

The Language Assessment Exercise

Overview

A court interpreter is considered a "language expert." Therefore, it is important that candidates for certification have a college-level command of their working languages.

The language assessment exercise of the written test consists of 10 items that the examinee is required to translate into his/her language of expertise. Examinees will have one (1) hour to complete the translation of all ten items. The legal vocabulary on the translation exam is limited to those common legal terms with which the general public would be familiar. The translation exercise is administered on the same date, and immediately after the completion of the 135 multiple-choice written examination.

Dictionaries and other translations aides are not allowed during the test. Please do not bring them with you as you will not be able to use them.

The language assessment exercise is graded on a pass/borderline/not pass basis and each test is rated and reviewed by trained and certified interpreters or language experts. Examinees must demonstrate a basic command of the grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and punctuation of their language without excessive or critical errors. Candidates will receive an assessment of their performance with indications of the areas needing improvement.

Who has to take the language assessment exercise?

Candidates who interpret in a language for which there is a full or abbreviated oral examination must take the language assessment exercise of the written exam. When there is no full or abbreviated oral exam in any of a candidate's working languages, they will not have to take the translation exercise. Sign language interpreters are exempt from the translation exercise.

Important instructions to remember

- Please print your translations. If a word is illegible, it will be marked incorrect.
- Do not give more than one translation for any word.
- Do not write in all upper-case letters or outside the printed margin.

What areas are evaluated when the exam is rated?

- Grammar, syntax, and punctuation
- Accuracy of translation
- Command of general and legal vocabulary
- Spelling, sentence construction, and correct placement of accents (if applicable)

Sample items

The following are representative of the length and difficulty of the translation exam items.

- The truck sideswiped the car while the motorist was trying to jumpstart his vehicle on the shoulder of the highway. He was told at the body shop that it would cost over \$1,500 to pound out the dents.
- The victim's family identified his corpse in the morgue on the night of the drive-by shooting. The witnesses will receive subpoenas to appear in court for the first hearing.
- There were many things missing from my carport when I returned home. They included an electric screwdriver, a sawhorse, a dolly and some sheets of plywood. A police report has been filed.
- Many women suffer from the so-called "battered woman syndrome." Courts are becoming more sensitive to these kinds of cases. The county has set up several shelters for abused women.
- Ms. Myers said that she observed the defendant pull the trigger of the gun before he fled. She also testified that she remembers that the barrel of the gun was about eight inches long.