# Guide to the Online Community Interpreter Certification Program

**CiSOC**

## CISOC'S Background

Established in July, 1993, the Cultural Interpretation Services for Our Communities (CISOC) is a non-profit, charitable organization that strives to provide the highest quality interpretation and translation services in order to facilitate equitable access to health, legal, social, educational, community and other services to non-English- or non-French-speaking clients. The agency, which offers services in over 60 languages, 24 hours per day, seven days per week (including holidays), is governed by a voluntary board of directors.

The organization was the result of collaboration amongst several committees and agencies. Since 1993, CISOC has worked successfully as an independent provider of interpretation and translation services to a broad spectrum of organizations and individuals. The agency currently responds to approximately 1,100 calls for interpretation and translation requests each month and is well-respected for its dedication to maintaining excellent service standards.

In 1994, at the request of Ontario's Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, CISOC developed the Community Interpreter Language and Interpreting Skills Assessment Tool (CILISAT). The tool evaluates the language and interpretation proficiencies of people applying for certification as Community Interpreters in any of 50 high-demand languages. CISOC manages and administers CILISAT certification in these 50 languages throughout Ontario, as well as in two centres in Alberta, two in British Colombia, and one centre each in Québec, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan.

In 2009, CISOC started the development of the Online Community Interpreter Certification Program and it was finally launched in June 2010. This program responds to the need for flexibility and accessibility for bilingual and multilingual newcomers and Canadians who wish to pursue careers as Community Interpreters but could not certify through regular in-house training programs.

This unique program from CISOC incorporates the same curriculum used to train over 300 Community Interpreters.

CISOC

44 Eccles Street, Suite 100, Ottawa, Ontario  K1R 6S4  Canada   telephone 613-237-0502    fax 613-237-5293    cisoc@cisoc.net       cisoc.net

## Introduction to the Community Interpreter Certification Program

Community interpretation is a complex and demanding profession. Interpreters act as a bridge between peoples and cultures, and, like a bridge, they require a solid foundation. For the Community Interpreter, that foundation is a thorough understanding of the theory and practice of interpretation.

The Community Interpreter Certification Program offers a complete course of study designed to provide this foundation. Through a mix of academic content, audio recordings, video demonstrations and exercises, students will learn the skills necessary to become successful Community Interpreters.

## About Online Learning

The Online Community Interpreter Workbook can be accessed from any computer with an internet connection. The workbook offers students the ability to study at their own pace and plan their studies around their own schedules. Studying online requires the same commitment of time and effort as studying in a classroom. Therefore, students are advised to set aside a time to study when they know they will not be disturbed. Being consistent in your efforts will make it easier to measure your progress and ensure that you are able to take full advantage of the material provided.

The workbook represents approximately 70 hours of study time. The more time you can dedicate to studying, the faster you will be able to progress.

Students will have access to the workbook for four months (120 days) from the date of purchase. After this time, access codes will no longer be valid. It is essential that students be able to meet the time commitment necessary to complete the course within this limit. CISOC does not track student progress through the workbook. Students are responsible for monitoring their own progress to ensure they can complete the program on time. The workbook is not printable.

## Technical Requirements

In order to access the Community Interpreter workbook, students will need internet access (preferably high-speed); the ability to listen to audio; and the ability to view and listen to video.

## Copyright Information

The contents of the workbook, including all printed and recorded material, are protected under copyright laws in Canada and other countries. By registering for the Community Interpreter Certification Program, you are granted access to view the material online. All other use is strictly prohibited.

One exam voucher is included with the purchased workbook for the final test. Certificates for those who pass the test will be issued in the name of the registered student.

## The Community Interpreter Workbook

The Community Interpreter Workbook is divided into nine units covering the following topics:

- Unit 1: Introduction to Community Interpreting
- Unit 2: The Community Interpreter's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
- Unit 3: The Roles, Boundaries and Essential Practices of the Community Interpreter
- Unit 4: Theory of Interpreting and Memory Development
- Unit 5: Culture Bridging Skills
- Unit 6: Communication Skills and Interpreting
- Unit 7: Sight Translating and Note-Taking
- Unit 8: Managing the Interpretation
- Unit 9: Interpretation Practice

## Unit Structure

Units are divided into three parts.

