

Public Comments Regarding Chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules, Rules of the Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters (due August 29, 2023)

Table of Contents

	(received)
Myles Megee	7/5/2023
Carrie Nauman	7/5/2023
Amanda Lee	7/5/2023
Lori Matthaidess	7/11/2023
Molly Clampitt	7/18/2023
Steven Truckenmiller	8/2/2023
Cathy L. Penniston	8/25/2023
Jill Bintz	8/31/2023



[EXTERNAL] Chapter 46 Amendments

Myles Megee

to:

rules.comments

07/05/2023 10:03 AM

Hide Details

From: "Myles Megee" <myles@cornerstonekc.net>

To: rules.comments@iowacourts.gov

Security:

To ensure privacy, images from remote sites were prevented from downloading. Show Images

FILED
JUL 05 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT

1 Attachment



2023 Letter to Iowa Supreme Court Re Voice Writers.doc

Please see the attached letter in support of expanding the definition of "certified shorthand reporters" to include stenomask reporters.

Kind regards,

Myles Megee, Owner
Certified Realtime Reporter
Registered Professional Reporter
CSR-KS, CCR-MO, CSR-IA

Quality Transcripts. On Time.

8700 Monrovia, Suite 310
Lenexa, KS 66215-3500
(913) 825-2510
(913) 894-8687 (Home Office)
(913) 375-8637 (Cell)
(913) 825-2530 (Fax)
www.cornerstonekc.net

CORNERSTONE COURT REPORTING COMPANY, LLC



Quality Transcripts. On Time.

8700 Monrovia, Suite 310
Lenexa, Kansas 66215-3500
(913) 825-2510 • Fax 825-2530
www.cornerstonekc.net
office@cornerstonekc.net

FILED
JUL 05 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT

July 5, 2023

Iowa Supreme Court (VIA email only)

RE: Proposed revisions to Chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules

To the Honorable Members of the Court:

I am writing in support of the proposed changes to expand the definition of “certified shorthand reporters” to include stenomask reporters.

In considering the request to change the rule, it may be important to note that the standards for certification as a Registered Professional Reporter (NCRA) and as a Certified Verbatim Reporter (NVRA) have remained consistent since 2001.

Cornerstone Court Reporting Company has successfully engaged the services of highly qualified stenomask reporters for a number of years, and I believe updating the language in Chapter 46 would increase the number of qualified candidates for official and freelance positions throughout the state of Iowa.

If I can answer any questions or be of further help, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

CORNERSTONE COURT REPORTING COMPANY, LLC

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Myles A. Megee'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Myles Megee, Owner
Registered Professional Reporter
Certified in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa
(913) 894-8687 (Home office) - (913) 375-8637 (Cell)
MM/mm



[EXTERNAL] Stenomask reporters open comments

Carrie Nauman

to:

rules.comments

07/05/2023 10:35 AM

Hide Details

From: "Carrie Nauman" <carrie.nauman@gmail.com>

To: rules.comments@iowacourts.gov

FILED
JUL 05 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT

Dear Sir or Ma'am: Just wanted to take time to comment on the issue of whether or not stenomask writers should be allowed in the State of Iowa to capture the record of official court proceedings. I am in favor of stenomask reporters. I am a current court reporter domiciled in Dubuque County. I have also served on the board for the Iowa Court Reporters Association. When I was on the ICRA board and the topic of court reporter shortages in Iowa was up for discussion and we were troubleshooting solutions, I took some time to do a bit of research on the steps stenomask reporters have to go through to become certified. I was truly impressed with their schooling and certification process.

Even if Iowa wasn't facing a shortage of steno machine writers to capture Iowa's record I would be in favor of allowing stenomask reporters to join our ranks.

Thank you for your time.

Carrie Nauman
563/543-8721

FILED
JUL 05 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT



Chapter 46 Amendments
Amanda Lee to: Rules Comment

07/05/2023 01:41 PM



Stenomask opinion.docx

As an official reporter for the State of Iowa, I am in favor of adding steno mask reporters to alleviate the shortage we are facing currently. While it is not preferred, I still find it acceptable, as it gets the job done in a satisfactory way comparable to a stenographer's work, and it also is a better option than relying on digital recording as a backup.

