

**STANDARDS FOR COURSEWORK IN
LEGAL TRANSCRIPTION AND PROOFREADING
(CERTIFIED ELECTRONIC TRANSCRIBER)**

Students are expected to enter the program with:

- *Proficiency in English grammar and punctuation,*
- *Minimum typing speed of 50 words per minute (with the understanding that many companies require transcribers to type 70+ WPM), and*
- *Proficiency in Word or WordPerfect, including but not limited to:*
 - *Adjusting line spacing*
 - *Adjusting margins*
 - *Adjusting font sizes*
 - *Using wraparound*
 - *Setting and using tabs*
 - *Creating headers and footers*
 - *Numbering of pages*
 - *Saving documents with unique names*

Upon successful completion of the Legal Transcription and Proofreading skills curriculum, the student will have the knowledge and skills to create an official, verbatim, written record of proceedings of courtrooms and other legal proceedings (e.g., depositions, civic hearings, administrative hearings, etc.) using digital technology.

Hardware and Software Requirements

Upon completion of the program, students can:

1. Identify what transcription hardware is required and how they are used, including:
 - a. Computer,
 - b. Foot pedal,
 - c. Headphones,
 - d. Printer.
2. Identify the minimum system requirements for hardware, including:
 - a. Minimum computer memory, sound card input/output,
 - b. Type of foot pedal, e.g., USB/universality,
 - c. SPL for headphones,
 - d. Range of printer features/needs for a growing paperless society.
 - e. Operating systems
3. Identify what software is required for transcription and how they are used, including:
 - a. Audio players,
 - b. Word processing,
 - c. Secure cloud storage,
 - d. Compression (zip) software,
 - e. Malware software,
 - f. Anti-virus software,
 - g. Shredding software.
4. Download and upload files.
5. Zip and unzip files.
6. Understand how to organize their audio and transcribed files, including:
 - a. Storing downloaded audio files,
 - b. Storing transcripts (drafts and final),
 - c. Naming conventions to facilitate access and minimize error.

Security Measures

Upon completion of the program, students can:

7. Explain the need for security measures on their computer.
 - a. Virus/malware
 - b. Secure and confidential delivery of transcripts
 - c. HIPAA requirements

Cleaning computer of completed files

General Transcription Standards

Upon completion of the program, students can:

8. Identify common format requirements, e.g.:
 - a. common cover page formats,
 - b. standard font/line spacing,
 - c. common colloquy and Q/A spacing,
 - d. formats for quoting text,
 - e. index/table of contents,
 - f. certification page(s).
9. Identify variations in common format requirements and explain the importance of ascertaining the client's format requirements/preferences.
10. Understand standard and defined terms capitalization rules.
11. Identify levels of verbatim and the need for following client preferences.
12. Explain the importance for a clean document with regard to spellings and punctuation.
13. Explain the difference between grammar for formal written language as compared to grammar for informal spoken language that is written down.
14. Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation rules.
15. Use common Latin abbreviations.
16. Describe various numbering protocols used in courts (e.g., numbers of quantity v. identifiers).

Assignment Information

Upon completion of the program, students can:

17. Identify the case/docket number on assignment paperwork.
18. Identify the case caption.
19. Identify the assignment type.
20. Identify the name of the client and all parties to the action.
21. Identify the client's contact information.
22. Determine the length of assignment and the estimated time required to complete the assignment.
23. Explain the importance of verifying and meeting the completion date and time.

In Court Proceedings

24. Understand the different types of jurisdictions:
 - a. Subject matter,
 - b. Territorial.
25. Identify the courts:
 - a. Federal,
 - b. State,
 - c. Administrative.
26. Understand, generally, the categories of law:
 - a. Statutory law,
 - b. Common law.
27. Describe basic court protocol, including:
 - a. Role of the court officer/bailiff/clerk,
 - b. Courtroom etiquette, e.g.:
 - i. rising when the judge and jury enter/exit
 - ii. speak directly to the judge, not between lawyers
 - iii. respect for all (including referring to judge as Your Honor)
 - c. Sanctions for inappropriate behavior,
 - d. Bar dividing participants in the proceedings from observers.
28. Identify various differences between civil and criminal matters, including:
 - a. Plaintiff,
 - b. Burden of proof.

29. Explain what preliminary hearings are.
30. Explain what pre-trial motions are.
31. Explain what hearings are, generally.
32. Explain what grand jury proceedings are.
33. Understand, generally, evidence discovery.
34. Explain the differences between jury and non-jury trials.
35. Identify common objections and how they're used.
36. Recognize and understand select legal and Latin terminology.
37. Explain what opening statements are.
38. Explain what colloquy is.
39. Identify direct, cross, redirect and recross-examinations.
40. Identify voir dire examinations:
 - a. Of jury,
 - b. Of expert witnesses (re: qualifications),
 - c. Of witnesses (re: exhibits).
41. Explain the purpose and procedures of bench conferences/sidebars.
42. Explain what closing arguments are.

