

Understanding the Healthcare Interpreter Exams of the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI)

A Reference Sheet Compiled by the Oregon Health Care Interpreters Association

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Overview

In order to become Oregon certified as a health care interpreter, a necessary requirement is taking a set of national exams (one written exam and one oral exam). These exams must be taken through either the National Board for Certification of Medical Interpreters (NBCMI) or the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI).

The NBCMI offers testing for Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, or Vietnamese only
The CCHI offers testing for Arabic, Mandarin, or Spanish only

This specific resource explains the process and requirements for the CCHI healthcare interpreter exams only. The CCHI has two such exams: the written CoreCHI exam and the oral CHI Performance exam (both are required for Oregon certification).

Oregon Certification and Qualification

Oregon certification is only available for Arabic, Cantonese, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish, or Vietnamese. Other languages must instead become qualified. Receiving national certification does not equate to Oregon certification; there are additional requirements set by Oregon. For more information on Oregon certification and qualification, visit the Oregon Health Authority's Office of Equity and Inclusion's website: <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei/Pages/hci-certification.aspx>

About the Written CoreCHI Exam

- Cost: **\$155** (for Oregon residents only & non-refundable, the fee is paid at the same time as the application fee, must pay to re-take exam if not passed initially)
- Must have registered with the CCHI and had your application accepted (Application fee for Oregon residents is **\$15**)
- Exam is offered year round
- Computer-based, 4 option multiple choice exam with 100 questions
- Exam administered at a testing center
- Length of exam is 2 hours; 20-30 minutes beforehand are given for the proctor to read the instructions and explain the testing procedures
- Test is scored based on the correct answers in the 5 knowledge domains and weighted on the scale from 300 to 600 points; the passing score is 450 points
- Preliminary results of passing or failing are given immediately
- Exam is in English only and tests for health care interpreter knowledge and critical thinking abilities, not target language skills; interpreters of any language, including ASL, can take the exam
- Knowledge tested on CoreCHI exam:
 - Manage an Interpreting Encounter 30%-35%
 - Healthcare Terminology 22%-25%
 - Interact with Other Healthcare Professionals 20%-24%
 - Prepare for an Interpreting Encounter 16%-20%
 - Demonstrate Cultural Responsiveness 3%-6%

About the Oral CHI Performance Exam

- Cost: **\$275** (non-refundable, must pay to re-take exam if not passed initially)
- Must have received the official results of passing the CoreCHI exam and take the oral exam within 1 year of passing the CoreCHI exam
- Exam is offered within 4 testing windows a year, with each window being 2-3 weeks long
- Computer-based oral performance exam administered at a testing center
- Length of exam is 60 minutes; 30-40 minutes beforehand is given to read the instructions and take a sample test to make sure the headsets work
- Test is scored by human raters on the Behaviorally Anchored Scale; with the weighted score distributed between 300-600 points; the passing score is 450 points
- Results are available 6 weeks after taking the test
- Exam is a test of interpreting/translating skills, with sections in English and the target language
- Skills Tested on CHI Performance Exam:
 - Consecutive Interpreting 75-80%
 - Simultaneous Interpreting 10-15%
 - Sight Translation and Written Translation 10-15%
- Structure of Oral Exam
 - 4 consecutive interpreting vignettes (all bi-directional conversations between an English speaking provider and a non-English speaking patient)
 - 2 simultaneous interpreting vignettes (1 from English to target language, and 1 from target language to English)

- Structure of Oral Exam (cont'd)
 - 1 sight translation vignette (3 short written passages in English which must be orally translated to target language)
 - 1 multiple choice consisting of a written passage in English with 4 potential translation answers in the target language (one must choose the best translation)

