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Utah Certified Novice Interpreter Examination Packet



Everything you need to know about the UCNI examination process



February 2025

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Novice Certification Check List ✓

✓	To-do
	Sign up for a UIP account at https://jobs.utah.gov/usor/uiip/index.html
	Optional: Follow UIP on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/groups/dsdhhuip to get updates, tips, support other interpreters and receive other non-critical information
	Schedule the Utah Certification Knowledge exam
	Study recommended reading materials
	Optional: Borrow study materials from UIP
	Optional: Sign up for mentoring from UIP or another organization/individual
	Take the Knowledge exam
	Didn't pass? Study and try again!
	Passed? Celebrate and keep going!
	Schedule the Novice Interpreter Performance exam
	Optional: Schedule and take the Utah Certification Mock exam
	Optional: Review and share mock exam with mentor/teacher
	Take Novice Interpreter Performance exam
	Didn't pass? Study, practice, get feedback, and try again!
	Passed? Sign your contract and CELEBRATE – You are now a UCNI!

All the Details: Becoming a Utah Certified Novice Interpreter (UCNI)

Congratulations on beginning your journey to becoming a Utah Certified Novice Interpreter. Utah has a long and rich history of setting standards and certifying high quality interpreters. In fact, Utah was the very first state to offer an ASL interpreter certification test. We were also the first state to pass a law requiring the certification of ASL interpreters.

At UIP, we are committed to continuing that strong tradition through our rigorous and fair examination process. Please use the information in this packet as a guide through that process. If you have any questions, or need to request accommodations, please reach out to UIP@Utah.gov.



Your Utah Interpreter Program Account

Your UIP account is your gateway to sign up and pay for exams, monitor certification(s) status, request recognition of other certifications, and submit Continuing Education Hours (CEHs).

It's easy to sign up for a UIP Account at <https://jobs.utah.gov/usor/uiip/index.html>. When you get to the main screen, you'll see a button to Login/Create an account. Click the button and follow the steps to create an account.

Tips for creating your account:

- Use an email address that you will check regularly
This email address is the primary way UIP will contact you. Important communications about your certification will come to this email address; we don't want your certification renewal to get lost in a throwaway or inaccessible account.
- If possible, use a personal email address instead of a work or educational institution address
People often lose access to their UIP account or do not receive critical information when they leave their workplace or educational institution because they no longer have access to the email address associated with their UIP account.
Avoid using a .gov .edu or USDB email address; these can create additional difficulties with account creation and ongoing usage.
Once you are certified, this will be the email address that (if you choose to make it public) will be displayed on the certified interpreter list on the UIP website.
- Creating a UIP account also creates a UtahID account. The State of Utah allows users to have multiple UtahID accounts, so don't worry if you already created another UtahID account for a different purpose.



The Knowledge Exam

The Utah certification process starts with a 100 question, multiple-choice exam that is taken on a computer. You will have up to two hours to complete the exam. This exam evaluates your knowledge of the interpreting profession and may include, but is not limited to:

- Ethics and Demand Control Schema (40%)
- Interpreting (20%)
- Deaf and United States Culture (20%)
- American Sign Language and English linguistics (10%)
- History and laws impacting the Deaf and interpreting communities (10%)

Upon completion of the exam, you will immediately receive your results. A passing score is 80% or higher and is valid for five years. After five years, if you want to take a Utah Certification exam, you will need to retake the Knowledge exam.

If you don't pass the Knowledge exam, you can take it again after a seven-day waiting period. Retesting requires a new application and examination fee.

Knowledge Exam Locations and Scheduling

Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
5709 South 1500 West • Taylorsville

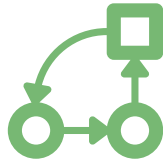
OR

South Center (by special arrangement)
1067 E. Tabernacle, Suite 10 • St. George



To schedule a Knowledge Exam, sign in to your UIP Account, select Knowledge exam, select an available time slot, and pay for the exam.

Please note that all exam fees are non-refundable.



