



OAKLAND
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

Conference & Court Reporting Mini Assessment

DUE TUES.

Prepared by
The Office of Institutional Research

December 1999

Mini Assessment Conference & Court Reporter (COU) Program

INTRODUCTION

This report examines a highly focused set of questions pertaining to the long term need and viability of the Conference & Court Reporting (COU) program. National, state and regional trends in employment, earnings, employee qualifications, job growth, educational opportunities, enrollment and degrees specific to the occupation were investigated. Information presented in this report was collected from well established and validated external as well as internal sources. Collectively, this information addresses issues pertinent to the College's decision-making process.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- X Job opportunities are expected to decline or remain stable through 2006. Technology coupled with no foreseeable expansion of the court system in Southeast Michigan are impacting this trend.
- X Programs approved by and individuals certified by the National Court Reporting Association have the best chance to succeed.
- X Annual salaries range from \$22,880 to \$41,310 based on 2,080 hours worked per year. However, large proportions of these workers are self-employed and/or work part-time.
- X OCCs program is one of four public post-secondary programs in the state. The number of private programs is unknown.
- X Annual state-wide enrollment has ranged between 100 and 200 students over the past five years. Meanwhile, the number of graduates has ranged between 8 and 17 students (annually).
- X Enrollment in BIS courses has declined by 18% over the last five years and by more than half (52%) since 1989-90.

QUESTIONS & ISSUES

- X What is the annual credit hour production and revenue generated by the program?
- X What are the annual costs associated with sustaining the program?
- X Is the program currently NCRA approved?
- X To what extent does the program utilize the technology typically used in the industry?
- X Is the need for qualified individuals to work in this field being met by other organizations?
- X What level of enrollment is necessary to sustain the program? Is this level practical and justifiable given labor market trends for this occupation?

SUPPORTING DATA

Employment

National: Court reporters medical transcriptionists, and stenographers held 98,000 jobs in 1996. More than 1 in 4 are self-employed. Of those who worked for a wage or salary, about one-third worked for State and local governments, a reflection of the large number of court reporters working in courts, legislatures, and various agencies. About one-fourth worked for hospitals and physicians' offices. Other stenographers and court reporters worked for colleges and universities, secretarial and court reporting services, temporary help supply services, and law firms. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

State: Currently, there are approximately 2,500 Court Reporters in the state of Michigan. (Source: *Michigan Occupational Information System*)

Regional: Overall employment is projected to grow more slowly than average (0 to 9 percent decline through 2006), as growth among medical transcriptionists is offset by the decline among stenographers. Certified medical transcriptionists and court reporters should have the best prospects. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Training, Qualifications, Advancement

A high school diploma is sufficient for stenographers; employers prefer medical transcriptionists who have completed a vocational school or community college program; and court reporters generally complete a 2- or 4-year post-secondary school program. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Court reporters generally complete a 2- or 4-year training program, offered by about 300 post secondary vocational and technical schools and colleges. About 110 programs have been approved by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), all of which teach computer-aided transcription and real-time reporting. NCRA-approved programs require students to capture 225 words per minute. Court reporters in the Federal Government generally must capture at least 205 words a minute.

Some States require court reporters to be notary publics, or to be a Certified Court Reporter (CCR); reporters must pass a State certification test administered by a board of examiners to earn this designation. The National Court Reporters Association confers the designation, Registered Professional Reporter (RPR), upon those who pass a two-part examination and participate in continuing education programs. Although voluntary, the RPR designation is recognized as a mark of distinction in this field. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

Earnings

National: Court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers had median earnings of about \$410 a week (\$21,320 annually) in 1996. The middle 50 percent earned between \$340 and \$550 (\$17,680 - \$28,600); the lowest paid 10 percent earned less than \$280 (\$14,560); and the highest paid 10 percent earned over \$840 a week (\$43,680 annually).

Court reporters generally earn higher salaries than stenographers or medical transcriptionists, and many supplement their income by doing additional freelance work. According to a National Court Reporters Association survey of its members, average earnings for court reporters were about \$1,080 per week in 1995. According to a 1996 survey by the American Association for Medical Transcription, over 4 out of 10 members earned less than \$25,000 a year, more than 3 out of 10 earned between \$25,000 and \$35,000, and over 2 out of 10 earned over \$35,000. Regardless of specialty, earnings depend on education, experience, and geographic location. (Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics*)

State:

Regional: Salary ranges in Michigan by county are as follows:

Annual Salaries

County	Circuit Court	District Court
Oakland/ Pontiac	\$41,310	\$22,880 - \$35,319
Kent/ Grand Rapids	\$40,260	\$25,406 - \$32,269
Saginaw	\$33,982	\$19,028 - \$22,238
Kalamazoo	\$33,294 - \$43,282	\$22,864 - \$27,750
Ingham	\$30,087 - \$43,947	\$23,497 - \$27,843
Berrien	\$31,823 - \$42,646	\$19,758 - \$26,864
Jackson	\$22,669 - \$30,659	\$23,614
Muskegon	\$41,172	\$21,873 - \$27,745
Monroe		\$20,924 - \$25,233
Grand Traverse	\$31,902 - \$40,404	\$17,764 - \$25,701
Genesee/ Flint	\$33,214 - \$42,494	\$33,097 - \$38,880
Wayne/ Detroit	\$35,412 - \$43,504	\$34,476 - \$41,438

(Source: Michigan Occupational Information System)

