

# **NATIONAL CREDENTIAL DESCRIPTORS FOR SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS: NIC, RID, NAD, ACCI, & EIPA**

## **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Certification Descriptions** (<http://www.rid.org/expl.html> as of 3/31/2006)

### **National Interpreter Certification (NIC)**

All three levels of this certification are considered professional-level certified interpreters. For the interview portion, certificate holders have demonstrated decision-making skills that meet or exceed basic professional standards. For the performance portion, certificate holders have demonstrated interpreting and transliterating performances that meet or exceed basic professional standards. Holders of all levels of the NIC are recommended for a broad range of interpretation and transliteration assignments.

#### **NIC: Certified**

Those who pass at this level have shown basic professional-level interpreting and transliterating skills.

#### **NIC: Advanced**

Those who pass at this level have scored within the standard range on the interview portion and high on the performance portion of the examination.

#### **NIC: Master**

Those awarded the NIC Master designation scored high on both the interview and performance portions of the test.

### **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Certificates** **Certificate of Interpretation (CI)**

Holders of this certificate are recognized as fully certified in Interpretation and have demonstrated the ability to interpret between American Sign Language (ASL) and spoken English in both sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign. The interpreter's ability to transliterate is not considered in this certification. Holders of the CI are recommended for a broad range of interpretation assignments. This test is currently available.

### **Certificate of Transliteration (CT)**

Holders of this certificate are recognized as fully certified in Transliteration and have demonstrated the ability to transliterate between English-based sign

language and spoken English in both sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign. The transliterator's ability to interpret is not considered in this certification. Holders of the CT are recommended for a broad range of transliteration assignments. This test is currently available.

### **Certificate of Interpretation and Certificate of Transliteration (CI & CT)**

Holders of both full certificates (as listed above) have demonstrated competence in both interpretation and transliteration. Holders of the CI and CT are recommended for a broad range of interpretation and transliteration assignments.

### **Conditional Legal Interpreting Permit (CLIP)**

Holders of this conditional permit completed an RID recognized training program designed for interpreters and transliterators who work in legal settings. Generalist certification (CI and CT, or CSC) was required prior to enrollment in the training program. Holders of this conditional permit are recommended for a broad range of assignments in the legal setting. The CLIP is no longer available.

### **Conditional Legal Interpreting Permit-Relay (CLIP-R)**

Holders of this conditional permit have completed an RID recognized training program designed for interpreters and transliterators who work in legal settings and who are also Deaf or hard-of-hearing. Generalist certification for interpreters/transliterators who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing (RSC, CDI-P, or CDI) is required prior to enrollment in the training program. This permit is valid until one year after the Specialist Certificate: Legal written and performance test for Deaf interpreters is available nationally. CLIP-R holders must take and pass the new legal certification examination in order to maintain certification in the specialized area of interpreting in legal settings. Holders of this conditional permit are recommended for a broad range of assignments in the legal setting. The CLIP-R is still offered.

### **Certified Deaf Interpreter-Provisional (CDI-P)**

Holders of this provisional certification are interpreters who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing and who have demonstrated a minimum of one year experience working as an interpreter, completion of at least 8 hours of training on the RID Code of Ethics, and 8 hours of training in general interpretation as it relates to the interpreter who is Deaf or hard-of-hearing. Holders of this certificate are recommended for a broad range of assignments where an interpreter who is Deaf or hard-of-hearing would be beneficial. The CDI-P is no longer available.

### **Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI)**

Holders of this certification are interpreters who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing and who have completed at least 8 hours of training on the RID Code of Ethics, and 8 hours of training in general interpretation as it relates to the interpreter who is

Deaf or hard-of-hearing and have passed a comprehensive combination written and performance test. Holders of this certificate are recommended for a broad range of assignments where an interpreter who is Deaf or hard-of-hearing would be beneficial. This test is currently available.

### **Comprehensive Skills Certificate (CSC)**

Holders of this full certificate have demonstrated the ability to interpret between American Sign Language and spoken English and to transliterate between spoken English and an English-based sign language. Holders of this certificate are recommended for a broad range of interpreting and transliterating assignments. The CSC examination was offered until 1987. This test is no longer offered.

### **Master Comprehensive Skills Certificate (MCSC)**

The MCSC examination was designed with the intent of testing for a higher standard of performance than the CSC. Holders of this certificate were required to hold the CSC prior to taking this exam. Holders of this certificate are recommended for a broad range of interpreting and transliterating assignments. This certificate is no longer offered.

### **Reverse Skills Certificate (RSC)**

Holders of this full certificate demonstrated the ability to interpret between American Sign Language and English-based sign language or transliterate between spoken English and a signed code for English. Holders of this certificate are Deaf or hard-of-hearing and interpretation/transliteration is rendered in American Sign Language, spoken English, a signed code for English or written English. Holders of the RSC are recommended for a broad range of interpreting assignments where the use of an interpreter who is Deaf or hard-of-hearing would be beneficial. This certificate is no longer offered. People interested in this area should take the CDI exam.

