

HISTORY

The **Missouri Interpreters Certification System (MICS)** was established by the Missouri legislature in 1994 with the passage of Senate Bill 568. That statute (209.321, RSMo) requires anyone who engages in the practice of interpreting within the state of Missouri to be both certified and licensed.

That statute established two separate boards with responsibility for administering the certification and licensure systems. The Board for Certification of Interpreters was created within the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the Missouri State Committee of Interpreters was established within the Division of Professional Registration.

In 1997, the BCI began certifying interpreters using a Quality Assurance instrument that issued five levels of certification. In 2013, the BCI sought funding through the Missouri legislature to implement a newer testing instrument. In 2014, MCDHH leased the BEI certification exam from the state of Texas because of its proven validity and reliability. Rules were updated to reflect the changes to the new testing system, increasing the educational requirement to become an interpreter and the number of hours required to maintain certification.

BCI

The **Board for Certification of Interpreters (BCI)** is composed of five members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Two members must be deaf, two must be certified interpreters, and one can be either deaf or a certified interpreter.

The board shall, with the approval of the commission (209.292.1, RSMo) :

- Develop specific guidelines for the use of interpreters according to their level of certification and submit the guidelines to the division, with copies to be distributed to state departments, agencies, commissions, courts, interpreters, and to the public;
- Develop ethical rules of conduct to be recommended for adoption by the division;
- Develop a conversion system and policy for

- accepting other certification systems into the certification offered by the Missouri commission for the deaf and hard of hearing;
- Investigate and implement the most appropriate testing model for interpreter certification.

MICS CERTIFICATION

The following MICS certifications issued based on performance tests taken prior to 9/30/2014 will be converted to the certifications established in 5 CSR 100-200.035:

1. Comprehensive shall convert to Master;
2. Advanced shall convert to Advanced;
3. Intermediate shall convert to Basic.

The conversion of prior MICS certifications pursuant to 5 CSR 100-200.035 to the new certification levels does not certify that the holder passed the written test of English proficiency or the corresponding level's performance test. It does not entitle the holder to reciprocity with another BEI certifying entity.

All other certifications issued prior to the effective date of this rule shall remain in full force and with the same rights, restrictions, and limitations as existed previously.

MICS CERTIFICATIONS OBTAINED THROUGH BEI TESTING

An interpreter with no prior certification who tests after 9/30/14 will receive MICS certification based on scores on the BEI exam. An interpreter who already holds MICS certification may take the BEI and receive a different level of MICS certification based on the results on the BEI exam.

The written Test of English Proficiency (TEP) must be passed before being eligible to take the performance test. The written portion of the certification process was developed to evaluate an applicant's English skills and is made up of five parts.

There are three distinct Interpreter Performance Tests—**Basic, Advanced, and Master**.

The tests are similar in terms of the sections they contain and the tasks they ask the candidates to perform. The tests differ principally in terms of their complexity.

In these tests, there are several factors that add to the complexity of the tests:

- complexity of the language,
- complexity of the topics and/or settings, and
- speed of the speaker or signer.

CURRENT MICS CERTIFICATES & CERTIFICATIONS

INTERN/PRACTICUM CERTIFICATE

A student, registered in an Interpreter Training Program (ITP) approved by the BCI and required to interpret in order to fulfill the curriculum requirements for an internship or practicum course, may apply for and be granted an **Intern/Practicum Certification**. Verification of registration in the internship or practicum course by the director of the ITP is required.

PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATE

A **Provisional Certificate in Education (PCED)** is available for individuals who wish to interpret only in preschool, elementary and/or secondary school settings. This term-limited certificate is not renewable.

RESTRICTED CERTIFICATIONS

Interpreters who only want to provide interpreting services in elementary and/or secondary school settings may be granted a **Restricted Certification in Education (RCED)**. An RCED is annually renewable.

- **RCED (K-6)** allows the holder to interpret only in Kindergarten through grade 6; and
- **RCED (7-12)** allows the holder to interpret only in grades 7 through 12.

Both of these certifications can be obtained only by conversion from the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA) system. The EIPA Elementary converts to the MICS RCED (K-6), and the EIPA Secondary converts to the MICS RCED (7-12).

MICS CERTIFICATES & CERTIFICATIONS RECOGNIZED BUT NO LONGER OFFERED

- **Novice Certification**
Expires 3 years after date of issue if certification is maintained annually
- **Apprentice Certification**
Expires 3 years after date of issue if certification is maintained annually
- **Provisional Certificate in Education (PCED)**
Issued to a person who presently holds either a Novice or Apprentice certification in the former MICS testing system. This certification allows an interpreter to interpret in the classroom in any grade from kindergarten through grade twelve. Expires 3 years after date of issue if certification is maintained annually
- **Restricted Certification in Education (General)**
This certification allows an interpreter to interpret in the classroom in any grade from kindergarten through grade twelve. Certification does not expire if it is maintained annually.

MISSOURI INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION SYSTEM (MICS) INFORMATION

CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE

All interpreters, including holders of a PCED, are required to obtain 2.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) annually in order to keep their certification current and to qualify for annual renewal of their license. This is equivalent to 20 hours of professional development activities. All continuing education activities must be approved in advance by the BCI, and CEU documentation must be submitted to the MICS Coordinator annually. All events that have been approved for MICS CEUs are posted on the MCDHH website (www.mcdhh.mo.gov).

SKILL LEVEL STANDARDS

A Skill Level Standards rule (5 CSR 100-200.170) was developed in order to protect the health, welfare, and safety of consumers of interpreting services. It contains a non-exhaustive list of various settings in which interpreters often practice. The settings are grouped into eight general categories, namely, Legal, Government, Medical, Employment, Mental Health, Financial, Education, and Entertainment. For each setting the certification level or levels that are appropriate for interpreters practicing in that setting are given. These standards are not intended to be all-inclusive regarding potential interpreting assignments. The standards show both consumers and interpreters the skill levels that are appropriate for interpreting in various settings. Should questions regarding specific areas of practice arise, see the Ethical Rules of Professional Conduct established by the Missouri State Committee of Interpreters at 20 CSR 2232-3.010.

Interpreters must accept, refuse, or withdraw from assignments based upon their experience, capability, and certification level, and in compliance with the Ethical Rules of Conduct established by the Missouri State Committee of Interpreters at 20 CSR 2232-1.010.

Interpreters must provide their certification level and license status upon request.

COMPLAINTS

If you have a problem with an interpreter and want to file a complaint against that interpreter, you are encouraged to contact the Missouri State Committee of Interpreters (SCI). They have statutory authority to investigate complaints and discipline interpreters if appropriate. If you need assistance in filing your complaint about an interpreter, feel free to contact the MCDHH office.



Missouri Interpreters Certification System (MICS)

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