Job Outlook/Forecast

National: Overall employment of court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers is projected to grow more **slowly than the average** for all occupations. Employment growth among medical transcriptionists should be offset by the decline among stenographers, and the number of court reporters should remain fairly stable. Employment of court reporters should be stable. The growing number of conventions, conferences, depositions, seminars, and similar meetings in which proceedings are recorded should create demand for court reporters. Although many of these events are videotaped, a written transcript must still be created for legal purposes or if the proceedings are to be published. Also, the trend to provide instantaneous written captions for the deaf and hearing impaired should strengthen demand for steno-captioners. In addition, demand should grow for court reporters willing to freelance or take depositions for court reporting service bureaus. However, budget constraints should limit the ability of Federal, State, and local courts to expand, even in the face of rising numbers of criminal court cases and civil lawsuits. Competition for entry-level jobs is increasing, as more workers are attracted to the occupation. Opportunities should be best for those who earn National Court Reporters Association certification. (Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

State: The expectation is that the demand for Court Reporters will decline due to increased recognition of video recordings as legal records. Little to no change is expected for Court Reporters, as there is no expectation for growth in the number of judges in Michigan. (Source: Michigan Occupational Information System)

Regional:

Education/Training Opportunities

Similar Programs

Michigan Post-Secondary Institutions with Similar Programs

Institution	Program Title
Gogebic Community College	
Lansing Community College	
Oakland Community College	
Central Michigan University	
Elsa Cooper Institute of Court Reporting	(248) 352-1600
Academy of Court Reporting	

(Source: Michigan Department of Education, Program Inventory)

Enrollment

Annual State-Wide Enrollment

Academic Year	State-Wide Enrollment	Percent Change	OCC Enrollment	Percent Change
1993-94	199		95	
1994-95	144	-27.6	52	-45.3
1995-96	116	-19.4	40	-23.1
1996-97	107	-7.8	40	0.0
1997-98	132	23.4	47	17.5

(Source: Michigan Department of Education, IPEDS: Year-End Enrollments)

Graduates

Annual State-Wide Degrees

Academic Year	State-Wide Graduates	Percent Change	OCC Graduates	Percent Change
1993-94			1	
1994-95	8		1	0.0
1995-96	17	240	0	-100.0
1996-97	11	-35.3	1	100.0
1997-98	16	45.5	0	-100.0

(Source: Michigan Department of Education, IPEDS: Degrees Awarded)

Academy of Court Reporting (Southfield, Michigan)

Graduates between 70 and 80 students per year in their 2 year day time program and in their 3 year evening program.

Elsa Cooper Institute of Court Reporting (Southfield, Michigan)

Enrolls approximately 100 students per year and graduates between 35-40 students per year. Students completing the 2 year day program and 4 year evening program receive an Associates Degree.

Sources of Additional Information

For information about careers, training, and certification in court reporting, contact:

National Court Reporters Association, 8224 Old Courthouse Rd., Vienna, VA 22182. Homepage: <http://www.verbatimreporters.com>

For information on a career as a medical transcriptionist, visit AAMT's Internet site or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

American Association for Medical Transcription, P.O. Box 576187, Modesto, CA 95357. Homepage: <http://www.aamt.org/aamt>.

(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Professional Certification

Registered Professional Reporter Certification (RPR) More than half of NCRA's reporter members have received certification as Registered Professional Reporters. To earn RPR status, reporters must pass skills and knowledge tests that are given twice a year at more than 100 sites throughout the U.S. and abroad.

The skills portion of the exam includes dictation at speeds up to 225 words per minute. The American Council on Education has evaluated the RPR exam as being worth 21 credit hours toward a bachelor's degree.

Registered Merit Reporter (RMR)

NCRA also offers a Registered Merit Reporter examination, which is similar to the RPR exam but more challenging, with speeds up to 260 words per minute. The American Council on Education has evaluated the RMR as being worth three additional college credit hours toward a bachelor's degree.

Registered Diplomat Reporter (RDR)

The Registered Diplomat Reporter certification is acquired by passing a written knowledge exam designed to reflect professional learning acquired over several years of experience as a reporter.

Certified Real-time Reporter (CRR)

The Certified Real-time Reporter designation promotes and recognizes competence in the specialized skill of converting the spoken word into the written word within seconds. Reporters use real-time skills to produce captions of live TV shows for the benefit of deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers. Real-time is also a key factor in complying with the access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Certified Manager of Reporting Services Institute (CMRS)

The CMRS Institute provides college-level training to reporters who wish to improve their knowledge and practice in management. The Institute consists of two intensive teaching modules plus reading and writing assignments for each, and an independent research assignment.

Certified Reporting Instructor (CRI)

The Certified Reporting Instructor program establishes criteria for excellence in reporter-training skills and

encourages continual learning to maintain and enhance these skills.

Certified Legal Video Specialist (CLVS)

Recognizing the need for high standards in the pretrial use of videotape for depositions, NCRA in 1977 began conducting videotape workshops for reporters and interested non-reporters. By 1984 the program had evolved to include a certification exam as a mark of competence in this skill.

Continuing Education

To retain the RPR, RMR or RDR designations, reporters must participate in NCRA-approved continuing education programs and earn at least 30 continuing education credits every three years. NCRA's continuing education program is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training, an organization designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency.

(Source: <http://www.verbatimreporters.com>)

Court Reporting Program (COU)
Notes from 12-20-99

Students can take the required 8 courses and then apply to take the state certification exam. All it takes is a letter from the College (faculty in the program). It appears by looking at the IPEDS Degrees report that these students are being awarded an OCC Certificate. Hence, an under counting of actual graduates from the program.

Carol Brown will call meeting early in the Winter 2000 session to discuss the possible creation of a "comprehensive legal program" at the college e.g. combining Legal Assisting, Legal Secretary, Court Reporting, etc.

IR will investigate programs at Elsa Cooper Institute and at the Academy of Court Reporting. This information will be incorporated into the Mini Assessment.

Mini Assessment Technical Notes

Employment Forecast

Changing employment between 1996 and 2006

If the statement reads "Employment is projected to..."

