

Colorado Office of Language Access Oral Exam Testing Process Changes

Summary

Effective September 1, 2025, the Colorado Office of Language Access (OLA) is updating our testing process to allow for the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) Oral Certification Examination (Oral Exam) to be completed in sections after a candidate has completed the Oral Exam in one sitting. OLA will also accept interpreters who have completed the Oral Exam in sections through the Reciprocity Process.

Background

OLA currently requires interpreter candidates to complete the three sections of the Oral Exam in one sitting to become a Certified Court Interpreter in Colorado. The proposed change aligns with practices in many other states and the NCSC guidelines where candidates can after their first attempt in one sitting:

- Take the simultaneous interpretation section first
- Progress to other sections upon successful completion
- Combine scores from multiple attempts

Our research shows that states requiring all sections to be passed in a single sitting typically face lower interpreter demand than Colorado. Given our state's current growth and high demand for certified interpreters, this flexibility will help us better serve our judicial districts while maintaining qualification standards.

Testing Changes

All certification candidates will be required to take the full Oral Exam in one sitting the first time they take the Oral Exam. After they do this, they will have the option to take the Oral Exam in two phases:

- 1) Simultaneous
- 2) Sight and Consecutive

Candidates are not allowed to take individual sections of the Oral Exam at a time unless they take the two-phase test, or the candidate passes two of the three sections and those scores carryover to allow the candidate to retake the single section the candidate did not previously pass. There is a 2-year expiration date on **carryover** partial exam scores after which the candidate must take the whole examination again.

It is important to note that some States only accept interpreters who have passed the Exam in one sitting.

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact interpreters@judicial.state.co.us