Process of Registering and Take the Exams

1. Register for the CCHI Exams and pay the CoreCHI exam fee
 - a. Make sure you meet the requirements listed below:
 - i. Minimum 18 years of age
 - ii. High school diploma or GED diploma (from any country)
 - iii. Successful completion of minimum 40 hours of health care interpreter training
 - iv. Language proficiency in English and the target language
 - v. **Note:** Providing evidence of requirements is not required at the time of application, but is required if audited (audits are conducted randomly)
 - b. Visit <https://cchi.learningbuilder.com/> to create an account and fill out an application (it is recommended you set aside an hour to complete the application)
 - c. Oregon residents have a special fee of **\$15** registration fee and **\$155** for the written CoreCHI exam. **To get this price**, email CCHI at apply@cchicertification.org and state that you are Oregon resident and are ready to pay. You will receive an invoice via email for **\$170**.
 - d. Wait 2 weeks to receive a response on your application
2. Schedule the CoreCHI exam testing:
 - a. Within 2 weeks after paying for the combined fee (application and exam), you will receive a Notice to Schedule; follow its directions for scheduling your CoreCHI exam date (the exam is offered year round)
3. Prepare for the CoreCHI exam (see *Prepare for the CCHI Exams* on page 4)
4. Attend the scheduled CoreCHI exam
 - a. Preliminary results of passing or failing will be given at the testing center
 - i. If you pass, wait 2 weeks to receive official results
 - ii. If you don't pass, you must wait 90 days to re-take the exam (repayment of exam fee is required for each re-take)
 - iii. There are a maximum of 3 re-takes for the CoreCHI exam allowed within one year
5. Pay **\$275** and schedule the oral CHI Performance Exam
 - a. Upon receiving official results of passing the CoreCHI exam, you have 12 months to pay for, schedule and take the CHI Exam
 - b. After receiving official notice of passing the CoreCHI exam, you must log in to your CCHI account and follow directions for paying the \$275 fee for the CHI Performance exam
 - c. 2 weeks after paying for the exam, you will receive a Notice to Schedule; follow its directions for scheduling your CHI Performance exam date (the exam is offered within 4 testing windows a year, with each window being 2-3 weeks long)
6. Prepare for the CHI Performance exam (see *Prepare for the CCHI Exams* on page 4)

7. Attend the scheduled CHI Performance exam
 - a. Results will be given 6 weeks later
 - i. If you pass, you will receive an official certificate in PDF format 2 weeks after receiving your results
 - ii. If you don't pass, you must wait 90 days or until the next testing window (whichever is first) to re-take the exam (repayment of exam fee is required for each re-take)
 - iii. There are a maximum of 3 re-takes for the CHI exam allowed within one year

How to Prepare for the Exams

- The CCHI offers a thorough website on preparing for these exams:
<http://www.cchicertification.org/prepare-for-your-exam/prepare-for-your-exam>
- <http://www.cchicertification.org/certification-resources/certification-resources>

The website above includes:

- Suggestions for studying for the exams
- Resources related to healthcare terminology, healthcare interpreter scope of practice and code ethics
- Medical terminology glossaries
- Free sample tests for the oral CHI Performance exam (meant to acquaint you with the exam interface)
- Outlines of the content covered for the CoreCHI and CHI Performance exams
- A free sample test for the CoreCHI exam (see Appendix D of the CCHI Candidate Examination Handbook)
- A link to an official, 27 question Practice CoreCHI test, which costs \$30
- Links to recorded webinars about the exams

CCHI Certification Renewal

The CCHI requires 32 actual hours of continuing education and 40 hours of healthcare interpreting experience in the 4 years following certification in order to maintain it. The CCHI also requires these be broken down into the following:

- In years 1-2 following certification, one must:
 - Complete 16 actual hours of continuing education
 - Complete 20 hours of healthcare interpreting
- In years 3-4 following certification, one must:
 - Complete 16 actual hours of continuing education
 - Complete 20 hours of healthcare interpreting
 - Submit two renewal applications (one for years 1-2 and one for years 3-4) with a \$150 payment each (\$300 total) at least 30 days before the end of the 4 year mark occurs

Note: Certification would be lost if the deadline was missed and/or the renewal guidelines were not properly followed.

For healthcare interpreting experience, this could be done as an employee, contractor, volunteer or combination thereof.

For acceptable forms of continuing education and renewal guidelines, visit the CCHI's renewal webpage:
<http://www.cchicertification.org/credentialed-interpreters/renewal-criteria>

Resources

CCHI Website:

<http://www.cchicertification.org/healthcare-interpreters/healthcare-interpreters>

CCHI Website Certification Resources:

<http://www.cchicertification.org/certification-resources/certification-resources>

CCHI Candidate Examination Handbook:

<http://www.cchicertification.org/images/pdfs/candidatehandbook.pdf>

CCHI Exams Study Checklist:

http://www.cchicertification.org/images/pdfs/cchi_exams_study_checklist.pdf

Important Note: The CCHI Candidate Examination Handbook is updated annually (check its first page for the last update), so some of its information is not up to date. The information on this OHCIA resource sheet is current as of June 2015. To confirm all details of the exams, please contact the CCHI:

- Email: info@CCHICertification.org
- Phone: 866-969-6665

This reference sheet was last updated in January 2016 and is subject to change.

This information has been reviewed by the CCHI for accuracy.

Information courtesy of the Oregon Health Care Interpreters Association
503-893-9660 support@ohcia.org www.ohcia.org