Grow much faster than the average (Increase 36 percent or more)

Grow faster than the average (Increase 21 to 35 percent)

Grow about as fast as average (Increase 10 to 20 percent)

Grow more slowly than average, or little or no change increase 0 to 9 percent decline (Decrease 1 percent or more)

Graduate Follow-Up

Survey of all OCC graduates approximately one year after receiving their OCC Degree/Certificate. Commonly, a 63% response rate is attained among all graduates. Response rates among graduates from a specific program may differ.

**Mini Assessment
Conference & Court Reporter (COU) Program**

INTRODUCTION

Note: This section always remains the same.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Note: Executive Summary section. Unique to every study.

SUPPORTING DATA

Employment

National:

(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

State:

(Source: Michigan Occupational Information System)

Regional:

(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Training, Qualifications, Advancement

(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Earnings

National:

Annualize where necessary.

(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

State:

Regional:

Annual Salaries

County	job title	job title
Oakland/ Pontiac		
Kent/ Grand Rapids		
Saginaw		
Kalamazoo		
Ingham		
Berrien		
Jackson		
Muskegon		
Monroe		
Grand Traverse		
Genesee/ Flint		
Wayne/ Detroit		

(Source: Michigan Occupational Information System)

Job Outlook/Forecast

National:

(Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

State:

(Source: Michigan Occupational Information System)

Regional:

Education/Training Opportunities

Similar Programs

**Michigan Post-Secondary Institutions
with Similar Programs**

Institution	Program Title

(Source: ?)

Enrollment

Annual State-Wide Enrollment

Academic Year	State-Wide Enrollment	Percent Change	OCC Enrollment	Percent Change
1993-94				
1994-95				
1995-96				
1996-97				
1997-98				

(Source: Michigan Department of Education)

Graduates

Annual State-Wide Degrees

Academic Year	State-Wide Graduates	Percent Change	OCC Graduates	Percent Change
1993-94				
1994-95				
1995-96				
1996-97				
1997-98				

(Source: Michigan Department of Education)

OCC SPECIFIC INFORMATION

1. Basic Student Demographics
2. Annual Credit Hour Trends (courses)
3. Graduate Follow-Up Data



Accessibility Information



Search by occupation: **GO**

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Court Reporters, Medical Transcriptionists, and Stenographers

OCCUPATIONS

- [Management](#)
- [Professional and Technical](#)
- [Sales](#)
- [Administrative Support](#)
- [Service](#)
- [Mechanics](#)
- [Construction](#)
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- [Laborers and Helpers](#)
- [Job Opportunities in the Armed Forces](#)
- [Career Guide to Industries](#)
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[Nature of the Work](#) | [Working Conditions](#) | [Employment](#) | [Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement](#) | [Job Outlook](#) | [Earnings](#) | [Related Occupations](#) | [Sources of Additional Information](#)

Significant Points

[Download a printer-friendly version \(PDF 149K\)](#)

- A high school diploma is sufficient for stenographers; employers prefer medical transcriptionists who have completed a vocational school or community college program; and court reporters usually need a 2- or 4-year postsecondary school degree.
- Overall employment is projected to grow about as fast as the average, as rapid growth among medical transcriptionists is offset by the decline among stenographers.
- Because of their relatively high salaries, keen competition should exist for court reporter positions; certified court reporters and medical transcriptionists should enjoy the best job prospects.

Nature of the Work

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Although court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers all transcribe spoken words, the specific responsibilities of each of these workers differ markedly. Court reporters and stenographers typically take verbatim reports of speeches, conversations, legal proceedings, meetings, and other events when written accounts of spoken words are necessary for correspondence, records, or legal proof. Medical transcriptionists, on the other hand, translate and edit recorded dictation by physicians and other healthcare providers regarding patient assessment and treatment.

Court reporters document all statements made in official proceedings using a stenotype machine, which allows them to press multiple keys at a time to record combinations of letters representing sounds, words, or phrases. These symbols are then recorded on computer disks or CD-ROM, which are then translated and displayed as text in a process called computer-aided transcription. Stenotype machines used for real-time captioning are linked directly to the computer. As the reporter keys in the symbols, they instantly appear as text on the screen. This is used for closed captioning for the hearing-impaired on television, or in courts, classrooms, or meetings. In all of these cases, accuracy is crucial because there is only one person creating an official transcript.

Although many court reporters record official proceedings in the courtroom, the majority of court reporters work outside the courtroom. Freelance reporters, for example, take depositions for attorneys in offices and document proceedings of meetings, conventions, and other private activities. Others capture the proceedings in government agencies of all levels, from the U.S. Congress to State and local governing bodies. Court reporters who specialize in captioning live television programming, commonly known as *stenocaptioners*, work for television networks or cable stations captioning news, emergency broadcasts, sporting events, and other programming.

Medical transcriptionists use headsets and transcribing machines to listen to recordings by physicians and other healthcare professionals. These workers transcribe a variety of medical reports about emergency room visits, diagnostic imaging studies, operations, chart reviews, and final summaries. To understand and accurately transcribe dictated reports into a format that is clear and comprehensible for the reader, the medical transcriptionist must understand the language of medicine, anatomy and physiology, diagnostic procedures, and treatment. They also must be able to translate medical jargon and abbreviations into their expanded forms. After reviewing and editing for grammar and clarity, the medical transcriptionist transcribes the dictated reports and returns them in either printed or electronic form to the dictator for review and signature, or correction. These reports eventually become a part of the patient's permanent file. (Medical secretaries, who are discussed in the *Handbook* statement on secretaries, may also transcribe as part of their jobs.)

