

# Licensure for Oregon Interpreters



# What is licensure?

- **Professional licensure** protects the public by enforcing standards that restrict practice to qualified individuals who have met specific qualifications in education, work experience, and exams.
- **Professional licensing** has the strongest public support for activities whose incompetent execution would be a health or safety threat to the public, such as practicing medicine. Licensing of low-risk businesses like florists and hair braiding salons is more controversial because licensing is inherently a form of restraint of trade.

# What's the difference between Certification, Licensure and Credentials?

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## **Certification**

The federal government has defined “certification” as the process by which a non-governmental (typically industry-related) organization grants recognition to an individual who has met predetermined qualifications specified by that organization.

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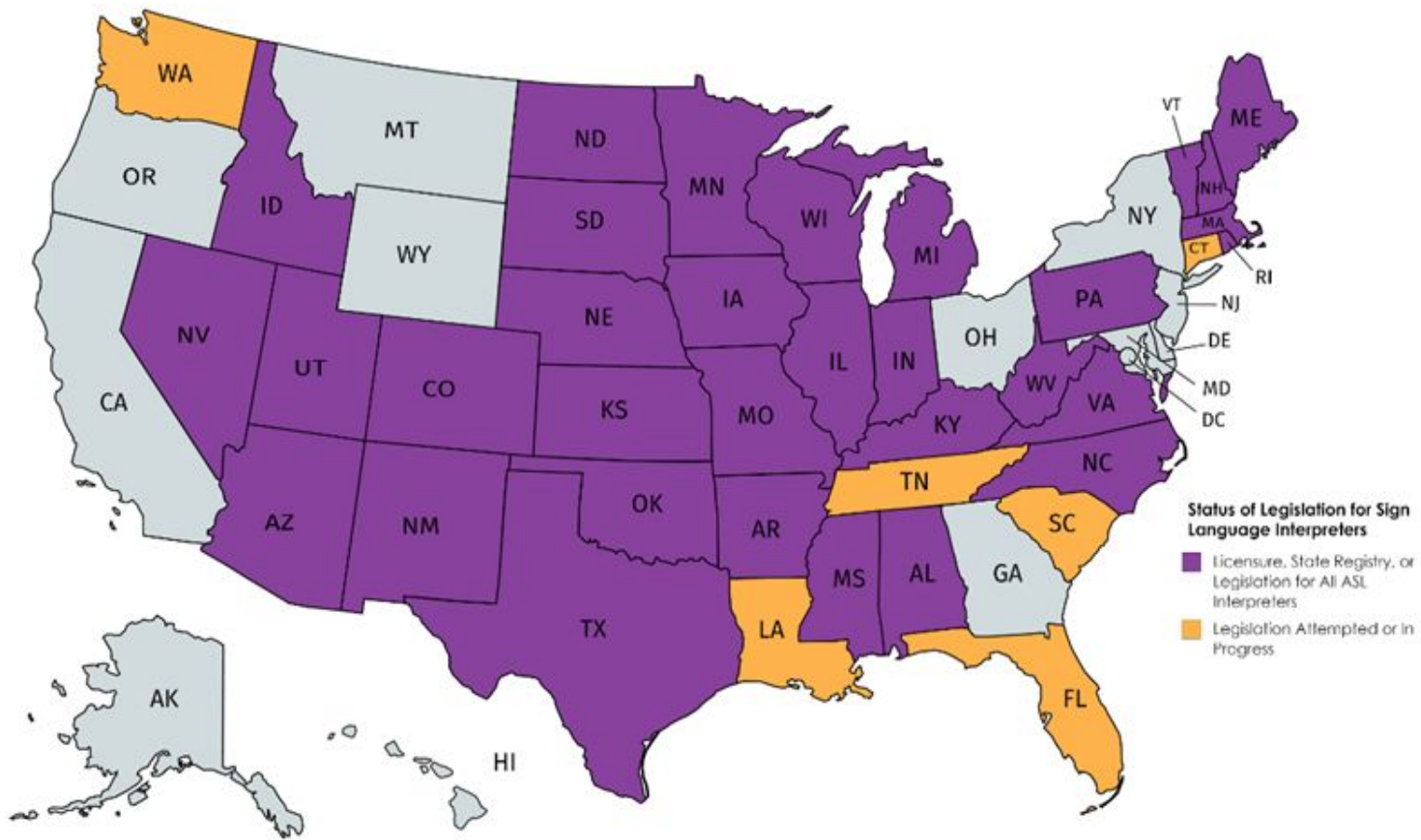
## **Licensure**

Under the licensure system, states define, by statute, the tasks and function or scope of practice of a profession and provide that these tasks may be legally performed only by those who are licensed. As such, licensure prohibits anyone from practicing the profession who is not licensed, regardless of whether or not the individual has been certified by a private organization.

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## **Credential**

Credentialing is the process of obtaining, verifying, and assessing the qualifications of a practitioner to provide care or services. Credentials are documented evidence of licensure, education, training, certification, experience, or other qualifications.



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# States with Interpreter Legislation

Why have state legislation?

quality  
interpreting  
services

# Survey of States with Licensure or Registry Results

# States that participated

Idaho  
Licensure

Rhode Island  
Licensure

Iowa  
Licensure

Nebraska  
Licensure

Wisconsin -  
Licensure

Colorado  
Title  
Protection

New York  
Legal settings  
only

Tennessee  
K-12 Licensure  
only

California  
K-12 & Court  
Settings

Massachusetts  
In process

Alaska - None

Hawaii - None

Additional states that have been studied by the legislative committee

**Maine  
Licensure**

**Nevada  
Required  
Registry**

**Arizona  
Licensure**

**Washington  
In Process**



Questions we  
asked other  
states

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How was your state licensure or registry program developed?