Study for the Knowledge Exam

The recommended reading materials for the Knowledge exam include:

- *Reading Between the Signs: Intercultural Communication for Sign Language Interpreters* by Anna Mindess
- *Sign Language Interpreting: Exploring Its Art and Science* by David A. Stewart, Jerome Schein, and Brenda Cartwright.
- *So You Want to Be an Interpreter* by Janice H. Humphrey and Bob J. Alcorn
- *A Journey into the Deaf World* by Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister and Ben Bahan
- *The Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession* by Robyn K. Dean and Robert Q. Pollard, Jr.
- *Encounters with Reality: 1001 Interpreter Scenarios* by Brenda Cartwright
- *Mask of Benevolence: Disabling the Deaf Community* by Harlan Lane
- [RID Code of Professional Conduct](#)
- [Utah Interpreter Program Policy and Procedures Manual](#)
- [Utah Interpreter Law](#)

Study Materials

UIP has a limited number of study materials available for loan to help you prepare for the Knowledge exam. After you have paid for the exam and have scheduled a date, you may request to borrow study materials for up to thirty days if they are available. Contact uip@utah.gov to check the availability of study materials.

If you borrow UIP study materials, please return them promptly. There is often a waiting list for these materials, and we want to assist as many candidates as possible. The materials available for loan include:

- *Reading Between the Signs: Intercultural Communication for Sign Language Interpreters* by Anna Mindess
- *So You Want to Be an Interpreter* by Janice H. Humphrey and Bob J. Alcorn
- *A Journey into the Deaf World* by Harlan Lane, Robert Hoffmeister and Ben Bahan
- *The Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession* by Robyn K. Dean and Robert Q. Pollard, Jr.



Resources

UIP and our interpreting community offer resources for both emerging and professional interpreters seeking to increase their skill and knowledge. UIP offers mentoring and a mock performance exam. You can join the UIP Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/dsdhh.uip> to find workshops and a community of practice. We also encourage you to seek other resources from the at-large professional community to help you develop as an interpreter. Our Utah interpreting community is stronger when colleagues are actively engaged in supporting and sharing information with each other. We hope you will both learn from and support your colleagues.

Mentoring

UIP offers limited mentoring opportunities on a first-come-first-serve basis. Our interpreting team has over 100 years of combined interpreting and mentoring experience. We mentor both emerging and professional interpreters seeking opportunities to improve their skill or reflect/debrief about their work in a confidential manner.

As a practice, mentors at UIP do not mentor “to a test” – neither to the Utah certification exams nor to any of the other assessments or professional certificates the State of Utah recognizes. We mentor for skill building, ethical decision making, and self-reflection. We will work with you to assess your goals, mix in our professional observations, and scaffold you with support to become the interpreter you want to be

Mentoring is provided at no cost; however, as UIP resources are limited, we ask that anyone signing up for mentoring commit to meet weekly with a mentor and complete assigned tasks. If you are unable to follow through with this commitment, we ask that you communicate your intentions so we can assign resources to other interpreters seeking support.

**If you are interested in working with a mentor,
please contact UIPMentoring@utah.gov
to check availability.**





Mock Performance Exam and Locations

We know that any examination process can be stressful and we want to see you achieve your very best results when you take the exam. To support this, UIP offers a Mock exam. This practice exam simulates the experience of taking a performance exam (with different stimulus material, of course).

After you have paid for a performance exam, you can sign up for a mock exam at no cost. Once your mock exam is complete, you will be sent links to your mock exam videos. You can review your videos and self-assess, and if you choose, share your videos with a colleague, teacher, peer or mentor.

Exams are given at:

Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
5709 South 1500 West • Taylorsville

OR

South Center (by special arrangement)
1067 E. Tabernacle, Suite 10 • St. George

Schedule a Novice Mock Exam

After you have paid for the Novice performance exam, sign in to your UIP account and select an available time slot to take the Novice Mock exam.

Other Community Resources

UIP is not the only place you can get support. Seek out professional development support from local and national organizations, interpreter training programs, other interpreters, and online forums and groups. Our Utah interpreting community is vibrant and supportive: ask peers, teachers, or mentors for their recommendations. Regardless of where you go next, we hope you'll embrace lifelong learning and support others on their journeys as well.



The Performance Exam and Locations

We are proud of the fair and rigorous exam process the State of Utah has implemented. When you pass a performance exam, you know that you have reached a significant milestone on your journey. Passing means you will be able to engage in professional interpreting in the State of Utah. It also means that you bear a heavy responsibility of professionalism to the local Deaf community, as well as the interpreter and other consumer communities. Thank you for seeking to serve in this way.

Exams are given at:

Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
5709 South 1500 West • Taylorsville

OR

South Center (by special arrangement)
1067 E. Tabernacle, Suite 10 • St. George



To schedule a Performance Exam, sign in to your UIP Account, select Novice exam, select an available time slot, and pay for the exam.