Stenographers take dictation and then transcribe their notes on a word processor or onto a computer diskette. They may take dictation using either shorthand or a stenotype machine, which prints shorthand symbols. General stenographers, including most beginners, take routine dictation and perform other office tasks such as typing, filing, answering telephones, and operating office machines. Experienced and highly skilled stenographers often supervise other stenographers, typists, and clerical workers and take more difficult dictation. For example, skilled stenographers may attend staff meetings and provide word-for-word records or summary reports of the proceedings to the participants. Some experienced stenographers take dictation in foreign languages; others work as public stenographers serving traveling business people and others. Technical stenographers must know the medical, legal, engineering, or scientific terminology used in a particular profession.

Working Conditions

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The majority of these workers are employed in comfortable settings. Court reporters, for example, work in the offices of attorneys, courtrooms, legislatures, and conventions. Medical transcriptionists are found in hospitals, doctors' offices, or medical transcription services. Stenographers usually work in clean, well-lighted offices. An increasing number of court reporters and medical transcriptionists work from home-based offices as subcontractors for law firms, hospitals, and transcription services.

Work in these occupations presents few hazards, although sitting in the same position for long periods can be tiring, and workers can suffer wrist, back, neck, or eye problems due to strain and risk repetitive motion injuries such as carpal tunnel syndrome. Also, the pressure to be accurate and fast can also be stressful.

Many court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers work

many court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers work a standard 40-hour week, although about 1 in 4 works part time. A substantial number of court reporters and medical transcriptionists are self-employed, which may result in irregular working hours.

Employment

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Court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers held about 110,000 jobs in 1998. More than 1 in 4 were self-employed. Of those who worked for a wage or salary, about one-third worked for State and local governments, a reflection of the large number of court reporters working in courts, legislatures, and various agencies. About 1 in 4 worked for hospitals and physicians' offices, reflecting the concentration of medical transcriptionists in health services. Other transcriptionists, stenographers, and court reporters worked for colleges and universities, secretarial and court reporting services, temporary help supply services, and law firms.

Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement [\[About this section\]](#)

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The training for each of the three occupations varies significantly. Court reporters usually complete a 2- or 4-year training program, offered by about 300 postsecondary vocational and technical schools and colleges. Currently, the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) has approved about 110 programs, all of which offer courses in computer-aided transcription and real-time reporting. NCRA-approved programs require students to capture 225 words per minute. Court reporters in the Federal Government usually must capture at least 205 words a minute.

Some States require court reporters to be Notary Publics, or to be a Certified Court Reporter (CCR); reporters must pass a State certification test administered by a board of examiners to earn this designation. The National Court Reporters Association confers the designation, Registered Professional Reporter (RPR), upon those who pass a two-part examination and participate in continuing education programs. Although voluntary, the RPR designation is recognized as a mark of distinction in this field.

For medical transcriptionist positions, understanding medical terminology is essential. Good English grammar and punctuation skills are required, as well as familiarity with personal computers and word processing software. Good listening skills are also necessary, because some doctors and health care professionals speak English as a second language.

Employers prefer to hire transcriptionists who have completed postsecondary training in medical transcription, offered by many vocational schools and community colleges. Completion of a 2-year associate degree program—including coursework in anatomy, medical terminology, medicolegal issues, and English grammar and punctuation—is highly recommended. Many of these programs include supervised on-the-job experience. The American Association for Medical Transcription awards the voluntary designation, Certified Medical Transcriptionist (CMT), to those who earn passing scores on written and practical examinations. As in many other fields, certification is recognized as a sign of competence in medical transcription.

Stenographic skills are taught in high schools, vocational schools, community colleges, and proprietary business schools. For stenographer jobs, employers prefer to hire high school graduates and seldom have a

preference among the many different shorthand methods. Although requirements vary in private firms, applicants with the best speed and accuracy usually receive first consideration in hiring. To qualify for jobs in the Federal Government, stenographers must be able to take dictation at a minimum of 80 words per minute and type at least 40 words per minute. Workers must achieve higher rates to advance to more responsible positions.

Stenographers, especially those with strong interpersonal and communication skills may advance to secretarial positions with more responsibilities. In addition, some stenographers complete the necessary education to become court reporters or medical transcriptionists.

Job Outlook

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Overall employment of court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers is projected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2008. Employment growth among medical transcriptionists should be offset by the decline among stenographers, while the number of court reporters should remain fairly constant.

Demand for medical transcriptionists is expected to increase due to rapid growth in health care industries spurred by a growing and aging population. Advancements in voice recognition technology are not projected to reduce the need for medical transcriptionists because these workers will continue to be needed to review and edit drafts for accuracy. Moreover, growing numbers of medical transcriptionists will be needed to amend patients' records, edit for grammar, and discover discrepancies in medical records. Job opportunities should be the best for those who earn an associate degree or certification from the American Association for Medical Transcription.

There should be little or no change in employment of court reporters. Despite increasing numbers of civil and criminal cases, budget constraints limit the ability of Federal, State, and local courts to expand. The growing number of conventions, conferences, depositions, seminars, and similar meetings in which proceedings are recorded should create limited demand for court reporters. Although many of these events are videotaped, a written transcript must still be created for legal purposes or if the proceedings are to be published. In addition, the trend to provide instantaneous written captions for the deaf and hearing-impaired should strengthen demand for stenocaptioners. Because of their relatively high salaries, keen competition should exist for court reporter positions; those with certification should enjoy the best job prospects.

The widespread use of dictation machines has greatly reduced the need for office stenographers. Audio recording equipment and the use of personal computers by managers and other professionals should continue to further decrease the demand for these workers.

