

## IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Justice	Court Reporter	
Position Number(s)	Community	Division/Region(s)
82-1304, 82-0448, 82-3533, 82-2025	Various	Court Services

## PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Court Reporter provides court reporting services in all Supreme Court and Territorial Court sittings throughout the Northwest Territories to ensure that a complete and accurate record of court proceedings is created, and organizes and controls the records in a defined protocol to ensure the asset is always useable and retrievable by the GNWT.

## SCOPE

Under the direction of the Chief Court Reporter, the incumbent will, through machine shorthand, provide verbatim reporting as required at all levels of court in the Northwest Territories.

These positions travel on a frequent and regular basis to virtually all communities for court circuit within the Northwest Territories as required.

This position is responsible to ensure a verbatim record of proceedings is created and therefore contributes to the proper and overall administration of justice. The position provides support to the Judiciary and officers of the court, members of the bar, and interacts with members of the public and all participants in the judicial process.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. The Court Reporter attends court when required to do so and creates a verbatim record of the proceedings by writing machine shorthand:

- Uses a Stenograph machine to write verbatim shorthand notes of the proceedings, including writing necessary punctuation and speaker identification;
- Reports proceedings in Supreme and Territorial Court of varying complexity, subject matter and length, and performs reporting such proceedings with a high level of proficiency;
- Locates and provides read backs of shorthand notes of varying complexity, subject matter and length to the Judiciary, juries and officers of the court in limited time frames and stressful environments;

- Demonstrates sound judgment when in the courtroom; e.g. when or whether to interrupt a soft-spoken witness, especially during emotional testimony; when or whether to ask counsel to speak slower or more clearly; trouble-shooting equipment failures;
  - Exercises independent control over developing an evolving writing style from an individual theory;
  - Avoids any appearance of conflict of interest and contributes to the integrity and impartiality of the judicial process by conducting themselves in a manner that is fair and courteous to all participants.
- 2. The Court Reporter prepares transcripts in accordance and in compliance with the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, Territorial legislation and statute, the *Supreme Court Rules of Court* and practice directions, the *Territorial Court Act*, and distributes transcripts when required:**
- Organizes and manages the safekeeping of electronic records which is the official record of all court proceedings;
  - Works independently with minimal supervision, maintaining responsibility for the coordination and prioritization of work;
  - Troubleshoot all court reporting specialized software and hardware concerns;
  - Carries out extensive terminological and documentary research from varying sources to ensure the written record is accurately reflective of speaker's intent; i.e. ensuring correct medical, pharmaceutical, legal, construction, environmental terminology in context.
- 3. The Court Reporter is expected to remain current with new and evolving practices in the profession through maintaining membership in the Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association (continuing education can be accessed through the Alberta Shorthand Reporters Association or the National Court Reporters Association).**
- Increases and maintains knowledge and skill development through participation in workshops, professional meetings, interaction with professional colleagues, and continuing education programs;
  - Implements knowledge and skill developed through continuing education to maintain proficiency in incumbent's skill set as recognized by professional body;
  - Observes and adheres to the powers and duties of the Practice Review Committee, Discipline Committee and the Code of Ethics of the professional body.

#### **KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES**

- Demonstrated ability to proficiently write machine shorthand for transcription by computer aided software [CAT];
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of English language concepts, mastery of grammar and punctuation principles and excellent proofreading skills are essential;
- Demonstrated initiative and desire to self-assess and develop individual writing proficiency and editing skills;
- Must have a sound working knowledge of court reporting practices and demonstrated understanding of the role of the court reporter as an officer of the court;
- Demonstrated initiative and desire to self-assess and develop individual writing proficiency and editing skills;
- Sound judgment to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of information;
- Self-motivated and able to work independently and as a team player;

- Demonstrated ability to work well in a cross-cultural environment;
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively and efficiently as part of a multi-disciplined judicial team;
- Ability to proficiently operate Microsoft Word, email and an ability to perform basic research on the Internet.

**Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:**

Must have diploma certification from an accredited court reporting program with recent working experience [within 1 – 5 years] using Computer Aided Transcription [CAT] software.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

Description	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
The Court Reporter must maintain continuous movement of the fingers and wrists when writing shorthand. The Court Reporter is "locked" into a very confined position that allows only for restricted movement of the shoulders and forearms, resulting in muscle fatigue and creating undue pressure on the back, neck and shoulders.	Daily	Hours at a time with no break.	High
The Court Reporter is required to lift and carry reporting equipment and laptops to court and while on court circuit (10-20 pounds).	Daily	15 - 30 minutes	Low

**Environmental Conditions**

Description	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
Traveling in small planes, potentially during adverse weather conditions.	Up to 10 days per month	Up to 4 hours per day.	Medium
Working in inadequate facilities on circuit (lack of proper chairs, lack of proper ventilation, lack of proper heating, noise).	Up to 10 days per month	Hours at a time with no break.	Medium to High
Heightened exposure to communicable diseases.	Daily	While in court and on circuit	Low

**Sensory Demands**

Description	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
Listening and concentrating intensely, routinely to multiple speakers at high rates of speech, emotional and/or graphic testimony, complex and technical evidence, while using motor skills to write shorthand.	Daily	Hours at a time with no break.	High
Heightened sensory demands required (hearing, concentration, motor skills) due to external factors, i.e. distractions by fans, white noise, the court gallery.	Daily	Hours at a time	High
Focused while proofreading and editing transcripts.	Daily	Hours at a time	High

**Mental Demands**

Description	Frequency	Duration	Intensity
May have to work extended hours as dictated by the Court with little or no advance notice in either the capacity of court sittings and/or transcript production to meet deadlines imposed by others.	2 - 4 x per week	Varies	High
Regular and frequent requirement of circuit travel to remote locations of the NWT. Disruption of personal life and personal commitments.	2 x per week	Up to 5 days at a time; up to 10 days per month	Medium - High
Concentrated attention to detail and accuracy while editing/proofreading transcripts causes varying degrees of mental stress, as the court reporter must certify the accuracy of transcripts upon completion.	Daily	Hours at a time	High
Providing readbacks of varying length and complexity of the proceedings in open court is mentally demanding. Readbacks often resolve dispute and objections among witnesses, lawyers and Judges, and are an extremely stressful part in the performance of	Monthly	Varies	Medium - High

a court reporter's duties			
Experience other people's emotional trauma (murder, sexual assault and child abuse) and must cope with witness's anxiety in reliving the trauma (emotional witnesses cry, mumble, speak very quickly, softly, or in broken sentences and/or English) to create a full and accurate verbatim record	Monthly	Varies	Medium
See graphic exhibits entered in court proceedings	Monthly	Varies	Medium
Accused and witnesses approach staff in social settings. This may impact on personal and social life	Monthly	Varies	Medium

#### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Position Security** (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☒ X Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☐ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check