

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES (DSHS)
LANGUAGE TESTING AND CERTIFICATION (LTC)**

**CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OF INTERPRETER CONTINUING EDUCATION
ACTIVITY**

Last update: July 28, 2015

To maintain and further the skills and knowledge necessary to adequately provide language access for persons of limited English proficiency, the Department of Social and Health Services/Language Testing and Certification (DSHS/LTC) and Washington Federation of State Employees/American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (WFSE/AFSCME) encourage DSHS medical and social services interpreters to pursue Continuing Education Activities. Persons and groups acting in accordance with this mission may seek recognition for the continuing education activities they provide to interpreters. Activity providers can seek guidance in requesting approval for their Continuing Education Activity by consulting and following the recommendations outlined below. DSHS/LTC-approved Continuing Education Activities will be published on the LTC website: www.dshs.wa.gov/ltc

Continuing Education Activity refers to educational activities in which interpreters participate to improve their professional knowledge, skills, and abilities. The instruction may be directly related to the act of interpreting, or may cover ethics, terminology, pertinent special topics, and areas of expertise. Continuing Education Activity may include courses offered at accredited institutions of higher learning or conferences and workshops organized by other groups or individuals.

Criteria for Approving Continuing Education Activity

Types of Continuing Education Credits

Continuing education credits are categorized into two types: ethics continuing education credit (ECEC) and general continuing education credit (GCEC).

ECECs are defined as a minimum of one hour spent on reviewing, explaining, and discussing the DSHS Code of Professional Conduct for Interpreters, Translators, and LAPL (WAC 388-03-050). Any training activity or curriculum content determined to be not consistent with WAC 388-03-050 will not be approved.

GECEs are defined as a minimum of one hour spent on skills building in all modes of interpreting, protocols for an interpreter encounter, terminology, modalities for delivering interpreting services, and other knowledge an interpreter or translator might need in order to be a successful professional.

Submission Requirements

In order to be considered for approval and publication, the topic or subject matter must be relevant to healthcare or social services interpreting and approved by the DSHS/LTC Advisory Committee, Professional Development Sub-committee (PDC). Along with the information requested on the application form (Form No. 02_592), the application package must include the following documents:

1. Course outline or syllabus
2. Record of date(s) and location(s) of activity
3. Résumé or short bio of presenter(s) or instructor(s)
4. Mode of delivery (e.g., on-site, in-person, webinar or on-line activity)

A separate request must be submitted for each activity to be considered. (Form No. 02_592) If ethics training is delivered by the same instructor on the same day in which other general topics will be covered, the request for ECECs will need to be submitted separately with a detailed outline of the content using a separate CEC application form. The person submitting the application will be informed of PDC's decision in writing. PDC will approve or not approve the proposed activities according to the criteria outlined below. Questions or concerns about PDC's decision(s) should be directed to DSHS/LTC: dshsct@dshs.wa.gov

Instructor Requirements

Presenters or instructors shall meet the following minimum qualifications:

Interpreting Classes:

- Have at least a bachelor's degree from a U.S. university or equivalent from a foreign university; *OR*
- Possess Washington State interpreter certification or registration, or national or federal interpreter certification.

In addition to either of the above, a minimum of five years of professional experience in interpreting is required.

Terminology Classes (Includes Domain Expertise):

- Have at least a bachelor's degree from a U.S. university or equivalent from a foreign university and at least five years of experience as a professional translator and/or domain expert; *OR*
- Be accredited by a DSHS-recognized professional translators association and/or professional healthcare group or association; *OR*

- Possess a university degree in translation and/or in the domain of expertise or valid credentials as a translator or a domain expert from another country.

Ethics and Other Classes:

- Possess the necessary credentials to practice their profession or trade (an academic degree, license, certificate, etc.) with at least five years of professional experience in their practice, or with at least five years of experience teaching the subject matter.

Formula for Calculating Continuing Education Credits (CECs)

1. Workshops and online training (interactive and passive): hour for hour (1 hour = 1 credit);
2. College face-to-face classes/courses or similar in-depth training activities: 20%* of every instruction hour (e.g., 10 hours = 2 credits), up to 6 DSHS CECs per quarter or 9 DSHS CECs per semester**;
3. Conference for interpreters : One (1) hour for at least one full day of conference attendance plus number of hours of interpreter skills or knowledge building breakout sessions totaling up to a maximum of five (5) hours per event, regardless of the length of days of the event (e.g., conference, summit, etc.).

* DSHS requires certified/authorized interpreters to obtain a total of 20 continuing education credits every 4 years to maintain their certification/authorization status. Interpreters' skill set encompasses a variety of interpreting skills as well as specialized knowledge. Since a college class/course or similar in-depth training activity normally focuses on a particular subject matter and takes longer (10 hours or more) to complete, it does not by itself offer interpreters the full variety of skills and knowledge necessary to improve their overall effectiveness as interpreters. Considering the overarching purpose of continuing education requirements for DSHS interpreters, only 20% of every instruction hour of any college face-to-face class/course or similar in-depth training activity will be applied toward 1 continuing education credit.

** Based on US education (postsecondary) credit systems (15 hours of class time = 1 credit): one semester (45 hours of class time or 3 credits) = 9 DSHS CECs; one quarter (30 hours of class time or 2 credits) = 6 DSHS CECs.

Record Keeping

Records of Continuing Education Activities should be kept by the person or the group organizing or presenting the activity or class. Records should include:

- a sign-in sign-out sheet for attendees (in the case of permissible partial attendance, one sheet per segment of the day)
- the name(s) of the presenter(s) or group organizing the Continuing Education Activity
- the name(s) of presenter(s) along with their short bio's and/or résumés
- an outline or description of subject matter to be presented
- the time spent on each activity
- a copy of any handouts used by the presenter(s) and given to attendees during the activity
- activity evaluation sheets (may be anonymous) completed by attendees at the conclusion of the activity
- the name, address, and contact information – physical or electronic – of presenter(s) or group organizing the activity

Record keeping is necessary whether attendees attend in person, electronically, or by other remote means.

Activity attendees may subsequently request these records when they apply for continuing education credits. It is strongly recommended that these records be maintained for a period of no less than 5 years.