Earnings

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Court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers had median annual earnings of \$25,430 in 1998. The middle 50 percent earned between \$21,060 and \$31,470; the lowest paid 10 percent earned less than \$17,060; and the highest paid 10 percent earned over \$39,070. Median 1997 annual salaries in the industries employing the largest number of these workers were:

Local government, except education and hospitals	\$29,300
State government, except education and hospitals	29,000
Mailing, reproduction, and stenographic services	28,600
Hospitals	23,500
Offices and clinics of medical doctors	22,600

Court reporters usually earn higher salaries than stenographers or medical transcriptionists, and many supplement their income by doing additional freelance work. According to a National Court Reporters Association survey of its members, average annual earnings for court reporters were about \$54,000 in 1999. According to the 1999 HayGroup survey about three-quarters of healthcare institutions paid their medical transcriptionists for time worked, with average salaries ranging from \$20,000 to \$30,000 annually. About a fifth of those respondents used a combination of payment methods (time worked plus incentive for production), with average salaries ranging from \$28,000 to \$36,000 annually. Regardless of specialty, earnings depend on education, experience, and geographic location.

Related Occupations

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A number of other workers type, record information, and process paperwork. Among these are [administrative assistants](#), [bookkeepers](#), [receptionists](#), [secretaries](#), and [human resource clerks](#). Other workers who provide medical and legal support include [paralegals](#), [medical assistants](#), and [medical record technicians](#).

Sources of Additional Information

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Disclaimer: Links to non-BLS Internet sites are provided for your convenience and do not constitute an endorsement.

For information about careers, training, and certification in court reporting, contact:

- National Court Reporters Association, 8224 Old Courthouse Rd., Vienna, VA 22182. Internet: <http://www.verbatimreporters.com>

For information on a career as a medical transcriptionist, contact:

- American Association for Medical Transcription, P.O. Box 576187, Modesto, CA 95357. Internet: <http://www.aamt.org>

For information on a career as a federal court reporter, contact:

- United States Court Reporters Association, 1904 Marvel Lane, Liberty, MO 64068. Internet: <http://www.uscra.org>

State employment service offices can provide information about job openings for court reporters, medical transcriptionists, and stenographers.

O*NET Codes: 55302A and 55302B [About the O*NET codes](#)

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The [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) is an agency within the [U.S. Department of Labor](#).

E-Mail: ooinfo@bls.gov

Last Updated: December 14, 2000

Page URL: <http://stats.bls.gov/oco/ocos152.htm>

Michigan Occupational Information System

Miniscript #352 - Court Reporter

Court Reporters also known as shorthand reporters, make word-for-word records of any proceeding taken in the courtroom, such as examinations, testimonies, judicial opinions or sentences of the court, by means of machine, shorthand or electronic recording equipment.

General Job Tasks

- Record proceedings (either stenographically or electronically); reading and/or preparing portions of the transcript during a trial at the judge's request; and asking speakers to clarify inaudible statements
- Operate a computer to aid in transcription; secure all records in his or her office; and filing a legible transcript of records of a court case with the court clerk's office
- Furnish a transcript of the records taken to any party on request
- Other types of shorthand reporters are free-lance (self-employed) reporters, hearings reporters, legislative reporters, closed captioning reporters, and data entry reporters

Work Environment

- Court Reporters perform their duties according to court rules and under the supervision of the presiding judge. Two or more Reporters may be assigned to work on a case in relays when copies of the court proceedings are needed by lawyers during a trial or at the end of the court day.
- In general, Court Reporters work a 40-hour week at minimum. They might work overtime with no extra compensation. Free-lance Reporters work hours might be irregular. On some days Reporters may work more than 10 hours.

Skills/Personal Characteristics/Education

- **Skills/Personal Characteristics** - You should be able to use reason and logic; understand sentence structure and the meanings of words; see detail in written material; recognize errors in numbers, spelling, and punctuation; write in shorthand and type; know/work with special vocabulary such as used in legal/medical fields; work under pressure and meet deadlines; concentrate and be attentive to detail; work within precise standards of accuracy; have agreeable working relationships with others.
- **Education** - A Certificate (program of up to one year of study beyond high school) or an Associate Degree (two years of study beyond high school) or a Bachelor's Degree (four years of study beyond high school) may qualify a person for this occupation.

Earnings

- Nationally, annual earnings of Certified Court Reporters working for federal courts averaged \$50,000 in mid 1999. This included fees that court reporters charged for transcript copies. In federal courts in Michigan, experienced Court Reporters' salaries started at about \$53,130 per year in 1999.

Outlook

- Nationally, there were over 50,000 Court Reporters employed by courts, legislatures, and agencies in the executive branch of government in 1996. Approximately 21,000 of this number were certified by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA). Three fourths of NCRA's membership are free-lance reporters, while the remainder are employees of state or federal courts.

School-to-Work Opportunities

- Mentorships, job shadowing, and cooperative education (co-op) jobs as a court reporter, will greatly benefit students interested in this career field.
- Postsecondary programs in court and conference reporting may offer co-op or internship opportunities. Individuals may observe Court Reporters by attending civil or criminal court cases.

Next Steps

- Read the full Court Reporter MOIScript, which details high school classes and career and vocational-technical programs that are helpful in pursuing a career goal in stenography.
- Investigate court specialties and college programs that match your career interests.
- Review your career plan and education goals to determine your next steps; pursue career counseling and testing to develop a career plan.
- Participate in job shadowing and mentorship programs where available, or interview a court reporter to get a closer look at this career and related occupations.

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Michigan Occupational Information System MOIScript #352 - COURT REPORTER

Court Reporters also known as shorthand reporters, make word-for-word records of any proceeding taken in the courtroom, such as examinations, testimonies, judicial opinions or sentences of the court, by means of machine shorthand or electronic recording equipment.

NATURE OF THE OCCUPATION

Court Reporters may:

Record proceedings (either stenographically or electronically)

Read and/or prepare portions of the transcript during a trial at the judge's request

Ask speakers to clarify inaudible statements

Operate a computer to aid in transcription

Secure all records

File a verbatim (word for word) transcript, when ordered, of records of court proceedings with the clerk of the court

Furnish a transcript of the records taken to any party on request

Other types of shorthand reporters are free-lance (self-employed) reporters, hearings reporters, legislative reporters, closed captioning reporters (captioners), and rapid data entry reporters.

