

# Order

Michigan Supreme Court  
Lansing, Michigan

November 26, 2025

Megan K. Cavanagh,  
Chief Justice

ADM File No. 2025-03

Brian K. Zahra  
Richard H. Bernstein  
Elizabeth M. Welch  
Kyra H. Bolden  
Kimberly A. Thomas  
Noah P. Hood,  
Justices

Amendment of Rule  
1.111 of the Michigan  
Court Rules

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On order of the Court, notice of the proposed changes and an opportunity for comment in writing and at a public hearing having been provided, and consideration having been given to the comments received, the following amendment of Rule 1.111 of the Michigan Court Rules is adopted, effective January 1, 2026.

[Additions to the text are indicated in underlining and  
deleted text is shown by strikeover.]

## Rule 1.111 Foreign Language Interpreters

(A) Definitions. When used in this rule, the following words and phrases have the following definitions:

(1)-(3) [Unchanged.]

(4) “Certified foreign language interpreter” means a person who meets all of the following criteria~~has~~:

(a) has passed a foreign language interpreter test administered by the State Court Administrative Office or a similar state or federal test approved by the state court administrator,

(b) has met all the requirements established by the state court administrator for this interpreter classification,~~and~~

(c) is registered with the State Court Administrative Office, ~~and~~

(d) provides foreign language interpreter services independently or on behalf of a registered interpreter firm.

(5) “Interpret” and “interpretation” mean the oral rendering of spoken or written communication from one language to another without change in meaning.

(6) “Qualified foreign language interpreter” means a person who meets all of the following criteria:

- (a) has passed the written English proficiency exam administered by the State Court Administrative Office or a similar state or federal test approved by the state court administrator,
- (b) within the two calendar years preceding their registration application to become a qualified foreign language interpreter, has passed the consecutive or simultaneous portion of a foreign language interpreter test administered by the State Court Administrative Office or a similar state or federal test approved by the state court administrator (if testing exists for the language),
- (c) is actively engaged in becoming certified by continuing to test on each portion of the oral examination in each calendar year,
- (d) has been determined by the court after voir dire to be competent to provide interpretation services for the proceeding in which the interpreter is providing services,
- (e) meets the requirements established by the state court administrator for this interpreter classification,
- (f) is registered with the State Court Administrative Office, and
- (g) provides foreign language interpretation services independently or on behalf of a registered interpreter firm.
- (a) ~~A person who provides interpretation services, provided that the person has:~~
  - (i) ~~registered with the State Court Administrative Office; and~~
  - (ii) ~~passed the consecutive portion of a foreign language interpreter test administered by the State Court Administrative Office or a similar state or federal test approved by the state court administrator (if testing exists for the language), and is actively engaged in becoming certified; and~~
  - (iii) ~~met the requirements established by the state court administrator for this interpreter classification; and~~
  - (iv) ~~been determined by the court after voir dire to be competent to provide interpretation services for the proceeding in which the interpreter is providing services, or~~

- (b) ~~A person who works for an entity that provides in person interpretation services provided that:~~
  - (i) ~~both the entity and the person have registered with the State Court Administrative Office; and~~
  - (ii) ~~the person has met the requirements established by the state court administrator for this interpreter classification; and~~
  - (iii) ~~the person has been determined by the court after voir dire to be competent to provide interpretation services for the proceeding in which the interpreter is providing services, or~~
- (c) ~~A person who works for an entity that provides interpretation services by telecommunication equipment, provided that:~~
  - (i) ~~the entity has registered with the State Court Administrative Office; and~~
  - (ii) ~~the entity has met the requirements established by the state court administrator for this interpreter classification; and~~
  - (iii) ~~the person has been determined by the court after voir dire to be competent to provide interpretation services for the proceeding in which the interpreter is providing services~~

(7) “Registered interpreter firm” means an entity that employs or contracts with certified or qualified foreign language interpreters to provide foreign language interpretation services and that is registered with the State Court Administrative Office as required by MCR 8.127(C)(2).

(B) [Unchanged.]

(C) Waiver of Appointment of Foreign Language Interpreter. A person may waive the right to a foreign language interpreter established under subrule (B)(1) unless the court determines that the interpreter is required for the protection of the person’s rights and the integrity of the case or court proceeding. The court must find on the record that a person’s waiver of an interpreter is knowing and voluntary. When accepting the person’s waiver, the court may use a foreign language interpreter. For purposes of this waiver, the court is not required to comply with the requirements of subrule (F) and the foreign language interpreter may participate remotely.

- (D) Recordings. The court may make a recording of anything said by a foreign language interpreter or a limited English proficient person while testifying or responding to a colloquy during those portions of the proceedings.
- (E) [Unchanged.]
- (F) Appointment of Foreign Language Interpreters
- (1)-(4) [Unchanged.]
- (5) Except as otherwise provided in this subrule, if a party is financially able to pay for interpretation costs, the court may order the party to reimburse the court for all or a portion of interpretation costs. Reimbursement is prohibited in criminal cases.
- (6)-(7) [Unchanged.]
- (G) Administration of Oath or Affirmation to Interpreters. The court shall administer an oath or affirmation to a foreign language interpreter substantially conforming to the following: “Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will truly, accurately, and impartially interpret in the matter now before the court and not divulge confidential communications, so help you God?”
- (H) [Unchanged.]

**Staff Comment (ADM File No. 2025-03):** The amendment of MCR 1.111 prohibits reimbursement for interpretation costs in criminal cases; allows an individual to become a “qualified foreign language interpreter” if they, among other things, have passed the consecutive or simultaneous portion of the oral exam within the last two calendar years; updates the definitions for “interpret,” “certified foreign language interpreter,” and “qualified foreign language interpreter”; and adds a new definition for a “registered interpreter firm.”

The staff comment is not an authoritative construction by the Court. In addition, adoption of a new rule or amendment in no way reflects a substantive determination by this Court.



I, Elizabeth Kingston-Miller, Clerk of the Michigan Supreme Court, certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the order entered at the direction of the Court.

November 26, 2025

*Elizabeth Kingston-Miller*  
Clerk