JUDICIAL COUNCIL
OF CALIFORNIA
COURT INTERPRETERS PROGRAM

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Essential for Court Interpretation

The following knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) are essential for court interpretation:[1]

Linguistic skills:

- **1A** Native-like proficiency in all working languages;
- **1B** Ability to think and react communicatively in all working languages;
- **1C** Knowledge and use of a broad range of vocabulary, including legal terminology, subject-specific terminology, and slang; and
- **1D** Knowledge and use of cultural nuances, regional variations, idiomatic expressions, and colloquialisms in all working languages.

Speaking skills:

- **2A** Ability to speak with proper pronunciation, diction, and intonation in all working languages;
- **2B** Ability to speak with a neutralized accent in all working languages; and
- **2C** Ability to project and/or speak softly.

Listening comprehension skills:

- **3A** Ability to listen to and comprehend different rates of speech in all working languages;
- **3B** Ability to listen to and comprehend various regional accents and/or dialectical differences in all working languages; and
- **3C** Ability to ignore auditory distractions and focus on source speaker.

Reading comprehension skills:

- **4A** Ability to read and comprehend overall meaning and specific details of written text in all working languages;
- **4B** Ability to read and recognize various written contexts, including formal and informal text, subject-specific vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and colloquialisms; and
- **4C** Ability to read quickly and with little preparation.

Interpreting skills:

- **5A** Ability to concentrate and focus;
- **5B** Ability to process linguistic information quickly;
- **5C** Ability to make quick linguistic decisions regarding word choice or terminology selection;
- **5D** Ability to apply short-term memory skills in retaining small units of information;
- **5E** Ability to think analytically;
- **5F** Ability to utilize predictive thinking skills to anticipate incoming messages;
- **5G** Ability to convey meaning;
- **5H** Ability to provide transference from one language to another;
- **5I** Ability to preserve accuracy;
- **5J** Ability to select appropriate equivalent for vocabulary or phrases;

[1] Source: ALTA Language Services, Inc., *Study of California's Court Interpreter Certification and Registration Testing* (2007).

5K Ability to conserve intent, tone, style, and utterances of all messages;
5L Ability to reflect register; and
5M Ability to self-monitor and self-correct.

Behavioral skills:

6A Ability to practice and follow ethical standards;
6B Ability to conduct business in a professional manner;
6C Knowledge and awareness of cultural aspects that affect language;
6D Ability to work in various settings, situations, or conditions;
6E Ability to project self-confidence and self-awareness when interpreting; and
6F Knowledge and continued learning of social, technological, and legal changes that affect language.