The tools, equipment, and materials used may include:

* Computerized-stenotype machines	* Computers/PC's
* Courter Reporters Manuals	* Printers
* Legal/Medical Dictionaries	
* Computer-aided transcript software programs	

OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTIES

202.362-010 COURT REPORTERS, also known as shorthand reporters, make word-for-word records of any proceedings taken in the courtroom such as examinations, testimonies, judicial opinions, the judgment or sentence of the court, by machine shorthand or electronic recording equipment. Most courtrooms are assigned one judge and one court reporter, although there are courts that have court reporter "pool". Court reporters are assigned to a specific courtroom on a given day.

In addition to learning about these specialties, you may also find it helpful to explore the following MOIScripts:

060 SECRETARY

065 TYPIST

220 PROOFREADER (Scopist)

392 PERSONNEL CLERK

WORKING CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Court Reporters perform their duties according to court rules and under the supervision of the presiding judge. Two or more Reporters may be assigned to work on a case in relays when copies of the court proceedings are needed by lawyers during a trial or at the end of the court day. One Reporter records and then immediately transcribes his or her notes, while the other takes over the recording.

Reporters usually record proceedings in well lighted and air conditioned court or hearing rooms and transcribe in their offices. They might be assigned to one place repeatedly or need to travel from place to place within a specified district. Free-lance Reporters work in many locations, such as corporate board rooms, lawyers' offices, doctors' offices, schools, at trade conventions, or at scenes of accidents. These Reporters maintain offices, often in their homes, for the conduct of their business.

The American Disabilities Act (ADA) and certain FCC rulings in the 1990's have phased in captioning for new television programs. Court reporters now do captioning for live broadcasts. Real time captioning is the simultaneous creation and transmission of captions during an unscripted or partially-scripted television programs. Real time reporting for hearing impaired television viewers has become a new career within court reporting. Because of the Television Decoder Circuitry Act of 1993, all TV sets over 13' must have caption decoder circuitry. Moreover, government funds also provide pay for a reporter to take lecture notes for a deaf person attending classes. CAPTIONERS contract with local TV stations, corporations, and others to caption live news programs, conferences/meetings via satellite locations or to caption videos for the deaf community. Pay scales vary greatly, depending on the type of contractor.

FREE-LANCE REPORTERS are court reporters that usually work for firms and offer services to attorneys' offices for deposition work, sworn statements on insurance claims, etc. Their pay varies greatly on the amount of work done. This is usually considered a subcontractor position, so the reporter is responsible for his or her own taxes, etc. Benefits are usually not provided to the free lance reporter. Travel is common for freelance reporters, who may or may not be reimbursed for mileage. They frequently work long hours (10-12) hours per day for several days. The reporters pay the free lance court reporting firm that referred them to the job about 20 to 40 percent of the fees they earn. Most steno-reporters are free-lance reporters.

SCOPISTS are proofreaders who are excellent typists who have superior grammar, punctuation and editing skills. They may work for the Court Reporters. They often come from the ranks of retired court reporters.

Court reporters may also perform rapid data entry. They contract with hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices to prepare medical reports, surgical reports, etc. Reporters work from dictation tapes and enter data into a steno machine which transfers the data onto a computer format. This is much faster than ordinary typing. Knowledge of medical terms is important in this work. Pay for this work is done on a "per line" basis and varies by facility. Some facilities offer full benefits, depending on how much is produced, and some allow reporters to work from home.

In general, Court Reporters work a 40-hour week at minimum. They might work overtime with no extra compensation. Free-lance Reporters work varying hours, depending on the availability of all parties. On some days Reporters may work more than 10 hours.

Free-lance Reporters usually must purchase part or all of their own equipment which might cost up to \$3,000 or more. Very highly experience free-lance reporters may pay over \$20,000 for specialized equipment. Free-lance reporters maybe referred to work by a court reporting firm.

Court Reporters are often members of professional associations, such as the Michigan Association of Professional Courter Reporters (MAPCR) and the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA). In addition, Court Reporters may join such labor organizations as the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) or the TEAMSTERS. Members must pay dues.

You Should Prefer:

- Activities of a routine, concrete, and organized nature
- Activities concerned with the communication of data

You Should Be Able To:

- Use reason and logic
- Understand sentence structure and the meanings of words
- See detail in written material
- Recognize errors in numbers, spelling, and punctuation
- Write in shorthand and type
- Know/work with special vocabulary such as used in legal/medical fields
- Work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Concentrate and be attentive to detail
- Work within precise standards of accuracy
- Have agreeable working relationships with others

Math Problem You Should Be Able to Solve:

If you can type 200 words per minute and you want to increase that by 5%, how many words will you then be able to type?

Reading Example You Should Be Able to Read and Comprehend:

Requests for a leave of absence must be made in writing by using a leave of absence agreement form. This form documents the day the leave begins and ends, as well as the payment arrangements for insurance premiums if the Reporter is covered.

Writing Example You Should Be Able to Produce:

You should be able to write a report summarizing the major points of your transcription.

Thinking Skill You Should Be Able to Demonstrate:

You should be able to decide the most efficient way to transcribe without getting behind in your work.

All Court Reporters who file transcripts in Michigan courts must be certified by the Court Reporting/Recording Board of Review of the Michigan Supreme Court. Applicants for certification must pass a 2-part, written and practical exam with a score of at least 80%; be at least 18 years old; be a Michigan resident; have completed a court reporting course; and have attained specified minimum dictation speeds.

