



U.S. FEDERAL COURTS

An Insider's Look: What
are they, and what goes on
in there?



**ARTICLE III OF THE
CONSTITUTION
ESTABLISHED
THREE TYPES OF
FEDERAL COURTS:**

1. U.S. District Courts
2. Circuit Courts of Appeal
3. Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS)

BASIC STRUCTURE

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Chief Justice and 8 Associate Justices

Hears a select few cases appealed from courts of appeal or State supreme courts

12 Circuits plus one federal circuit covering the entire country

Hears cases appealed from district courts; and cases decided by some federal agencies, eg. NLRB.

U.S. CIRCUIT COURTS OF APPEAL

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURTS

94 Districts

Each District has a Bankruptcy Court

US
COURT
S
OF
APPEA
L

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURTS

JURISDICTION

- CIVIL

EXAMPLES: EEOP claims, claims for federal benefits, suits vs. companies alleging violation of federal antitrust laws.

- CRIMINAL

EXAMPLES: bank robbery (insured by FDIC), mail fraud, drug trafficking, certain violations of U.S. immigration law. (8 USC, Sec. 1324, 1325, 1326, etc.)



**BUT WHAT
ABOUT
IMMIGRATION
COURT?**

THEY ARE CIVIL, ADMINISTRATIVE COURTS WITHIN THE US DOJ, NOT THE JUDICIAL BRANCH.

IMMIGRATION JUDGES ARE APPOINTED BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

IMMIGRATION CASES CANNOT BE RULED ON BY A JURY

INTERPRETER REQUIREMENTS DIFFER FROM U.S.D.C.

COURT PARTICIPANTS



JUDGE

DISTRICT | MAGISTRATE



COURT INTERPRETERS ACT OF 1978

1. Established a program to facilitate the use of certified and otherwise qualified interpreters in criminal and civil judicial proceedings instituted by the United States.

2. Provided for the development and administering of the FCICE (Federal Court Interpreter Certification Exam).

The FCICE:

- Is currently only offered for Spanish.
- has separately administered written and oral portions
- is NOT a translation certification
- passage opens the door to expanded opportunities:
 - Staff positions
 - Independent contract work

THREE CATEGORIES OF COURT INTERPRETERS IN FEDERAL COURT

1. FCCI – has passed both the written and oral Federal Court Interpreter Certification Exam (FCICE)
2. Professionally Qualified (PQ):
 - U.S. Department of State conference or seminar interpreter (but not escort interpreter)
 - United Nations interpreter
 - **National Center for State Courts – languages other than Spanish only**
 - Is a current member in good standing of:
the Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (AIIC); or
the American Association of Language Specialists (TAALS).
3. Language Skilled:
 - Can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the court the ability to interpret court proceedings from English to a designated language and from that language into English

SAMPLE STAFF POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

[COURT INTERPRETER \(SPANISH/ENGLISH\) #25-09 | NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS | UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT](#)

Starting Salary: Notice of Vacancy: Court Interpreter (Spanish/English) 25-09 Dallas, TX Open Until Filled. JSP 14 (\$135,382) The United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas is seeking an innovative and experienced individual to serve as a Court Interpreter. The Court has seven divisions in Texas: Abilene, Amarillo, Dallas, Fort Worth, Lubbock, San Angelo, and Wichita Falls. The duty station for this position is in Dallas; however, the interpreter serves the entire district.

DIRECTOR'S SCHEDULE OF FEES FOR CONTRACT INTERPRETERS

Federally Certified Interpreters

Full-Day: \$566

Half-Day: \$320

Overtime: \$80 per hour or part thereof

Professionally Qualified Interpreters

Full-Day: \$495

Half-Day: \$280

Overtime: \$70 per hour or part thereof

Language Skilled Interpreters (non-certified)

Full-Day: \$350

Half-Day: \$190

Overtime: \$44 per hour or part thereof

PARTING THOUGHTS.....AND A PLEA!

FCICE dates:

Written – Registration opens March 9; closes May 1;
Administered May 11-23

Oral – Registration opens June 22; closes July 31; Max. of
400 candidates; Administered TBD in August

<https://www.prometric.com/exams/aousc>

Q & A

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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