### **Specialist Certificate: Legal (SC:L)**

Holders of this specialist certificate have demonstrated specialized knowledge of legal settings and greater familiarity with language used in the legal system. Generalist certification and documented training and experience is required prior to sitting for this exam. Holders of the SC:L are recommended for a broad range of assignments in the legal setting. This test is currently available.

### **Provisional Specialist Certificate: Legal (Prov. SC:L)**

Holders of this provisional certificate hold generalist certification and have completed RID approved legal training. Holders of this certificate are recommended for assignments in the legal setting. Prov. SC:L is no longer available.

**Specialist Certificate: Performing Arts (SC:PA)**

Holders of this certificate were required to hold RID generalist certification (CSC) prior to sitting for this examination and have demonstrated specialized knowledge in performing arts interpretation. Holders of this certificate are recommended for a broad range of assignments in the performing arts setting. The SC:PA is no longer offered.

**Oral Transliteration Certificate (OTC)**

Holders of this generalist certificate have demonstrated, using silent oral techniques and natural gestures, the ability to transliterate a spoken message from a person who hears to a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing and the ability to understand and repeat the message and intent of the speech and mouth movements of the person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing. This test is currently available.

**Oral Interpreting Certificate: Comprehensive (OIC:C)**

Holders of this generalist certificate demonstrated the ability to transliterate a spoken message from a person who hears to a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing and the ability to understand and repeat the message and intent of the speech and mouth movements of the person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing. This certification is no longer offered. Individuals wishing oral certification should take the OTC exam noted above.

**Oral Interpreting Certificate: Spoken to Visible (OIC:S/V)**

Holders of this partial certificate demonstrated the ability to transliterate a spoken message from a person who hears to a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing. This individual received scores on the OIC:C examination which prevented the awarding of full OIC:C certification. The OIC:S/V is no longer offered. Individuals wishing oral certification should take the OTC exam noted above.

**Oral Interpreting Certificate: Visible to Spoken (OIC:V/S)**

Holders of this partial certificate demonstrated ability to understand the speech and silent mouth movements of a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing and to repeat the message for a hearing person. This individual received scores on the OIC:C examination which prevented the awarding of full OIC:C certification. The OIC:V/S is no longer offered. Individuals wishing oral certification should take the OTC exam noted above.

**Interpretation Certificate/Transliteration Certificate (IC/TC)**

Holders of this partial certificate demonstrated ability to transliterate between English and a signed code for English and the ability to interpret between American Sign Language and spoken English. This individual received scores on

the CSC examination which prevented the awarding of full CSC certification. The IC/TC is no longer offered.

### **Interpretation Certificate (IC)**

Holder of this partial certificate demonstrated ability to interpret between American Sign Language and spoken English. This individual received scores on the CSC examination which prevented the awarding of full CSC certification or partial IC/TC certification. The IC was formerly known as the Expressive Interpreting Certificate (EIC). The IC is no longer offered.

### **Transliteration Certificate (TC)**

Holders of this partial certificate demonstrated the ability to transliterate between spoken English and a signed code for English. This individual received scores on the CSC examination which prevented the awarding of full CSC certification or IC/TC certification. The TC was formerly known as the Expressive Transliterating Certificate (ETC). The TC is no longer offered.

## **National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Certificates**

### **NAD III (Generalist) - Average Performance**

Possesses above average voice-to-sign skills and good sign-to-voice skills, or vice versa. Demonstrates the minimum competence needed to meet generally accepted interpreter standards. Occasional words or phrases may be deleted but the expressed concept is accurate. Has good control of the grammar of the second language. Is generally accurate and consistent but is not qualified for all situations.

### **NAD IV (Advanced) - Above Average Performance**

Possesses excellent voice-to-sign skills and above average sign-to-voice skills, or vice versa. Demonstrates above average skill in any given area. Performance is consistent and accurate. Fluency is smooth, with little deleted, and the viewer has no question to the candidate's competency. Should be able to interpret in most situations.

### **NAD V (Master) - Superior Performance**

Possesses superior voice-to-sign skills and excellent sign-to-voice skills. Demonstrates excellent to outstanding ability in any given area. Performance is with a minimum of flaws. Demonstrates interpreting skills necessary in almost all situations.

**American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI)**  
**National Sign Language Interpreter Assessment Program**  
(<http://acci-iap.org/lvldesc.htm> as of 3/31/2006)

The American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI) grants certification to interpreters who successfully complete the Assessment attaining a Level III (Generalist), Level IV (Advanced), or Level V (Master). The descriptions are as follows: PLEASE NOTE: It should be clearly understood that the term "INTERPRETER SKILL" is used generically here in the overall ratings. The term includes both transliterating and interpreting skills. While each skill is assessed independently of the other, the OVERALL PERFORMANCE rating factor refers to both.

