

TENNESSEE COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION
VOLUNTARY CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER PROGRAM
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER GUIDELINES

SECTION 1: SCOPE

This program applies to all persons who are professional members in good standing with the Tennessee Court Reporters Association (hereinafter "TCRA"). The examination and certification of court reporters are matters that are integrally related to the effective, impartial and efficient operation of the judicial system of the State of Tennessee.

SECTION 2: PURPOSE AND CONSTRUCTION

This program is designed to promote proficiency in the practice of court reporting and to extend to the courts and to the public the protection afforded by establishing a minimum standard of competency for those engaged in it. The requirements for certification shall be established by the TCRA Board of Directors as defined herein and TCRA's Committee of Certified Reporters.

Any professional member of TCRA to whom a certificate is issued may use the title "Certified Court Reporter" or the abbreviation therefore "CCR" with his or her certificate number which may be displayed upon the title and certification page of any transcript.

SECTION 3: DEFINITIONS

(A) "Court Reporting" shall be read to include all judicial reporting, captioning, and other related types of verbatim reporting of proceedings by use of shorthand symbols, manually or by stenographic machine, or by voice reporting or Stenomask, as an official court or legislative reporter, freelance reporter, captioner, or CART provider.

(B) "Court Reporter" means any individual engaged in the practice of court reporting as a profession as defined in Section 3(A).

(C) "CCR" means Certified Court Reporter.

(D) "RPR" means Registered Professional Reporter, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Court Reporters Association.

(E) "RMR" means Registered Merit Reporter, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Court Reporters Association.

(F) "RDR" means Registered Diplomat Reporter, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Court Reporters Association.

(G) "CRR" means Certified Realtime Reporter, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Court Reporters Association.

(H) "CVR" means Certified Verbatim Reporter, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Verbatim Reporters Association.

(I) "CM" means Certificate of Merit, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Verbatim Reporters Association.

(J) "RVR" means Realtime Verbatim Reporter, which is a designation attained by meeting the requirements established by the National Verbatim Reporters Association.

(K) "Committee" as defined herein means the TCRA Committee of Certified Court Reporters.

(L) "Program" as defined herein means the TCRA Voluntary Certified Court Reporter Program.

(M) "Board of Directors" means the officers and directors of TCRA.

(N) "Official" means any shorthand reporter or court reporter as defined under the statutes of the State of Tennessee.

(O) "Freelance" means any court reporter engaged in the practice of court reporting independent of the duties of an official reporter as defined in the statutes of the State of Tennessee.

(P) "Professional Member" means any person skilled in the art of court reporting as defined in Article XII, Definitions, of the Bylaws, and actively engaged in the practice of court reporting in the state of Tennessee.

(Q) Whenever the terms "court reporter," "court reporting," "certified court reporter," appear in this program same shall be limited to mean court reporter, court reporting, certified court reporter.

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION

(A) The TCRA Committee of Certified Court Reporters shall be appointed by the Board of Directors and shall supervise this program as defined herein.

(B) The Committee of CCR should consist of five professional members and include a TCRA Director who will serve as chairperson, and the chairperson may designate a committee member to act as liaison with NCRA. The Committee should include whenever possible at least one RDR, one RMR, and one RPR. Committee members must be practicing reporters with a minimum of five years experience in the state of Tennessee. A majority of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

(C) Terms of the Committee Members: Two members shall serve for two-year terms and three members shall serve for one-year terms. Terms of Committee members shall run from July 1 through June 30.

(D) Any vacancy occurring in the Committee may be filled by the Board of Directors. An appointee filling such vacancy shall serve during the unexpired portion of the term of the member replaced.

(E) Committee members, during the term of their appointment, must maintain an e-mail address and monitor e-mail correspondence at a minimum on a weekly basis.

(F) Committee members while engaged in performing their official duties shall be reimbursed for the actual expenses incurred in the performance of such duties out of funds generated by this program upon submission of receipts to the TCRA Treasurer and according to the TCRA Reimbursement Policy. The Board of Directors must first approve expenses not defined in the CCR budget.

(G) The Committee shall keep minutes of its meetings and all official action taken. All records of the Committee shall be maintained at a location(s) designated by the committee chairperson and approved by the TCRA Board of Directors.

(H) Duties, power and authority of the Committee shall be:

- 1) To review all applications for Voluntary CCR Certification and upon applicant satisfying all requirements issue or authorize to be issued CCR certificate and certificate number.

- 2) To report any discrepancy or irregularity in the administration of this program immediately to the TCRA President.

