

Interpreter Testing/Training Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is required for me to be an enrolled Interpreter/Translator in the Illinois Early Intervention System?

Completion of the System's Overview Training, completion of the one day Interpreter Training, and a passing score on an oral interpreter proficiency exam and/or written translation proficiency exam.

Why is this required?

New standards were implemented on March 1, 2008 for all new bi-lingual interpreters enrolling in the Illinois Early Intervention System. Existing interpreters that were enrolled prior to March 1, 2008 must complete the required trainings and demonstrate proficiency for oral interpretation and/or written translation on or before January 1st, 2009. Existing interpreters who are unable to complete the required trainings and demonstrate proficiency on or before January 1st, 2009 **will not be allowed to provide any services in Early Intervention** until they have met the new requirements.

How do I register for the exam?

Contact the Illinois EI Training Program toll free at 866-509-3867 x 267 to make an appointment for the written and/or oral proficiency exam. Visit the website www.illinoiseittraining.org for dates and locations near you. Registration for the Interpreter Training and the System's Overview Training can be done online.

What is the cost of the exams?

The oral interpretation exam is \$65 and the written translation exam is \$65 which totals \$130 for those planning to take both tests. No payment is required for the one day face to face Interpreter Training or the System's Overview Training.

How and when do I need to pay for the exam?

Payment is required during pre-registration and **will not** be accepted at the testing site. Payment can be made over the phone by major charge card (VISA/MasterCard). Payment must be received prior to your testing date.

What will the exam test for?

Proficiency testing will measure interpreter candidates' interpretation ability, or the ability to render a speaker's dictation from a source language into a target language, and vice-versa. Candidates completing the oral exam will be graded on accuracy & completion, terminology, pronunciation/intelligibility, and grammar. With regards to written translation, candidates will be graded on areas such as spelling, grammar and word usage (including accents, sentence structure, verb, tenses, etc.).

How much time will I have for the exam?

2 hours is the maximum time allowed to complete the written exam. 30 minutes is the maximum time allowed for the oral exam.

What will the oral exam include?

The oral exam will be recorded and is broken down into three sections. There are two sections on sight translation, one section of sight translation from the family's native language into English and another section from English into the family's native language. The third section of the oral exam is an audio recording of a dialogue and the candidate will be required to interpret the dialogue. You **MAY NOT** use a dictionary for the oral portion of the exam. Note taking **NOT** is allowed for any part of this exam.

What can I expect from the written exam?

You will be allowed up to 2 hours to complete this exam. Once you begin the exam you may not leave the room until you are finished. If you leave the room during the exam you will be considered finished with the exam. You will be required to turn your cell phone off. Applicants are allowed to use one dictionary, and no additional books, notes, notebooks, or reference aids will be allowed. Electronic dictionaries are not acceptable. There are four sections of this exam which include translation from English to the target language and from the target language to English. There are two sections on word translation and two sections on paragraph translation. You will be graded on areas such as spelling, grammar and word usage (including accents, sentence structure, verb, tenses, etc.).

What do I need to bring the day I take the proficiency exam?

You should arrive 15 minutes prior to your testing time and you will be required to show **photo identification**. For those who plan to complete the written exam you should also have a **black or blue ink pen** and you may bring **one** dictionary. Electronic dictionaries are **NOT** acceptable.

What level of knowledge is required for the proficiency exam?

Approximately a high school graduate level of knowledge is required.

Can I do both the oral and written exam on the same day?

Yes, as long as you pre-register and provide pre-payment for each exam prior to the day of the exam. Those who are completing both exams in one day will need to allow at least 2.5 hours to complete their exams. The Interpreter Training will always be on a different day from the day of your proficiency exam.

How will the scores be reported?

Results are reported in a pass/fail format and you will be notified by mail if you have demonstrated proficiency. The written and oral exams are outsourced and the EI Training Program will notify the applicant by mail when their grade comes in. It will take approximately 30 business days (45 calendar days) to have the

exam graded. The EI Training Program will notify Provider Connections of passing scores. The applicant should also notify Provider Connections and the Child and Family Connections offices when they have passed the exam and completed the Interpreter Training and System's Overview Training.

What do I do after I get my results?

If you have demonstrated proficiency you will receive a certificate of completion in the mail. It is the interpreter's responsibility to send Provider Connections their certificates of completion for the written and/or oral exam, Interpreter Training, and System's Overview Training. Interpreters should send all their certificates to Provider Connections together. Interpreters should also inform the Child and Family Connections office(s) that they work with (or plan to work with) when they have demonstrated proficiency and completed the required trainings.

New interpreters are required to enroll with **Provider Connections** in order to provide services in the Illinois Early Intervention System. New interpreters **MAY NOT** enroll with Provider Connections until they have completed the one day Interpreter Training, the System's Overview Training, and have demonstrated proficiency in written translation, oral interpretation, or both. Interpreters may download the enrollment application by visiting the Provider Connections website at <http://www.wiu.edu/ProviderConnections/>. Interpreters should send the aforementioned certificates along with their enrollment application to the following address:

Center for Best Practices in Early Childhood Education
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
Macomb, IL 61455

Interpreters should contact Provider Connections at (800) 701-0995 if they have additional questions with regards to their enrollment in the Illinois EI System.

What if I don't pass the exam? Can I take it again?

Applicants may take the test up to 2x in a 6 month period and must pay each time they take the test (\$65 for the oral exam and \$65 for the written exam).

If you do not demonstrate proficiency you may choose to visit the Interpreter/Translator Resource list which can be viewed and/or downloaded on the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program website (www.illinoiseittraining.org).

Do I need to take the Interpreter Training first?

It is recommended (but not a pre-requisite) for each candidate to complete the Systems Overview Training and the one day Interpreter Training prior to completing the proficiency exam.

What can I expect out of the training?

The Interpreter Training will include an overview of what it means to be an Interpreter within Early Intervention. The practice and ethics of being an EI Interpreter will be included. The training will also include an interactive format, with the opportunity for less experienced Interpreters to benefit from the experience of the group. The System's Overview Training will provide a general knowledge base on the EI System as a whole.

Is there anything else I need to know about the day of the exam?

It is important to remember that you will not be permitted to leave the testing room during the test. If you need to leave the testing room, the exam will be considered completed. Please plan accordingly.

If you arrive early you may be asked to wait until your scheduled time. If you arrive late for your appointment you may be required to reschedule your testing date for another day.

The proctor will not be able to provide you any assistance other than giving basic instructions. You will not be allowed to leave with the exam or any notes you have made under any circumstances.

Furthermore, there are multiple versions of the exam. Your testing experience may be different from another interpreter's depending on what version of the exam you complete.