ratified by the **National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT)**.





## **CODE OF ETHICS**

This is a profession that demands a *lifetime commitment* to learning about the nuances of language and terminology, as well as maintaining and upgrading the skills of the interpreter.

# CREDENTIALS

Judiciary interpreters in the continental United States and in Puerto Rico can obtain several credentials through criterion-referenced performance examinations:

- Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts)
- State Court Interpreter Certification by the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts (State-level certification in 40 states)
- Court Interpreter and Translator Certification Program (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators)
- American Sign Language Certification by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)



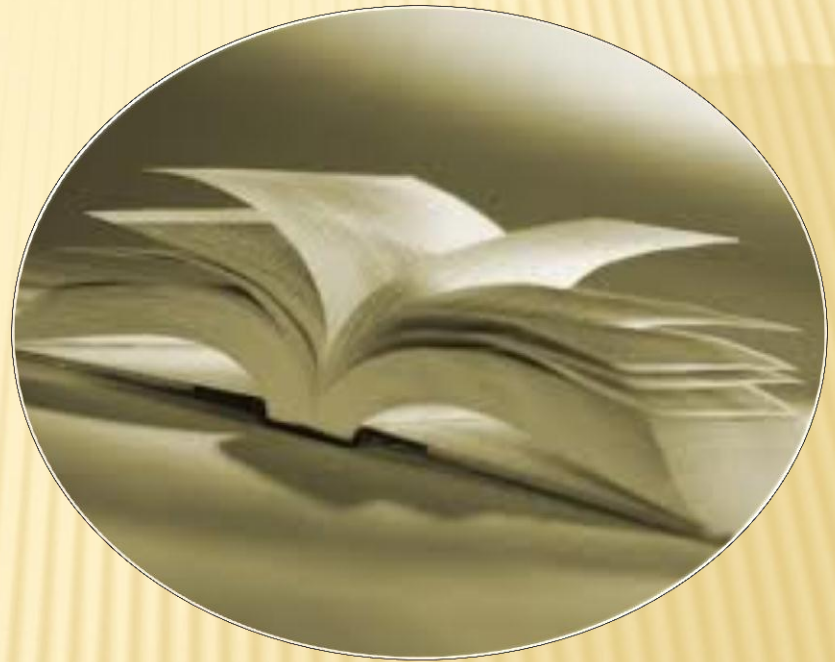
# CREDENTIALS

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Please see our presentation, “GETTING CERTIFIED”, for detailed information about credentials for judiciary interpreters.



There are currently no state-level exams or credentialing requirements in Puerto Rico, other than the federal certification.



**CREDENTIALS**

# TRAINING

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Certification is a rigorous process. Training and experience are essential to acquiring a credential as a professional interpreter.





# TRAINING

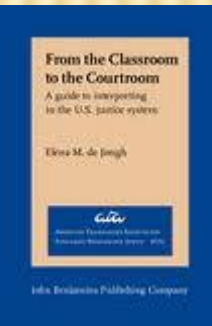
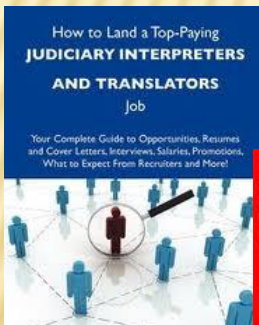
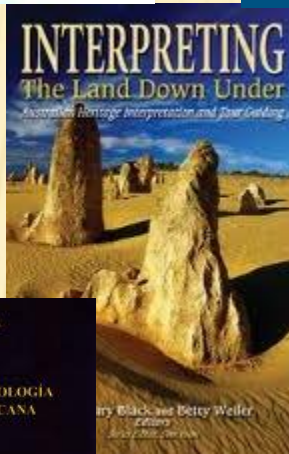
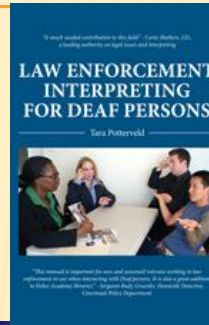
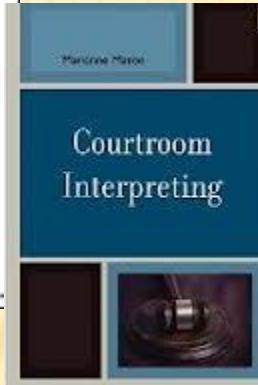
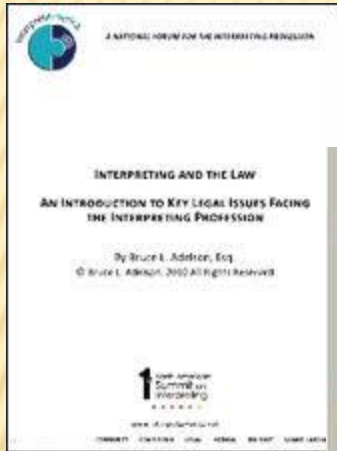
While there are no training programs for interpreters in Puerto Rico, there are many options on the mainland, and even online.

Many state courts offer their own training programs.



Institutions such as the Southern California School of Interpretation, Monterrey Institute of International Studies, Florida International University, New York University, The University of Arizona and many others offer degree and certificate programs in judiciary interpreting.

# TRAINING



Aspiring as well as practicing interpreters can also find great resources in books that can help with their self-education and continuous professional development.



# U.S. DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

Please see our other presentations  
about **Interpreter Services** in the  
United States District Court for the  
District of Puerto Rico.

- Code of Ethics
- Training and Continuing Education for Judiciary Interpreters
- Getting Certified as a Judiciary Interpreter
- Interpreters in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico





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