Certified Assessment Levels:

**Level III (Generalist) - Average Performance**

Candidate demonstrates beginning interpreting ability. The skill shown is acceptable in meeting generally accepted interpreter standards. Occasional words or phrases may be deleted but the expressed concept is accurate. Is generally accurate and consistent. Someone you would feel comfortable with in many interpreting situations. Has good control of the grammar of the second language.

**Level IV (Advanced) - Above Average Performance**

Candidate demonstrates above average skill in any given area. Performance is consistent and accurate. Fluency is smooth, with little deleted, and the viewer has no question as to the candidate's competency. Should be able to interpret in any situation.

**Level V (Master) - Superior Performance**

Candidate demonstrates an excellent to outstanding ability in any given area. Performance is practically without flaw. Possess the skills necessary to interpret in practically all situations. A person you would go out of your way to seek to interpret for you.

Non-Certified Assessment Levels:

**Level I - Poor/Marginal**

Is not an interpreter. This candidate demonstrates very little skill on a given task. Scattered phrases or concepts may be completed correctly but the candidate has trouble conveying smoothly all that is signed or voiced. Demonstrates jerkiness and lags too far behind. Misses more than is acceptable and pauses too often. May fingerspell too much, use conceptually incorrect signs or demonstrate

distracting mannerisms. Not at all a person you would want to interpret for you in almost any situation.

**Level II - Below Average Performance**

Candidate may demonstrate the ability to communicate on a basic level but is unable to complete the task according to generally accepted interpreter standards. Candidate exhibits weakness in specific areas, will delete too much at times in order to keep up and fingerspell more than is necessary. Frequently uses conceptually inaccurate signs.

**Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment®**  
**Descriptions of each EIPA Level**

<http://www.classroominterpreting.org/EIPA/performance/rating.asp>  
as of 3/31/2006)

**Level 1: Beginner**

Demonstrates very limited sign vocabulary with frequent errors in production. At times, production may be incomprehensible. Grammatical structure tends to be nonexistent. Individual is only able to communicate very simple ideas and demonstrates great difficulty comprehending signed communication. Sign production lacks prosody and use of space for the vast majority of the interpreted message.

An individual at this level is not recommended for classroom interpreting.

**Level 2: Advanced Beginner**

Demonstrates only basic sign vocabulary and these limitations interfere with communication. Lack of fluency and sign production errors are typical and often interfere with communication. The interpreter often hesitates in signing, as if searching for vocabulary. Frequent errors in grammar are apparent, although basic signed sentences appear intact. More complex grammatical structures are typically difficult. Individual is able to read signs at the word level and simple sentence level but complete or complex sentences often require repetitions and repairs. Some use of prosody and space, but use is inconsistent and often incorrect.

An individual at this level is not recommended for classroom interpreting.

**Level 3: Intermediate**

Demonstrates knowledge of basic vocabulary, but will lack vocabulary for more technical, complex, or academic topics. Individual is able to sign in a fairly fluent manner using some consistent prosody, but pacing is still slow with infrequent pauses for vocabulary or complex structures. Sign production may show some errors but generally will not interfere with communication. Grammatical production may still be incorrect, especially for complex structures, but is in general, intact for routine and simple language. Comprehends signed messages but may need repetition and assistance. Voiced translation often lacks depth and subtleties of the original message. An individual at this level would be able to communicate very basic classroom content, but may incorrectly interpret complex information resulting in a message that is not always clear.

An interpreter at this level needs continued supervision and should be required to participate in continuing education in interpreting.

#### **Level 4: Advanced Intermediate**

Demonstrates broad use of vocabulary with sign production that is generally correct. Demonstrates good strategies for conveying information when a specific sign is not in their vocabulary. Grammatical constructions are generally clear and consistent, but complex information may still pose occasional problems. Prosody is good, with appropriate facial expression most of the time. May still have difficulty with the use of facial expression in complex sentences and adverbial non-manual markers. Fluency may deteriorate when rate or complexity of communication increases. Uses space consistently most of the time, but complex constructions or extended use of discourse cohesion may still pose problems. Comprehension of most signed messages at a normal rate is good but translation may lack some complexity of the original message.

An individual at this level would be able to convey much of the classroom content but may have difficulty with complex topics or rapid turn-taking.

#### **Level 5: Advanced**

Demonstrates broad and fluent use of vocabulary, with a broad range of strategies for communicating new words and concepts. Sign production errors are minimal and never interfere with comprehension. Prosody is correct for grammatical, non-manual markers, and affective purposes. Complex grammatical constructions are typically not a problem. Comprehension of sign messages is very good, communicating all details of the original message.

An individual at this level is capable of clearly and accurately conveying the majority of interactions within the classroom.