

## CHANGES IN LICENSED COURT INTERPRETER LAW

H.B. 4445 (81st Regular Legislature) took effect September 1, 2011, creating two license designations: basic and master. A “basic” designation will permit the interpreter to interpret court proceedings in justice and municipal courts that are not municipal courts of record, other than a proceeding before the court in which the judge is acting as magistrate. A “master” designation will permit the interpreter to interpret court proceedings in all courts in this state, including justice and municipal courts.

With these changes, interpreters who score at least 60% on each part of the oral examination will be issued the basic designation license. Interpreters who score at least 70% on the oral examination will be issued the master designation license and will be permitted to interpret in court proceedings in all courts in the state. All interpreters must pass the written examination with a score of at least 80%.

According to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR), those licensed court interpreters who held an active court interpreter license should have been issued a replacement license with the “master” designation on or before August 31, 2011. If you did not receive your replacement license, contact TDLR at [CS.Court.Interpreters@license.state.tx.us](mailto:CS.Court.Interpreters@license.state.tx.us) or call at 512.463.6599 or 800.803.9202 with your name, license number, and current address.

These new basic and master designations will not affect a court’s appointment of a licensed court interpreter, under Section 57.002 of the Government Code, until January 1, 2012. Any appointments made prior to January 1, 2012 need not discriminate between the basic or master designation. However, beginning January 1, 2012, a municipal court of record will have to appoint a licensed court interpreter with the master designation.

For more on H.B. 4445 and the amended laws on court interpreters, visit the Court Interpreters page of the TMCEC website at: [http://www.tmcec.com/Programs/Court\\_Interpreters](http://www.tmcec.com/Programs/Court_Interpreters).