Please note that all exam fees are non-refundable.

Format

The Novice performance exam format is recorded video. You will be escorted to a private room where your signed and spoken interpretation of the video source material will be recorded. You should plan for up to three hours to complete all three components for the Novice performance exam:

- **Component One – English to ASL Interactive:** You will interpret a one-on-one or small group scenario. The primary mode of interpreting is English to ASL. The component also includes interactive dialogue among the participants.
- **Component Two – ASL to English Interactive:** You will interpret a one-on-one or small group scenario. The primary mode of interpreting is ASL to English. The component also includes interactive dialogue among the participants.
- **Component Three – Teaming with a Deaf Interpreter:** You will team interpret with a Certified Deaf Interpreter for a one-on-one or small group interactive scenario. You will provide an English to ASL feed to the Deaf Interpreter, as well as an ASL to English interpretation from the Certified Deaf Interpreter's feed.

The Novice level performance exam combines interactive settings that allow a high level of control and low level of complexity and sensitivity. Scenarios and topics are based on the needs of the local community and common interpreting settings at Novice level standards.



You must pass all three components of the performance exam in the same attempt to be awarded Novice certification. If you do not pass all three components, you may retake the exam.

Exam Preparation Time and Materials

Before each component, you will be given an opportunity to “meet” the presenter/participants and learn a little about the topics you will be interpreting. This will be done through video and printed documents. After viewing the component preparation materials, you will be escorted to the testing room where you will take that component. When you have completed the component, you will prepare for the next component. You will do this until all three components are complete.

Raters

Your exam will be evaluated by several teams of raters consisting of local Deaf consumers, Utah Certified Professional or Master Interpreters, and Utah Certified Deaf Interpreters. Each rating team is trained to observe and evaluate specific aspects of your interpreting work based on predetermined rating criteria. Raters work independently of each other to evaluate your interpreting performance exam. The results are then compiled to determine the overall outcome.

Rating Criteria

English to ASL Interactive	
Criteria	Description
Processing	The interpreter consistently demonstrates the ability to receive, process, and deliver information while effectively managing the flow of information.
Presence	Demeanor and appearance consistently reflect professional standards.
Speaker and setting	The interpretation consistently conveys the intent, affect, and register that matches the setting and speaker's delivery style.
Semantics	ASL semantic choices are effective and consistently follow the norms of ASL.
	The interpretation consistently includes equivalent semantic choices that adhere to native usage of ASL and English in the given context.
Coherence	The interpretation consistently includes equivalent temporal markers, pronouns, and spatial referencing.
	The interpretation consistently includes equivalent transitions, topic shifts, and relational discourse markers.
Sign parameters	Sign parameters (handshape, location, movement, palm orientation) are consistently produced accurately.
Fingerspelling and numbers	Fingerspelling and numbers consistently follow the norms of ASL and are produced at an appropriate pace.
Non-manual markers	Non-manual markers are consistently demonstrated for appropriate sentence types, mouth morphemes, and emotive behavior follow the norms of ASL.
Space and depiction	Space (tokens, constructed action/dialogue, eye gaze) and depiction (motion, handshape, size) are used appropriately and follow the norms and native usage of ASL.
Interactive elements	Interactive cues consistently follow the norms and native usage of ASL and allow for a natural flow of communication.
	Interactive cues consistently follow the norms and native usage of English and allow for a natural flow of communication.
Delivery and comprehension	The signed interpretation is easy to comprehend and follows the norms and native usage of ASL.
	The spoken interpretation is easy to comprehend and follows the norms and native usage of spoken English.
Equivalency	The content of the English to ASL interpretation is equivalent.
	The content of the ASL to English interpretation is equivalent.

ASL to English Interactive

Criteria	Description
Processing	The interpreter consistently demonstrates the ability to receive, process, and deliver information while effectively managing the flow of information.
Presence	Demeanor and appearance consistently reflect professional standards.
Speaker and setting	The interpretation consistently conveys the intent, affect, and register that matches the setting and speaker's delivery style.
Semantics	The interpretation consistently includes equivalent semantic choices that adhere to native usage of ASL and English in the given context.
Coherence	The interpretation consistently includes equivalent temporal markers, pronouns, and spatial referencing.
	The interpretation consistently includes equivalent transitions, topic shifts, and relational discourse markers.
Interactive elements	Interactive cues consistently follow the norms and native usage of English and allow for a natural flow of communication.
	Interactive cues consistently follow the norms and native usage of ASL and allow for a natural flow of communication.
Delivery and comprehension	The spoken interpretation is easy to comprehend and follow the norms and native usage of spoken English.
	The signed interpretation is easy to comprehend and follow the norms and native usage of ASL.
Equivalency	The content of the ASL to English interpretation is equivalent.
	The content of the English to ASL interpretation is equivalent.