- 3) To submit status reports via email to the Board of Directors within ten days of each Board meeting.

- 4) To keep an accurate, up-to-date database of continuing education points for each CCR.
- 5) To publish in the Spring issue of "The Volunteer Reporter" information regarding the Voluntary CCR Program.
- 6) To notify membership in writing of any significant change to this program in the Spring issue of "The Volunteer Reporter." Significant changes to this program shall be presented by the Committee to the membership at the annual business meeting in June and changes shall become effective on July 1st of each year.

SECTION 5: APPLICATION

(A) A professional member seeking certification under this program shall make application by completing the Application for Voluntary CCR, submit a copy of required documents as defined in Paragraph B, submit payment payable to TCRA and form to TCRA as listed on the application.

(B) A professional member seeking certification under this program must meet the following requirements:

1) If holder of RPR/CVR or higher NCRA/NVRA designation or state certification, certified by test, and applying for certification under reciprocity, a copy of certificate must accompany application.

OR

(2) If applicant is a graduate of a court reporting school meeting the minimum requirements of 225/200/180, a copy of an official transcript must be provided,

AND

Must be a professional member in good standing for three (3) consecutive years with TCRA, OR earn 2.0 Continuing Education Units.

OR

(3) If applicant does not meet requirements of 1 or 2, applicant must have five (5) consecutive years experience as a court reporter immediately preceding application,

AND

Must submit a letter of recommendation from a Tennessee CCR and one practicing attorney in good standing,

AND

Must be a professional member in good standing for three (3) consecutive years with TCRA, OR earn 2.0 Continuing Education Units.

SECTION 6: EXAMINATION

(A) Certification by examination under this program shall be by use of the National Court Reporters Association's Registered Reporter/National Verbatim Reporters Association examination given each year. Passage of all test sections at one setting is not required.

(B) All applicants applying for CCR certification by examination shall be responsible for reading all rules and regulations of NCRA's/NVRA's examination procedure before exam date.

(C) It shall be the responsibility of the Applicant to provide a copy of the RPR/CVR test result notification with their CCR application.

SECTION 7: FEES

(A) Members applying for certification under this program shall pay to TCRA fees identified below unless otherwise noted. This program is intended to be a self-funding program if at all possible and all fees received for this program shall be used to fund this program.

(B) All fees will be nonrefundable.

(C) All fees listed below shall remain effective as defined in Section 10(A).

\$50 Application Fee.
\$30 Annual Renewal Fee

SECTION 8: ISSUANCE

(A) Once an applicant has met and satisfied the qualifications as set forth in this program, the Committee shall issue the applicant a certificate as a CCR with a certificate number. The certificate shall remain valid as long as the reporter remains a member in good standing of TCRA, pays the annual TCRA dues by June 1st of each year and certification renewal fee by June 1st of each year, submits proof of 2.0 continuing education units every two years, and abides by all rules and regulations under this program.

(B) Accumulation of a total of 2.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) shall be required during each two-year license period. It is the responsibility of each CCR certificate holder to provide TCRA with documentation of any CEU points obtained from sources other than TCRA-sponsored events.

CEUs may be obtained from the following sources:

(1) Any CEUs accrued under the auspices of NCRA/NVRA-approved and/or TCRA-sponsored events.

(2) Classes taken at state or community colleges will accrue at .1 CEU per credit hour per semester.

(3) Service as a TCRA Board Member or Committee Member will accrue CEUs on an annual basis, as follows: Board member, .3 CEUs. Committee members are eligible to receive .2 CEUs based on level of participation in achieving goals and objectives of the Committee, at the discretion of the Committee Chairperson. Receipt of CEUs set forth in Item (3) is subject to Board approval by majority vote at the board meeting prior to the annual convention.

(4) Participation in Career Day presentations or serving as a proctor for NCRA/NVRA certification examinations, .1 CEU.

(5) CCR certificate holders must submit CEU requests to the CCR Committee for approval before attending any event or seminar that is not included in Items (1) through (4) above. CEU requests pre-approved by the CCR Committee for seminars/events sponsored by third parties may receive .1 CEU per hour.

(C) The CCR Committee will maintain a database of continuing education units for each CCR upon submission of proof of CE units earned. The Committee shall notify each CCR on an annual basis of total points accumulated.

(D) All CCRs as of June 15 of each year shall be listed in the TCRA Annual Membership Directory with

the designation “CCR” in addition to all other certification designations achieved.