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What is the biggest benefit after implementing licensure or registry program?

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What has been the biggest challenge after implementation?

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If your state was to do it again, what would you do differently? Lessons learned?

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What was the reaction from the interpreting, deaf, k-12, and post-secondary education communities?



# Interpreter Survey Results

- Creates **shortage** of interpreters
- **Cost** to interpreters and price of services to consumers
- Provisions for **new interpreters**
- Including stakeholders from the **Deaf community**
- **Visiting interpreter** provisions
- Government control and **lack of understanding** of the profession
- What does it look like?!?

What **concerns**  
you about  
interpreter  
licensure in  
Oregon?

**Concern:**  
Creates an  
Interpreter  
Shortage

- Accurately reflects the number of qualified interpreters a state has
- Can draw qualified interpreters to the state
- Creates a pathway for new interpreters to work before certification (Provisional License)
- Adds justification to the industry to heighten the view of the profession
- Research shows pool of qualified interpreters actually increases (UT, KY)



**Concern:**  
Cost to  
Interpreters  
and the  
Administrative  
Process

- Application Process
  - User friendly and on-line
- Documentation requirements
  - Education
  - Certification(s)
  - Experience
  - Continuing Education Units
- Response time to applications
- Renewal timeframe and ease of verification
- Cost of licenses<sup>1</sup>
  - Application fee: 4/5 states charge \$50
  - Full license: 15 states charge \$25-\$250
  - Renewal fee: 15 states charge \$25-\$250

1. Izutsu, S., Horvath, V. E., Whited, C. (2015). *Summary Status of State Licensure of American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters*. Pacific Basin Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

## Potential Ideas (taken from other states)

- Professional License
  - Provisional License
  - Legal (Import requirements from courts)
  - K-12 (Import requirements from K-12 law)
  - Medical (Import requirements from OHA)
  - Mental Health
  - Temporary/Visiting Interpreters
- ❖ The categories would be inclusive of both Hearing and Deaf interpreters



**Concern:**  
Levels of Licensure

**Concern:**  
Provisions for new  
interpreters

## Provisional License

- Provide mentoring and supervision
- Professional Development Plan
- Team with other licensed interpreters in specific settings
- Limit on how long one can hold a provisional license

**Concern:**  
Exemptions



**EMERGENCY**





**Concern:**  
Including  
stakeholders  
from the Deaf  
community

Oregon Registry of  
Interpreters for the  
Deaf

Oregon  
Association of the  
Deaf

Oregon  
Department of  
Deaf and Hard of  
Hearing Services

Disability Rights  
Oregon

Colleges and  
Universities  
(WOU, PCC, COCC)

Oregon  
Department of  
Education

OHA's Healthcare  
Interpreter Council

Oregon Judicial  
Dept. Interpreter  
Services

Interpreter Service  
Agencies

**Concern:**  
Government  
control and lack  
of understanding  
of the profession

- Housed where (ODHHS, OHA,..)
- Staff person to oversee administrative duties
- Oversight Board/Council to be inclusive of all community stakeholders
- Board/Council to be responsible for developing Administrative Rules for administering the program

## **Concern:**

Handling of  
unqualified  
interpreters

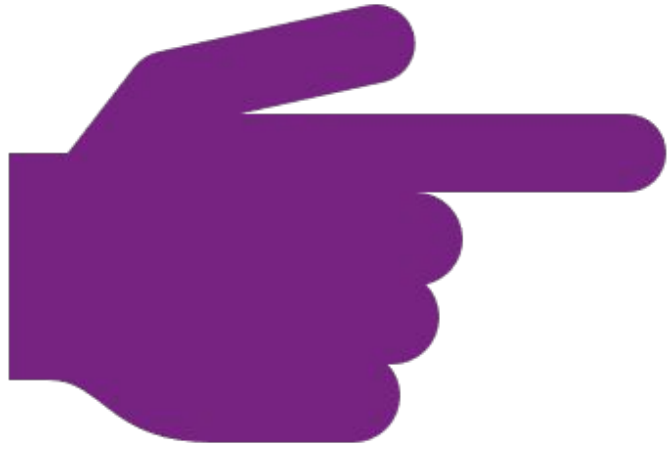
- Grievance process
- License denial
- Suspension
- Revocation
- Resulting penalties

**How do you  
think Oregon  
could benefit  
from  
interpreter  
licensure?**

- Will benefit rural areas of Oregon
- Create an interpreter network/registry within Oregon of qualified/professional interpreters
- Improve interpreters' skills and professionalism (improve interpreter quality)
- Help to validate the field of interpreting by promoting professional interpreters
- Create interpreter accountability
- Establishes consumer protections
- Create a grievance process for Deaf community

## How other states benefited from licensure or registry

- Elevate **quality of interpreters** and implement mechanism on how to collect complaints
- Knowing that consumers have an **avenue to file complaints** about rogue interpreters or interpreters who were unprofessional in taking work that they were not qualified for.
- The biggest benefit is that our **best qualified interpreters** are working and the false wannabes are not.
- To better **empower the Deaf community** with our new bill.



We want to hear  
from you...

Concerns  
Questions  
Comments