

Legal Interpreter Training: Curriculum Toolkit for Trainers

© 2015 National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC)

Instructional Design Team – University of Northern Colorado-Mid-America
Regional Interpreter Education Program (UNC-MARIE Center).

Carla M. Mathers, Esq., Author and Content Expert

Anna Witter-Merithew, M. Ed., Content Expert

Sherri Lancton, M.Ed., Instructional Designer

Reviewers:

Eileen Forestal, Ph.D., RSC

Rayni Plaster, CDI

Permission is granted to copy and disseminate the materials herein for educational, non-commercial purposes, provided that the NCIEC is credited as the source and referenced appropriately on any such copies.



Deaf Interpreters: Interpreting in Court and Legal Settings

Overview of Curriculum

NCIEC Mission and Curriculum Background

The mission of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers is to connect and collaborate with diverse stakeholders to create excellence in interpretation. The Mid-America Regional Interpreter Education (MARIE) Center is one of the five other federally funded Centers across the United States.

The NCIEC has recognized that “[w]orking in the legal setting requires advanced interpreting competence—including the ability to fluently execute consecutive and simultaneous interpreting of complex texts, work effectively in teams—particularly the ability to work collaboratively with

As a result, one NCIEC priority involves preparing the next generation of legal interpreter educators, both Deaf and non-deaf. To that end, in 2013, the Consortium dedicated funds and personnel to creating this curriculum designed to prepare qualified Deaf interpreters to train other Deaf interpreters to work in court and legal settings.

The project work was led by the MARIE Center personnel. The MARIE

Kristen Lund
Rayni Plaster
Jeff Pollock
June Prusak
Robin Shannon
Ryan Shepard
Christopher Tester
Rayni Plaster

Purpose of Curriculum

The purpose of this curriculum is to educate competent Deaf legal interpreters in specific topical areas in which they are most frequently retained. Participants must be active Deaf interpreters who have already undertaken a foundational legal interpreting program and are certified at a generalist credential. This curriculum anticipates that the participants will already have a solid working knowledge of the legal system and its history, of legal vocabulary, protocol and legal interpreting roles and ethics through foundational legal interpreting coursework. The curriculum focuses, in depth, on those areas in which Deaf interpreters are working most often.

Trainer prerequisites

Prerequisites for instructors include generalist certification and foundational legal interpreter training. Additionally, we suggest that the trainers have similar qualifications as set forth in the NCIEC Deaf Interpreter Training Curriculum (2014 Digital Edition) including being an active Deaf interpreter with a minimum of 500 hours of interpreting within the last five years. In addition to knowledge and experience in the legal setting, 'trainers must also be fluent users of ASL with knowledge of and experience with interpreting processes, ethics, ASL linguistics, gestural

Modules and Sequence

Module 1: Deaf Interpreters: Interacting with the Players

Module 2: Deaf Interpreters: Deaf Minors and Interpreting Considerations

Module 3: Deaf Interpreters: Teaming with Deaf and Hearing Interpreters

Module 4: Deaf Interpreters: Working in Law Enforcement Settings

Module 5: Deaf Interpreters: Practical Applications

Module

settings involving Deaf children. The module guides users through the range of factors affecting language development in Deaf minors. A Deaf expert in the field of signed language acquisition, Amy Hile, Ph.D., presents an in-depth exploration of the development of language among Deaf minors. Participants are able to view video clips of Deaf and hearing teams of interpreters working with Deaf minors. This module explores the juvenile justice system and where Deaf minors may be involved in abuse, neglect and delinquency proceedings. The module concludes with an examination of family law when Deaf minors are involved in custody proceedings.

Module 3: Teaming with Deaf and Hearing Interpreters

Module 3 introduces the concepts of team interpreting in a courtroom context. Deaf interpreters typically work in tandem with hearing interpreters to render the interpretation. At times, though not frequently, Deaf interpreters work alone or work with another Deaf interpreter without a hearing interpreter involved. This module introduces learners to a framework to negotiate team configurations depending on the role of the Deaf person involved and to engage in self-assessment activities to hone the ability to attain meaningful agreements with team interpreters. Learners will develop a set of tools to use when preparing for a court assignment which can be modified for other legal settings as well. The module also delves into the sometimes complicated arena of positioning and logistics for the Deaf interpreter depending on the Deaf person's role in the legal setting.

Module 4: Deaf Interpreters: Working in Law Enforcement Settings

Module 4 presents instruction on interpreting for law enforcement personnel. It focuses on the legal foundation underlying police procedure in conducting investigations including in administering the Miranda warnings. At the time *Miranda v. Arizona* was decided, there were very few limitations on the conduct of the police in interacting with a suspect. *Miranda* placed important restrictions upon the police. The Supreme