SECTION 9: RECIPROCITY

(A) All professional members in good standing who hold an RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CSR, CVR, CM, or RVR, from another state with equivalent or higher testing standards may apply for certification under this program upon satisfying all requirements as set out in Section 5(A) and 5(B).

SECTION 10: RENEWAL

(A) The Renewal for CCR form will be published in “The Volunteer Reporter” Spring issue each year and must be completed and returned with renewal fee by June 1 of each year. It shall be the responsibility of each CCR to submit proof of continuing education units earned to the Committee. Only upon written request shall the Committee send confirmation of the number of CE units a CCR has accumulated, over and above the annual notification. Each CCR shall be entitled to make four written requests of Committee for CE units accumulated during any two-year period. After four requests, the Committee may charge CCR for this information.

(B) Upon review of renewal form by Committee, confirmation of renewal will be sent to each CCR.

SECTION 11: REINSTATEMENT

(A) A CCR may be placed on inactive status by written request to the Committee and, provided TCRA membership dues are paid annually, may be reinstated upon written request. CCR shall complete and return Renewal For CCR form and pay renewal fee. While a certificate is in an inactive status, the use of the CCR designation is prohibited.

(B) A member whose CCR certificate has become null and void under Section 12(B) may apply for reinstatement by completing the Application For Voluntary CCR Program, paying application fee and the showing of good cause. Reinstatement shall be subject to review and approval by the Committee.

SECTION 12: NULLIFICATION, REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF CERTIFICATE

(A) A CCR whose certificate has become null and void under Section 12(B) will be notified in writing and shall be granted fifteen (15) days to satisfactorily meet requirements for renewal of their CCR certificate.

(B) A CCR’s certificate shall become null and void on June 30th of each year for one or more of the following reasons:

- (1) Nonpayment of TCRA dues by June 1 of each year.
- (2) Failure to provide proof of 2.0 continuing education units every two years.
- (3) Nonpayment of CCR certification renewal fee by June 1 of each year.
- (4) Failure to satisfactorily complete renewal form.

(C) Prior to the revocation or suspension of any certificate, member shall be given notice and opportunity for hearing shall be afforded.

(D) Any member’s certificate issued under this program shall be suspended or revoked for one or more of the following reasons:

- (1) Conviction of a felony.
- (2) Failure to abide by the TCRA Bylaws.

- (3) Failure to abide by any rule, policy or procedure as defined in this program.
- (4) Misrepresentation in applying for certification.
- (5) Remaining on inactive status for more than nine (9) consecutive years.
- (6) Twelve (12) or more written complaints mailed to the TCRA Committee of CCR or TCRA Board of Directors by an attorney(s) for one or more of the following:
 - (a) Failure to make delivery of transcripts to an attorney(s) or a court.
 - (b) Failure to produce a transcript in its entirety, except upon the order of a court, agreement of the parties, or request of a party.
 - (c) Failure to preserve shorthand notes for a period of no less than five (5) years in civil cases and in criminal cases for the length of the defendant's sentence through storage of the original paper notes or an electronic copy of either the shorthand notes or the English transcript of the notes on computer disks, cassettes, backup tape systems, or optical or laser disk systems.
 - (d) Failure to preserve the confidentiality and ensure the security of information, oral or written, entrusted to the CCR by any of the parties in a proceeding.

SECTION 13: EXTENSION FOR CEUs

(A) If you fail to meet the continuing education credit requirement of 2.0 CEUs in the two-year cycle, you may submit a written request for a three-month extension to obtain the required CEUs. This request will be allowed only upon a written request to and approval by the Board. It will be the individual's responsibility to contact the Board and show good cause to support their request of an extension. The Board must receive the extension request before the CCR term expires on June 30th. If the extension is granted by the Board, the CCR will have three months from the date the extension was granted to accumulate the 2.0 CEUs needed for their current term. Once the 2.0 requirement has been met in that three-month period, the CCR will begin a new two-year cycle, which will expire on June 30th two years later, thus giving the CCR a shorter time period to earn the 2.0 CEU requirement for the new term.

(B) There is a \$25 extension/processing fee, which should accompany your request. All appeals must be in writing. You will be notified of the outcome of your appeal in writing shortly after the Board votes on your request. After a notice of noncompliance has been issued, if the CCR Committee does not receive an extension request from the CCR, you will receive a letter revoking your certificate. See Section 12: NULLIFICATION, REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF CERTIFICATE for information regarding a certificate that has become null and void.

(C) Mail your extension request form to TCRA, CCR Committee, P.O. Box 135, Brunswick, TN 38014.