

In the Iowa Supreme Court

**In the Matter of Amendments to
Chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules
to include Certified Verbatim
Reporters**

Order

The Iowa Supreme Court adopts amendments to chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules.

The amendments expand the definition of “certified shorthand reporter” to include the “earned designation of Certified Verbatim Reporter.” The amendments also expand the definition of “shorthand” to include a “verbatim record of a proceeding using a closed microphone voice dictation silencer, stenomask, or similar device using oral shorthand and voice notes.”

These amendments to the Iowa Court Rules are provided with this order and are effective January 1, 2024.

Dated this 13th day of November, 2023.

The Iowa Supreme Court

By: 

Susan Larson Christensen, Chief Justice

CHAPTER 46
RULES OF THE BOARD OF EXAMINERS OF SHORTHAND REPORTERS

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Rule 46.2 Definitions. In this chapter:

(1) “Certified shorthand reporter” is an individual who has demonstrated by examination administered by the board of examiners that such individual has achieved proficiency in shorthand equivalent in the discretion of the board to the standard of the National Court Reporters Association for the earned designation of Registered Professional Reporter or the National Verbatim Reporters Association for the earned designation of Certified Verbatim Reporter, namely, the demonstrated ability to write dictated tests at 180 words per minute (question and answer — technical dictation), 200 words per minute (multivoice dictation for transcription or readback), and 225 words per minute (question and answer dictation), or such equivalents thereof as the board may select, each at 95 percent accuracy or better, and demonstrated written knowledge of the reporter’s duties, Iowa legal procedure, and correct English usage at 70 percent accuracy or better. Individuals who hold the designation of Registered Professional Reporter from the National Court Reporters Association ~~by passing the association’s examination on or after May 1, 1973~~ or the earned designation of Certified Verbatim Reporter from the National Verbatim Reporters Association and are in good standing with such association, may, upon application to the board of examiners, become certified shorthand reporters upon successfully passing a written examination concerning a reporter’s duties, Iowa legal procedure, and correct English usage at 70 percent accuracy or better.

(2) “Shorthand” is a method of writing rapidly with stenographic machine by substituting characters, abbreviations, or symbols for letters, words, or phrases or by making a verbatim record of a proceeding using a closed microphone voice dictation silencer, stenomask, or similar device using oral shorthand and voice notes.

(3) “Shorthand reporting” is the professional skill, the practice of which by official shorthand reporters and freelance shorthand reporters serves the judicial branch of state government in courts of record, references by such courts or the law, depositions taken by shorthand reporters, or proceedings of like character, with the end in view of ensuring the accuracy and integrity of the record upon which courts rely for evidence, trial, and appellate review.

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Rule 46.4 Applications. Candidates for examination must make written application on the form approved by the board and provided by the board’s office. An application must be on file with the administrator at the board’s office at least 30 days before the date of the

examination, unless the board for good cause shown grants an applicant additional time to file or otherwise waives the 30-day filing deadline. Good cause for this purpose may include illness, military service, unavoidable casualty or misfortune, or other grounds beyond the control of the applicant. A new application is required for each examination. An applicant to become a certified shorthand reporter must not be examined until the applicant has satisfied the board that the applicant's educational and special training includes at least one of the following:

46.4(1) The applicant has attained proficiency of 200 words per minute or more in a shorthand reporting course.

46.4(2) The applicant has had at least two years of experience as a shorthand reporter in making verbatim records of judicial or related proceedings.

46.4(3) The applicant has graduated from a shorthand reporting school approved by the National Court Reporters Association or the National Verbatim Reporters Association.

Rule 46.5 Examination.

46.5(1) Applicants are required to write shorthand from dictation of regular court proceedings, or such other matter as may be selected by the board of examiners, for such periods as required at varying speeds within the standard.

46.5(2) Applicants will be examined with respect to their knowledge of the statutory duties of a court reporter, general Iowa court procedure, and correct English usage at a 70 percent or better accuracy rate.

46.5(3) Applicants are required to transcribe such part of the dictation as the board of examiners may indicate.

46.5(4) Applicants are required to read aloud such part of the dictated matter as the board of examiners may indicate.

46.5(5) Applicants are required to furnish their own equipment and supplies for taking shorthand. Applicants must make their own transcript on a provided computer or typewriter unless the applicant is otherwise notified.

46.5(6) Upon completion of the examination, all shorthand notes, transcripts, and other papers used in connection with an examination must be returned to the board.

46.5(7) Testing rules and guidelines of the National Court Reporters Association, the National Verbatim Reporters Association, and the Board of the Academy of Professional Reporters for Registered Professional Reporters must be used as a guide to procedure.

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Rule 46.8 Continuing education requirement.

46.8(1) Units of continuing education credits as approved by the board must be completed by each reporter in active practice in Iowa. Failure to comply with the continuing education requirements will be grounds for disciplinary action under rule 46.11. In order to comply, a reporter must meet the requirements of rule 46.8(1)(a) or 46.8(1)(b):

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b. Alternative requirements. In lieu of the requirements set forth in rule 46.8(1)(a), the board will accept satisfactory evidence of compliance with the current continuing education requirements of the National Court Reporters Association for retention on its Registry of Professional Reporters or the National Verbatim Reporters Association for retention on its Registry of Certified Verbatim Reporters.

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46.16(3) Veteran reciprocity.

a. A veteran with an unrestricted professional certificate as a shorthand reporter in another jurisdiction may apply for certification in Iowa through reciprocity. A veteran must pass any examinations required for certification to be eligible for certification through reciprocity and will be given credit for examinations previously passed when consistent with board rules on examination requirements. A veteran's fully completed application for certification submitted under rule 46.16(3) will be expedited and given priority.

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46.16(4) Substantially equivalent certification requirements. The certification requirements of another jurisdiction are substantially equivalent to those of Iowa, if in that jurisdiction an individual must demonstrate, by examination administered by the licensing authority of the jurisdiction, proficiency in shorthand equivalent to the standard of the National Court Reporters Association for the earned designation of Registered Professional Reporter or the standard of the National Verbatim Reporters Association for the earned designation of Certified Verbatim Reporter.

Rule 46.17 Certification by reciprocity.

46.17(1) An applicant with an unrestricted professional certificate as a stenographic shorthand reporter in another jurisdiction may apply for certification in Iowa through reciprocity. The applicant will be given credit for examinations previously passed when consistent with board rules on examination requirements.

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46.17(7) The certification requirements of another jurisdiction are substantially equivalent to those of Iowa, if in that jurisdiction an individual must demonstrate by examination, administered by the licensing authority of the jurisdiction, proficiency in stenographic shorthand equivalent to the standard of the National Court Reporters Association for the earned designation of Registered Professional Reporter or the standard of the National Verbatim Reporters Association for the earned designation of Certified Verbatim Reporter.