The exam takes about 5 hours and is given in April and October of each year. The examination and certification fee is \$50. Only workers designated by the Board of Review as certified electronic recorder (CER), certified shorthand reporter (CSR), or certified steno-mask reporter (CSMR) may file transcripts in Michigan courts. The National Court Reporters Association certifies individuals who complete its program as Registered Professional Reporters (RPR'S). NCRA also provides information on its approved court reporter training programs in Michigan and in other states.

EDUCATION AND PREPARATION OPPORTUNITIES

NOTE: A Certificate (program of up to one year of study beyond High School) or an Associate Degree (two years of study beyond high school) or a Bachelor's Degree (four years of study beyond high school) may qualify a person for this occupation.

The following education and preparation opportunities are helpful in preparing for occupations in the MOIScript:

SCHOOL SUBJECTS

0700 CAREERS , 0900 COMMUNICATIONS , 1300 ENGLISH , 1700 GOVERNMENT , 2200 MATH ,
3300 TECHNOLOGY

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

There are no Vocational Education Programs related to this MOIScript

Students should obtain the local Career Preparation Consumer Report for information on what happens to students who successfully complete a program. This information is available at each high school or career/technical center.

The table below provides **State of Michigan** data based on the Class of 1997 Follow-Up Survey completed approximately ten months after graduation.

Program Name	# of Completers	Related Placement	Hourly Wage	Continuing Education
Business Services/Technology	11,843	55.6%	\$7.15	70.4%

POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS

038 COURT & CONFERENCE REPORTING

Programs in Court and Conference Reporting provide opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills needed to note in shorthand every word spoken at trials and other proceedings and to transform

these notations into written records. Individuals may choose to be conference or general reporters rather than Court Reporters.

Courses vary from school to school but may include:

English	Legal Procedures
American Government	Testimony-Jury Charge
Sociology	Machine Shorthand
Interpersonal Communication	Transcription
Elementary Business Law	Advanced Legal Dictation
Business Internship	Congressional-Literary Dictation
Medical Terminology & Ethics	High Speed Reporting Dictation
Advanced Typewriting	

*****APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES*****

There are no Apprenticeships related to this MOIScript

*****MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS*****

Please check the Military web site at <http://www.myfuture.com>

LEGAL SPECIALISTS AND COURT REPORTERS

The military has its own judicial system for enforcement of the military code of law. Legal specialists and court reporters assist military lawyers and judges in the performance of legal and judicial work. They perform legal research, prepare legal documents, and record legal proceedings.

What They Do

Legal specialists and court reporters in the military perform some or all of the following duties:

- Research court decisions and military regulations
- Process legal claims and appeals
- Interview clients and take statements
- Prepare trial requests and make arrangements for courtrooms
- Maintain law libraries and trial case files
- Type text from stenotyped records, shorthand notes, or taped records of court proceedings
- Prepare records of hearings, investigations, court-martials, and courts of inquiry

Training Provided

Job training consists of 6 to 10 weeks of instruction. Course content typically includes:

- Legal terminology and research techniques

- How to prepare legal documents
- High speed transcription
- Military judicial processes

Helpful Attributes

Helpful school subjects include business mathematics, typing, speech, and shorthand. Helpful attributes include:

- Interest in the law and legal proceedings
- Ability to keep organized and accurate records
- Ability to listen carefully

Special Requirements

Some specialties require the ability to type at a rate of 25-50 words per minute.

Physical Demands

Good hearing and clear speech are needed to record and read aloud court proceedings. A clear speaking ability is necessary to interview clients.

Civilian Counterparts

Civilian legal specialists and court reporters work for private law firms, banks, insurance companies, government agencies, and local, state, and federal courts. They perform duties similar to military legal specialists and court reporters. Civilian legal specialists and court reporters may also be called legal assistants, clerks, paralegal assistants, and court clerks or recorders.

Work Environment

Legal specialists and court reporters work in military law offices and courtrooms.

Opportunities

The services have about 2,500 legal specialists and court reporters. On average, they need about 210 new specialists and court reporters each year. After training, they work under an attorney or legal office. With experience, legal specialists and court reporters perform more demanding activities. In time, they may become supervisors of other legal specialists and court reporters.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPERIENCE AND METHODS OF ENTRY

Postsecondary programs in court and conference reporting may offer co-op or internship opportunities. Individuals may observe Court Reporters by attending civil or criminal court cases. Experience may be obtained in military service also.

School-to-Work opportunities include:

informal apprenticeships

mentorships

job shadowing experiences

touring a local Court Clerk employer

internships

volunteer work with a Court Clerk employer

community service work with an agency

There is little uniformity in the methods by which court reporting positions are filled in federal, state, or local courts and agencies. Such positions are usually classified under civil service. "Official" Court Reporters are usually appointed by judges. School placement offices and the National Shorthand Reporters Association may be helpful in locating a job. In addition, you should access and search the Internet's on-line employment services sites such as:

The NCRA Job Bank (<http://www.verbatimreporters.com/ejmart.htm>)

Michigan Association of Professional Court Reporters

(<http://www.machineshorthand.com>)

America's Job Bank (<http://www.ajb.dni.us>)

Classifieds2000 Employment (<http://www.classifieds2000.com>)

Yahoo Classifieds (<http://classifieds.yahoo.com/employment.html>)

You should also enter an electronic resume on these on-line services.

EARNINGS AND ADVANCEMENT

Salaries of Court Reporters vary by the type of court and geographic location. Salaries in district and probate courts are lower than the salaries in circuit courts. For court reporters who free-lance or for those who perform captioning the pay scales vary greatly, depending on the type of contractor.

Nationally, annual earnings of certified Court Reporters working for federal courts averaged \$50,000 in mid-1999. This included fees that court reporters charged for transcript copies.

If federal courts in Michigan, experienced Court Reporters' salaries started at about \$53,130 per year in 1999. After ten years of experience working for federal courts or certification of merit through the National Court Reporters Association, they may earn up to \$58,443 per year. The salaries of these federal government workers may be higher in some urban areas.