Teaming with a Deaf Interpreter

Criteria	Description
Presence	Demeanor and appearance consistently reflect professional standards and best practices while working with a Deaf Interpreter.
Teaming dynamics	The interpreter consistently remains attentive and engaged by providing backchanneling and supportive cues for effective team interaction and monitors the interpretation (via the Deaf Interpreter) for equivalency.
Provide access to key content & vocabulary	The interpreter consistently provides access to key content and vocabulary from the speaker in the interpreted feed to the Deaf interpreter.
Clarity of feed	The signed feed is consistently produced clearly and appropriately.
Delivery and comprehension	The English production is easy to comprehend and adheres to the norms of spoken English.
Equivalency	The content of the English to ASL interpretation is equivalent.
	The content of the ASL to English interpretation is equivalent.



Results

We know you are anxious to receive your results. We are anxious to get them to you as quickly as possible. Exam results are typically delivered within eight to twelve weeks. If you have not received your results after twelve weeks, please reach out to UIP at UIP@utah.gov.

Detailed Results Report

As part of your results, you will receive a Detailed Results Report (DRR). This will provide additional insight into the patterns raters saw in your interpretations. Whether you pass or not, this information can support you as you continue to improve the equivalence and quality of your interpreting work. You are welcome to share your DRR with a mentor, teacher, peer, or anyone else you feel will support you on your journey.

Retesting

If you don't pass all components, you may retake the exam. You can take the exam up to four times in a twelve-month rolling period. You can apply to retake the exam as soon as your previous exam results are received, but you may not attempt the performance exam more than four times within a twelve-month time frame.

Passing Results

Congratulations! Remember to celebrate passing the Utah Novice performance exam as a milestone on your journey to be the best interpreter you can be!

Passing the performance exam demonstrates entry-level skills, and the knowledge and judgement to facilitate communication in a variety of situations that have a high level of control, low sensitivity, and low complexity. Working in more complex, technical, specialized or highly sensitive scenarios however, requires advancement to Utah Certified Professional Interpreter or one of the other advanced certifications/assessments recognized by the State of Utah.



You aren't a Utah Certified Novice Interpreter (UCNI) quite yet. There is one thing left for you to do before you can begin interpreting as a certified interpreter. You must first sign your contract.

You Passed! Now What?

First things first, after receiving your passing results, you must sign in to your UIP account and sign your contract. Signing this contract confirms you understand

1. how to maintain your UCNI over the next four years
2. the expectation to adhere to the RID Code of Professional Conduct
3. the expectation to stay knowledgeable of Utah laws and policies related to interpreting

You have two weeks to sign your contract. After your contract is processed, UIP will mail your official certification card and certificate.

It is time to celebrate again – your certification is official!

Maintaining Your Certification

Novice level certification requires renewal every year.

To renew your certification, complete and document in your UIP account twenty (20) annual continuing education hours (CEHs) and pay the annual renewal fee in your UIP account. You can earn CEHs by:

- attending workshops/training that explicitly state they offer Utah CEH or RID CEU
- completing academic coursework
- completing other trainings that benefit interpreters (requires pre-approval)

Find more information on earning and receiving pre-approval for CEHs in the Policies Governing the Certification of ASL Interpreters (the Policy and Procedure Manual) at: <https://jobs.utah.gov/usor/uiip/index.html>

Certification Advancement

You must advance your certification to Utah Certified Professional or to one of other advanced certifications or assessments Utah recognizes within four years of the date you passed the Novice certification exam.

We encourage you to begin working on increasing your skill for certification advancement as soon as possible after you pass the Novice Exam. Continuing education, workshops, mentoring, self-assessment, seeking feedback, and of course, gaining real-world interpreting experience are all good ways to work toward advancing your certification. And throughout your journey in interpreting, keep working, learning and enhancing your skillset so you can provide the highest quality interpreting to the communities you serve.

4 YEARS

*Remember,
your Novice
certification is
valid for four
years.*



Questions or comments?
Contact us at UIP@utah.gov