Sincerely,

Amanda Lee

Court Reporter

First Judicial District

FILED

JUL 11 2023

CLERK SUPREME COURT

07/11/2023 11:28 AM



Chapter 46 Amendments

Lori Matthaidess to: Rules Comment



Chapter 46 Amendments comments.docx



Lori Matthaidess, CSR | Certified Shorthand Reporter

Iowa Judicial Branch | Seventh Judicial District

Scott County Courthouse | 400 West Fourth Street | Davenport | Iowa 52801

563.326.8656 (phone) | 563.328.8218 (fax)

lori.matthaidess@iowacourts.gov

www.iowacourts.gov

The Iowa Judicial Branch dedicates itself to providing independent and accessible forums for the fair and prompt resolution of disputes, administering justice under law equally to all persons.

Comments on Rule 46.2(1), lines 11 and 12, lines 20-22, lines 29-31,

I am writing to add my comments regarding Chapter 46 Amendments to add stenomask reporters. I am a current court reporter for the State of Iowa since 2005. Through the years, the shortage of court reporters has been increasing as we all know. I believe adding stenomask reporters for the State of Iowa is a great idea. They are certified to the same speed levels as certified machine shorthand reporters are and they are qualified to hold positions in this state. Stenomask reporters who are certified deserve to have employment in the state of Iowa if they wish to apply. Thank you for considering my comments.



Chapter 46 Amendments
Molly Clampitt to: Rules Comment

FILED
JUL 18 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT
07/18/2023 09:50 AM

Good morning. Attached please find my comments regarding the proposed amendments to chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules. Thank you.



Chapter 46 Amendments - Comments.docx

Molly Clampitt, CSR, RPR
Court Reporter for the Second Judicial District
molly.clampitt@iowacourts.gov
(515) 291-8389

I am an official court reporter in the Second Judicial District. I fully support all of the proposed amendments to chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules, Rules of the Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters, concerning voice writers, specifically, rule 46.2(1) lines 11-12 and 20-22; rule 46.2(2) lines 29-31; rule 46.4(3) lines 17-18; rule 46.5(7) line 38; rule 46.8(1)(b) lines 18-20; rule 46.14(4) lines 6-8; and rule 46.17(7) lines 24-25.

At age 47 I decided to finally take my high school shorthand teacher's advice from thirty years prior, and I enrolled in an online court reporting program. At the time, I was a single mom working full time as a paraeducator with an income of \$10,000 per year. I'm sure you all have a grasp on how difficult stenography is. It took me three years to finish the program, and in July of 2017 I became an official for the state.

After working so hard to obtain my certification, you can imagine my disappointment the last couple of years as my arthritis and lupus has begun flaring up more often. I have days where my fingers swell up and it is quite painful. The more I use my fingers, the more frequent the flare-ups.

Last summer during a particularly bad flare-up, I decided to purchase all of the equipment and software upgrades needed to study voice writing. I worked so hard for my certification, and I love every aspect about working as an official. I decided voice writing would be one way I could still perform the job I love so much and greatly reduce the amount of stress on my wrists and fingers. I decided if Iowa didn't join all of the other states now accepting voice writing, I would at least have that skill in my back pocket and could always find remote work if my condition ultimately forces me to quit stenography.

I started practicing right away with the intention of becoming certified within a couple of months (since I already have all of the other skills needed to certify), but then my youngest sister had a stroke in September. That, coupled with learning that testing isn't offered anywhere even remotely near Iowa because we don't accept voice writers, caused me to put my practicing on hold for several months. Now I'm ready to "hit the books" and prepare for testing, even if that means having to fly somewhere to do so.

In all of the research that I have done, I've found that there are a lot of misconceptions about voice writing. I think largely it is due to people not understanding exactly what voice writing is, as well as some confusion between digital recorders and voice writers.

Every aspect of voice writing is exactly the same as stenography. The software is the same. The certification tests are identical. The speed and accuracy required are the same. In fact, a stenographer and a voice writer can sit for the very same certification test. A voice writing student will have to take all of the same courses as a steno student: numerous English, grammar, and punctuation courses (who knew it would be so difficult to properly punctuate a horribly constructed sentence?!); transcript preparation; CAT software; medical and legal terminology; et cetera. The only difference between the two is the output method.

I do believe that learning voice writing *could* take less time than steno for many people because when you are learning stenography, you are learning an entirely new language. That strange little machine has so many key combinations that it takes months and sometimes years just to learn the theory before you move on to speed building. With voice writing, you already know how to speak English, so it is just a matter of training your software to recognize your voice and learning "shortcuts." So although it would

still take the same amount of time to complete all of the other courses, mastering the actual skill itself could take less time for students.

Voice writers come up with "briefs" for phrases, just like stenographers do. For instance, for steno briefs you "smoosh" words together to make a one-syllable, one-stroke brief. "Ladies and gentlemen" could be "LAIJ." The same is true with voice writing. I simply have to tell my software that when I say "LAIJ," the output should be "ladies and gentlemen."