In Deposition/ Statement

43. Differentiate the types of depositions / statements, i.e., de bene esse, examination under oath, discovery, noticed video deposition, etc.
44. Be able to identify the Courts where depositions are filed
45. Be able to identify the Rules of Civil Procedures pertaining to depositions
46. Be able to understand basic deposition / statement procedures
47. Be able to identify the difference between Civil and Criminal depositions / statements
Matters
48. Be able to understand deposition / statement procedures
49. Be able to understand the procedures of discovery
50. Know and understand objections
51. Know and understand Q., A., Colloquy, Examinations, i.e., direct, cross, redirect, recross, etc.
52. Know and understand parentheticals for non-verbal actions and responses

53. Know Reporter's Statement for a Standard Deposition
54. Know the Reporter's Statement for going ON/OFF RECORD
55. Know the Reporter's Statement Regarding the Signature of the Deponent
56. Know the Reporter's Statement that Concludes a Deposition / Statement
57. Know the Reporter's Statement for going OFF/ON the Record During a Noticed Video Deposition
58. Know the Reporter's Concluding Statement During a Noticed Video Deposition
59. Be able to properly identify exhibits mentioned in deposition
60. Know and understand objections
61. Know and understand select legal and Latin terms

Preparation of Transcripts

Upon completion of the program, students can:

For Court Proceedings

62. Identify and use common parentheticals and event headers, including but not limited to:
 - a. Court called to order,
 - b. Pause,
 - c. Recess,
 - d. Jury enters/exits,
 - e. Witness excused,
 - f. Exhibits,
 - g. Non-verbal communications,
 - h. Playbacks,
 - i. Oaths administered,
 - j. Examinations.
63. Create an index and/or table of contents including exhibits, witnesses, rulings, verdicts, and other significant events.
64. Use templates for a variety of formats.
65. Use advanced features of at least one major word processing program (i.e., MSWord or WordPerfect), including:

- a. Macros,
 - b. Autocorrect,
 - c. Headers/footers.
66. Understand annotations and how they facilitate transcription.
 67. Create stipulations and certification pages and understand their import.
 68. Understand what "client-ready transcript" means, including:
 - a. Clean transcript (researched, spell-checked, proofed),
 - b. Correct format (as per client template),
 - c. Required finalized format (e.g., Word, PRN, minuscrit, etc.).
 69. Convert files to common alternate formats (ASCII, PDF, etc.).
 70. Deliver final transcripts via various methods.
 71. Explain time frame for removal of documents and audio from the computer for security.
 72. Add an electronic signature.
 73. Use a variety of research tools efficiently, e.g., Google, online legal and medical dictionaries, etc.

For Deposition/Statement

74. Identify and use common parentheticals and event headers, including but not limited to:
 - a. Court reporter read-in,
 - b. Oaths administered,
 - c. Examinations
 - d. Colloquy
 - e. Breaks,
 - f. Recess,
 - g. On and Off the Record
 - h. Non-verbal communications,
 - i. Playbacks,
 - j. Exhibits,
 - k. Read and Sign by Witness,
 - l. Transcript orders,
 - m. Concluding read-out.
75. Create an index and/or table of contents including exhibits, and other significant events.

76. Use templates for a variety of formats.
77. Use advanced features of at least one major word processing program (i.e., MSWord or WordPerfect), including:
 - a. Macros,
 - b. Autocorrect,
 - c. Headers/footers.
78. Understand annotations and how they facilitate transcription.
79. Create stipulations and certification pages and understand their import.
80. Understand what "client-ready transcript" means, including:
 - a. Clean transcript (researched, spell-checked, proofed),
 - b. Correct format (as per client template),
 - c. Required finalized format (e.g., Word, PRN, minuscule, etc.).
81. Convert files to common alternate formats (ASCII, PDF, etc.).
82. Deliver final transcripts via various methods.
83. Explain time frame for removal of documents and audio from the computer for security.
84. Add an electronic signature.
85. Use a variety of research tools efficiently, e.g., Google, online legal and medical dictionaries, etc.

Proofreading of Transcripts

Upon completion of the program, students can:

86. Explain the importance of proofreading their own transcripts.
87. Explain the role of an independent proofreader.
88. Describe how proofreading verbatim transcripts is different than editing a written text (book, article, etc.).
89. Explain how scoping varies from standard proofreading.
90. List the degrees of proofreading, including:
 - a. With audio,
 - b. Without audio,
 - c. For format only.
91. Identify the goals of proofreading, including:
 - a. Ensuring what is written is an accurate record of what was said,

- b. Ensuring the meaning conveyed in the spoken word is clear in the written version,
- c. Ensuring formats are complied with,
- d. Ensuring all names and terms are spelled correctly.

Ethics and Decorum

Upon completion of the program, students can:

- 92. Demonstrate proper ethical behavior, including:
 - a. Conflict of interest/impartiality,
 - b. Do not accept gifts,
 - c. Do not offer advice or personal opinions,
 - d. Confidentiality.
- 93. Demonstrate proper decorum when dealing with clients, e.g., professional interactions on phone and in e-mail

Miscellaneous

Upon completion of the program, students can:

- 1. Complete and submit billing invoices.
- 2. Track expenses for tax purposes.