Many counties use Court Recorder clerks in district or probate courts who take electronic tape recordings (audio) of court sessions. Typically, these Recorders are paid from \$19,000 in smaller counties to \$30,000 per year. Court reporters' pay is generally higher, ranging from \$32,000 to \$55,000 depending on the county and court system. In 1999, annual salaries of Court Reporters/Recorders employed in various areas by Michigan circuit and district courts ranged as

follows:

County	Circuit Court	District Court
Oakland/Pontiac	\$45,801	\$25,588 - \$40,483
Kent/Grand Rapids	\$37,929-\$46,968	\$27,050 - \$34,476
Saginaw	\$37,874	\$22,532 - \$27,272
Kalamazoo	---	\$22,864 - \$27,750
Ingham	\$35,131 - \$51,317	\$27,600 - \$27,489
Berrien	\$35,131 - \$51,317	\$24,986 - \$28,806
Hillsdale	\$29,182 - \$37,398	\$20,842 - \$25,251
Muskegon	\$42,407	\$22,799 - \$28,920
Grand Traverse	\$33,562 - \$42,515	\$19,442 - \$28,100
Detroit	\$39,889 - \$48,827	\$38,863 - \$46,546

Hearings Reporters and supervisors employed by the State of Michigan earned between \$33,613 and \$42,282 per year in 1999. Court Reporters earn extra income by furnishing transcripts for a fee and by undertaking outside reporting assignments. Some also receive a cost-of-living allowance.

Court Reporters usually receive paid vacations and holidays; life, hospitalization, and disability insurance; and pensions. These benefits are paid for, at least in part, by employers. Free-lance Reporters working on referrals from court reporting firms sometimes do not typically receive similar benefits, because frequently they are self-employed subcontractors.

Periodic pay raises, promotion to higher grades, or appointment from a lower to higher court may be considered advancement. The title "chief court reporter" is sometimes given as an honor without financial reward. Some Reporters consider operating their own independent reporting firms as advancement.

EMPLOYMENT AND OUTLOOK

Nationally, there were over 50,000 Court Reporters employed by courts, legislatures, and agencies in the executive branch of government in 1996. Approximately 21,000 of this number were certified by the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA). Three fourths of NCRA's membership are free-lance reporters, while the remainder are employees of state or federal courts. It is estimated that, at present, women represent 86% of the total number of practicing reporters. The need for free-lance reporters follows economic and business cycles. Demand for skilled Court Reporters should decline as video recordings are increasingly recognized as legal records of proceedings. Opportunities will be best for workers who have earned certification as a registered professional reporter from the National Court Reporters Association.

There were approximately 2,400 certified Court Reporters employed in Michigan in 1999. Most Court Reporters work as either official or temporary employees of city, county, state, and federal courts. In Michigan, Court Reporters/Recorders are required to be certified. Steno reporters are called certified steno reporters (CSR's) and those who operate tape recorders are called certified electronic recorders (CER's). The number of steno reporters versus tape-recording reporters is about equal. Some Court Reporters record proceedings of state assemblies, the United States Congress, and the United Nations, as well as hearings before state and federal agencies. It is estimated that there are an additional 500 to 1,000 free-lance reporters who are self-employed and work for commercial reporting firms which may call upon them to record arbitration hearings, trade

association meetings, boards of directors and stockholders meetings, and depositions.

The number of "official" Court Reporters is directly related to the number of judges - one Reporter for each judge. Little or no change is expected in the number of judges in Michigan through the year 2005, a similar trend can be expected for Court Reporters. The expansion of legal services will contribute to some growth. Some fast growing communities will need additional judges and Reporters to handle the increasing number of cases. Competition for court reporting positions is keen and the turnover rate is low. In recent years, courts have favored and provided for the practice of questioning witnesses under oath before a trial. The recording of these examinations (depositions) makes up a large part of the work of free-lance Reporters. The growing number of conventions and trade association meetings, particularly in the metropolitan Detroit area, will also require free-lance Reporters to record their various activities. They assist hearing-disabled students by recording lectures on a screen which is then read by the student. Court Reporters may become specialists in recording medical litigation or litigation related to auto crashes. Generally, the more skilled the reporter, the more work will be available to him/her.

MICHIGAN'S EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK TO 2005

EMPLOYMENT AND OUTLOOK REGIONS	NUMBER EMPLOYED	PERCENT GROWTH	PROJECTED YEARLY JOB OPENINGS
State Total	2,400	*** %	***

SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Printed Occupational information is available upon written request from the sources below.

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Michigan Council 25 600 W. Lafayette Detroit, MI 48226 1313-964-1711 http://www.afscme.org	National Court Reporters Ass. 8224 Old Courthouse Road Vienna, VA 22182 1-703-556-6272 http://www.verbatimreporters.com
Michigan State Court Administrative Office P.O. Box 30048 Information Services Lansing, MI 48909 517-373-3727	Michigan Department of Career Development http://www.michlmi.org
Telephone Directory Yellow Pages Under Reporters-Court & Convention	Federal, State, and Local Civil Service Offices
Michigan Works! & Michigan Talent Bank http://www.michworks.org	Local Military Recruiters
School/College Placement Offices	

SUMMARY PROFILE

The occupation of Court Reporter can be summarized by the following:

Growth Outlook:	As fast as average
Salary Potential:	Average potential growth
GOE Cluster:	Business Detail Interest Group (#07)
Work Values:	Typing, stenography, office practices
SDS Code:	Conventional (enjoys working with data)
Relationship to Data:	Compiling (collects and records conversations)
Relationship to People:	Speaking-Signaling (repeats previous conversations to the court members)
Relationship to Things:	Operating-Controlling (types data on a stenographer)

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