1. **Introduction:** The Introduction outlines the concepts and terms covered in the unit and provides the students with a set of objectives against which to measure their understanding.

2. **Unit Sections:** The academic material in each unit is divided into various sections. The sections are meant to be studied in order. Some sections may have interactive elements or pop-ups containing extended explanations or examples. This extra material can be accessed by clicking on the blue buttons. Please remember to close the pop-up window when you are finished reading the contents.

3. **Exercises:** Each unit has a set of exercises and quizzes designed to test your knowledge of the material presented in the unit. Some will contain case studies meant to offer the opportunity to apply what you've learned to real-life situations. Other exercises will use recorded dialogues that simulate actual interpretation sessions. These recordings, as well as the answers to the quizzes, can be accessed by clicking on the blue buttons. Again, please remember to close the pop-up window when you are finished reading the contents.

Unit Nine is a practice only unit and does not follow the above format.

**Additional Languages**

In addition to English, students who speak Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, German, French, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Nepali, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Urdu and Vietnamese will be able to access written and recorded materials in these languages to better simulate real-life interpreting situations. Knowledge of these languages, however, is not necessary to complete the course.

**Quiz Answers**

Answers to quiz questions are available for students to check their understanding of the material presented in each unit. It is in students' best interest to answer the questions themselves before opening the Answer window. Treat the quizzes as you would any test: write your answer on a piece of paper and compare your response to the answer provided.

**Support**

If you have questions concerning the content of the workbook or are experiencing technical problems accessing the workbook or any of its sections, support is available at **training@cisoc.net**.

**Language Skills**

A successful interpreter must be fluent in more than one language. The Community Interpreter Workbook does not measure language proficiency and does not teach language skills.

We suggest that anyone considering completing this program have their language skills assessed by a reputable agency before registering. Many universities and colleges offer assessments (for a fee) in select languages. For help locating an evaluation centre near you, please contact **training@cisoc.net**.

The CILISAT is a CISOC-delivered test which measures proficiency in 50 languages. For information about the CILISAT, please contact **cilisat@cisoc.net** or visit our website at **www.cisoc.net**.

## Introduction to the Community Interpreter Certification Test

Students who have purchased the workbook are able to sit for an online exam. Those who pass the test will receive the accreditation as Community Interpreter issued by CISOC.

Students who do not pass the test the first time can take the test again. However, if their access to the workbook has expired they will not be able use the workbook book as a study resource.

It can take up to two weeks to receive your mark. Please consider this when scheduling your exam. Students are advised to leave enough time to receive their mark and, if necessary, still have access to the workbook in order to review for a second test.

## Community Interpreter Certification Test

The examination consists of a computer-based randomized selection of questions which correspond to the material covered in the Community Interpreter Workbook. It contains six sections with a total of 91 questions.

The exam takes two hours to write; please keep track of the time as the exam will terminate itself after two hours. If you complete the exam within the two hour time frame, you are advised to use the extra time to review your answers before submitting them. Once you have submitted your test there is no way to add or change answers.

## Purchasing an Exam Voucher

Students who have purchased the workbook are eligible to one exam voucher which will allow them to sit for the Community Interpreter Certification Exam. The voucher consists of a one-time-use code which is needed to access the online exam.   Additional exam vouchers can be purchased online if needed by registered students.

## Taking the test

Exams are taken online. Students can contact CISOC at **training@cisoc.net** if they have any questions.

**NOTE**

The voucher used to access the exam is a single-use code that, once entered into the system on the day of the exam, becomes invalid. The code cannot be used again and the cost of the voucher cannot be refunded. If, for whatever reason, you decide to reschedule your exam you must do so before entering your exam code to avoid forfeiting both the code and the voucher fee.

## After the test

Tests take up to two weeks to mark. You will be notified by email of your results as soon as they become available.

Certificates will be mailed to students who have passed the test within a week of notification. At the time of notification, students will be asked to verify the name that will appear on the certificate and the address to which the certificate will be mailed.