Some might worry that a voice writer would be a distraction in the courtroom, but voice writers are required to be even quieter than interpreters. During certification, the testers walk around the room. If your voice is audible at less than 2 feet away, you may be disqualified.

I realize that oftentimes, people don't like change. I have witnessed other court reporters look down on voice writers, which I find ironic because voice writing has been around for a *very* long time. A judge that I sometimes work with told me his wife chose court reporting in part because her father was a voice writer in the military. I am sure some pen-and-paper shorthand writers complained when machine shorthand came along.

On top of all of the reasons I have laid out here in support of voice writing, another very important consideration is this: We are tired. The shortage of court reporters is really starting to take its toll. In 2B, if my judge doesn't have a hearing or trial, I'll often be sent to cover another judge. This week I was scheduled to cover someone every day, which I understand is my job, but the thing that's sometimes overlooked is all of the other things we are tasked with besides making the record. If I am covering another judge, I am managing the queue, setting hearings, proofreading rulings, and other work for my own judge and the judge I'm covering for that day, as well as doing the same on a fairly regular basis for my former judge, who has been without a reporter, plus any dictation he needs done, which can sometimes be quite lengthy.

Ultimately, everyone who works in the judicial branch has the same goal of preserving the record, and I don't think anyone disagrees that a human being is the best choice to perform that job. It should not matter whether that human being uses their voice or their fingers to achieve that.

With the shortage of reporters we're facing – which is only going to worsen – I feel allowing voice writers is a win/win situation. I cannot think of one valid reason why it would be a bad decision. I hope my input has given you more information about voice writing than you previously had, and I sincerely hope you will move forward with the steps necessary to allow voice writers to become certified in the state of Iowa by approving the proposed amendments to chapter 46. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Clerk of the Supreme Court
111 East Court Ave
Des Moines Ia 50010

7/25/2023

Chapter 46 Amendment Comments.

1. Seems to me the organization of getting all persons involved in any litigation remotely would be a challenge in 2 respects. One being a reliable connection to actually last the time of comment or witness involvement without drop-outs . Would lead to lengthening the whole process. Two, AI is coming and false information could easily be presented.again delaying and endangering the outcome of the procedure..
2. Are we changing something that is not broken?

Steven Truckenmiller
3602 Farnham DR.
Ames Ia 50010



[EXTERNAL] Chapter 46 Amendments

Cathy Penniston

to:

rules.comments

08/25/2023 07:07 PM

Cc:

"Cathy Penniston"

Hide Details

From: "Cathy Penniston" <cpenniston@gmail.com>

To: rules.comments@iowacourts.gov

Cc: "Cathy Penniston" <cpenniston@gmail.com>

FILED
AUG 25 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT

1 Attachment



Comments to Chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules, Rules of the Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters.docx

My comments are attached.

Thank you,

Cathy L. Penniston

--

**Cathy L. Penniston, M.A., CSR, RPR, CRI
Court Reporting Instructor**

Broadcast Captioner, CART Captioner

**"You've achieved success in your field when you
don't know whether what you are doing is work or
play." --Warren Beatty**

641-777-7695 | cpenniston@gmail.com

August 24, 2023

RE: Chapter 46 Amendments

Dear Sir or Madam,

FILED
AUG 25 2023
CLERK SUPREME COURT

As a court reporting instructor at Des Moines Area Community College holding a Master's Degree in Teaching, an Iowa Certified Court Reporter, an NCRA Registered Professional Reporter, an NCRA Certified Realtime Instructor and Secretary-Treasurer of the National Court Reporters Association, I am writing in opposition to the Proposed Amendment to Chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules, Rules of the Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters.

My reasons for opposing this Chapter 46 Amendment are as follows:

