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**MINISTRY: JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES**

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO: 3638**

**DATE OF QUESTION: 14 OCTOBER 2022**

**DATE OF SUBMISSION: 28 OCTOBER 2022**

**Adv G Breytenbach (DA) to ask the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services:**

1. What qualifications, formal and/or otherwise, are required for appointment as an interpreter in the (a) lower and (b) high courts;
2. whether any assessment of interpreters’ work is carried out in real time court situations; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
3. what training is provided for interpreters who work in specialised courts?

**NW4456E**

**REPLY:**

1. (a) Qualifications requirement for entry Level 5 Court Interpreters is Grade 12

(Matric) or an equivalent qualification at NQF Level 4, and good proficiency in the

Indigenous Languages of the area in question.

Qualifications requirement for Senior Interpreters is a National Diploma in Legal Interpreting at NQF Level 5, and three (3) years’ practical experience in court interpreting or Matric/Grade 12 or an equivalent qualification at NQF Level 4 and ten (10) years’ practical experience in court interpreting. The good proficiency in the Indigenous languages of the area in question will also be a requirement.

Qualifications requirement for Principal Interpreters is a National Diploma in Legal Interpreting and five (5) years’ practical experience in court interpreting, Matric/Grade 12 or an equivalent qualification at NQF Level 4. Good proficiency in the Indigenous languages of the area in question is also a requirement

Qualifications requirements for Cluster Manager Language Service, is a National

Diploma in Legal Interpreting at NQF Level 5 and six (6) years’ practical experience in court interpreting, of which three (3) years should be at supervisory Level, Grade 12 or an equivalent qualification at NQF Level 4. Good proficiency in the Indigenous languages of the area in question is also a requirement.

Qualifications requirements for a Provincial Manager Language Service, is a Bachelor`s Degree/National Diploma in Legal Interpreting at NQF Level 6 and six (6) years’ practical experience in court interpreting, of which three (3) years should be at supervisory level, Grade 12 or an equivalent qualification at NQF Level 4. Good proficiency in the Indigenous languages of the area in question is also a requirement.

1. The Admission requirements into Court Interpreting in the High Courts is Grade 12 and a National Diploma in Legal Interpreting or equivalent relevant qualification, on NQF level 6. A minimum of three (3) years practical experience in Court Interpreting/ or Grade 12 and minimum ten (10) years’ practical experience in Court Interpreting.
2. Assessment of Court Interpreters is always carried out in a real time court by Language Service managers when Court is in session. There is a standardized assessment/evaluation tool that assesses skills such as listening, memory retention, pronunciation, knowledge of both the Source Language and the Target Language, and turn-around time in encoding and decoding the message conveyed, etc. The tool also assists in determining the skills gap, and also informs the required training interventions.

All court interpreters enter into a Performance Agreement on an annual basis and assessments are conducted with the respective supervisor’s mid-year and on an annual basis. In addition, the management of Court Interpreters (Principal Interpreter/Cluster Manager) conducts assessments in real time while the Interpreter is in court conducting interpretation.

1. Court Interpreters who are placed in Specialised Courts are currently being offered an In-House training by the Justice College on Expert Evidence. The Course content includes, but not limited to, Forensic Pathology, Cyber-crimes, Ballistics and Toxicology, and Advance Interpreting.

The Department is currently engaging Institutions of Higher Learning and the Judiciary to craft a specialised Training Curriculum for the Specialised Courts, to cover areas such as dealing with vulnerable groups, recently introduced pieces of legislation relating to commercial crimes and Human Trafficking and also understanding Court Procedures, Legal Concepts and their Interpretation.

Training needs are identified based on the requirements of the specific Specialised Court. Training has been provided in the area of Legal Interpreting and, Expert Evidence.