1. Making a record using a closed microphone voice dictation silence or steno mask is not a method that is taught in Iowa and not a method I recommend. (I have taught that method in the past so I do understand the method.)
2. This proposal would take jobs away from our Iowa graduates at DMACC. We currently have 58 steno court reporting students in our classes at DMACC. It has taken DMACC 10 years to increase the enrollment to this level at DMACC after the closure at AIB.
3. If this proposal to employ closed microphone voice dictation writers from out of state takes effect, where will our students find jobs? We currently have 25 advanced students in their second year of court reporting school who will be in the job market in the next two years.
4. I teach at DMACC. We do not teach the closed microphone voice dictation method. At this time there are no schools in Iowa that teach the closed microphone dictation method. This proposed amendment is an attempt to bring in employees from other states to take jobs away from Iowa residents.
5. Currently, the rules state that "shorthand" is "a method of writing rapidly with a stenograph machine." This has been the accepted method of providing an accurate court record in Iowa at least since 1975 when I graduated from the AIB court reporting program.
6. Rather than replacing the gold standard of machine shorthand in Iowa, we need to look at what is causing the shortage of certified court reporters in Iowa and address this problem.
7. Statistics from the Office of Professional Regulation of the Iowa Supreme Court per Nicholas Critelli, III, Executive Director, in 2022 there were only six participants who passed the Iowa CSR test.
8. Is the State of Iowa making it too difficult to pass the Iowa CSR test? Have you heard of another test given by any professional regulating body that requires participants to purchase a personal printer and carry it into the Iowa Judicial Building on test day? This is causing added stress on the students taking the test.
9. After failing the Iowa CSR test, our students are then required to pass the NCRA national test in order to work in Iowa due to the difficulty of the Iowa CSR test. Many students

refuse to take the Iowa CSR test. The current Iowa test needs to be reviewed and updated.

10. The NCRA RPR test allows participants to pass the test online on separate days. The Iowa CSR test requires three speed test with high accuracy to be taken in one setting on site. If a student passes two out of three tests that day, they fail the test and do not become certified. The test is only given twice a year and only on site. If that student wants to work in Iowa, they then must pay for and sit for the NCRA online test. Many students move to another state that does not require the Iowa CSR test.
11. Rather than adding another method of shorthand to our Iowa rules, we need to examine our Iowa test and help our current Iowa students and reporters. We are wasting valuable resources administering an out-of-date test.
12. This fall we have 33 new steno court reporting students at DMACC. We have been working tirelessly to recruit new students since the program opened 10 years ago. Are we going to add the less skilled closed microphone voice dictation writers into our courtroom to take away the jobs of our highly skilled steno reporters? That is a great concern to me as an Iowa court reporter and Iowa taxpayer. Just because closed microphone voice dictation writers can get through school in less time than highly skilled steno students does not justify adding this method to our Iowa court system.
13. We have faced difficult times in Iowa recruiting steno students since AIB closed. There were no steno graduates after the closing of AIB for approximately three years until we started DMACC. It takes at least two years and sometimes three years to graduate a gold standard steno student. That caused a shortage that we are now starting to solve. Our numbers at DMACC are growing at this time. If jobs are taken away from the gold standard steno student graduates and offered to closed microphone voice dictation writers from out of state, it will be very difficult to recruit new students to the DMACC court reporter program.
14. Are we going to give our highly prized Iowa judicial jobs to closed microphone voice dictation writers who live in another state and come into Iowa to take the jobs of our gold standard steno students? Closed microphone voice dictation training is not at the high level of steno training. A closed microphone voice dictator can be trained in about one year. Are they as qualified as a machine steno writer who has spent two or three years perfecting their skill? As a court reporter and steno teacher, I say no.

In conclusion, I feel we are going the wrong direction on allowing the closed microphone voice dictation writers to take our Iowa jobs especially since we do not offer that training in Iowa. We have always had the highest standard for our court reporters in Iowa, and we are recognized throughout the United States for our excellent steno writers.

Instead of spending our precious resources allowing the closed microphone voice dictation writers to take jobs of our Iowa highly-trained steno writers, we need to focus on supporting our current reporters and our DMACC graduates and offering them a fair Iowa CSR test and helping them become employed in Iowa.

I urge you to deny passage of this amendment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cathy L. Penniston, M.A. CSR, RPR, CRI
Professor of Court Reporting, Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC)
Secretary-Treasurer, National Court Reporters Association (NCRA)
Secretary-Treasurer, National Court Reporters Foundation (NCRF)
Past President of Iowa Court Reporters Association (ICRA)
Iowa Certified Shorthand Reporter
NCRA Registered Professional Reporter
NCRA Certified Reporting Instructor
Master of Arts in Teaching—Clarke University

Email bintzjr09@hotmail.com

Address:

Comments: Hello. My name is Jill Bintz from Dayton, Iowa. I am writing Chief Justice Christensen, as he has signed an order requesting public comment on proposed amendments to chapter 46 of the Iowa Court Rules, Rules of the Board of Examiners of Shorthand Reporters. And, I would like to comment that switching or adding Verbatim Reporting to the court rooms would benefit me to become a Verbatim Reporter, as Steno is not an option for me since I cannot be a full time student to earn this. I would, however, be able to do the schooling for Verbatim Reporting and still work full time. I hope you take this into consideration. Thank you

Submitter: Unknown