



# CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEW YORK STATE UNIFIED COURT SYSTEM

---

## THE OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES AN OPEN-COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION

**TITLE: COURT REPORTER**

**EXAMINATION NUMBER: 45-754**

**STARTING  
SALARY**

The Court Reporter job is graded at JG-24. The current hiring rate for JG-24 is \$63,869. In addition, appointees in New York City, Nassau, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester Counties may receive \$3,451 in annual location pay. Appointees in Orange, Dutchess and Putnam counties will receive \$1,725 in annual location pay.

**APPLICATION  
FEE**

A \$30 **NON-REFUNDABLE** application fee is being charged to file for this examination.

**DISTINGUISHING  
FEATURES OF  
WORK**

Court Reporters are responsible for verbatim recording and transcribing testimony in formal and informal court settings such as trials, conferences, calendar calls, arraignments, and hearings. They may also perform back office and courtroom clerical tasks such as processing forms related to case proceedings. Court Reporters work in the Civil, Criminal and Family Courts of the City of New York and in City, Family, District and County Courts.

**ELIGIBLE LISTS  
AND LOCATION OF  
POSITIONS**

The eligible list established as a result of this examination will be used to fill positions throughout New York State. This examination, which will be held on a statewide basis, is open to all qualified candidates, whether they are employees of the Unified Court System or members of the general public.

**MINIMUM  
QUALIFICATIONS  
TO COMPETE**

To participate in this examination, candidates **must**, by the date of the examination, April 25, 2009:

- 1) possess a high school diploma or its educational equivalent; **and** have,
- 2) 18 months of general verbatim reporting experience\*; **or**,
- 3) completed a formal program in court reporting and have one (1) year of general verbatim reporting experience.\*

\*Two hundred and fifty (250) days of per diem experience may be substituted for one year of full-time experience.

---

**Examination is scheduled to  
be held April 25, 2009**

---

---

**Applications must be postmarked no  
later than January 30, 2009**

---

**MINIMUM  
QUALIFICATIONS  
FOR  
APPOINTMENT**

To be eligible for appointment, candidates **must**, by the time of appointment, have:  
1) three (3) years of general verbatim reporting experience\*; **or**,  
2) completed a formal program in court reporting and have two (2) years of general verbatim reporting experience.\*

\*Two hundred and fifty (250) days of per diem experience may be substituted for one year of full-time experience.

**RESIDENCY**

New York State residency is **not** a requirement to compete in this examination or for appointment from the eligible list.

**PROBATIONARY  
REQUIREMENT**

As a condition of successful completion of the one-year probationary period, Court Reporters must demonstrate proficiency in, and use of, computer-aided transcription (CAT).

**BENEFITS**

Court employees receive 20 days of paid vacation during their first year of service in addition to 12 paid holidays. They also accrue 13 days of paid sick leave annually. Participation in medical, dental, life insurance and retirement plans is offered.

**EXAMINATION  
CENTERS**

This examination will be held only in the following test centers: Albany (01), Binghamton (06), Buffalo (08), Nassau County (21), New York City (24), Nyack (42), Rochester (35), Suffolk County (9), and Syracuse (38).

**SUBJECT OF  
EXAMINATION**

The examination for Court Reporter will consist of two components as described below: a written test and a dictation performance test presented through a video format. Candidates must obtain a passing score on **each** of the two components. The written part will be weighted 25% and the performance part will be weighted 75% of the final ranked score.

**WRITTEN TEST**

The written examination will consist of multiple-choice questions designed to assess the following:

1. **Knowledge of English Grammar and Usage, Punctuation and Sentence Structure**  
These questions are designed to measure the candidate's ability to apply the rules of English grammar, usage, punctuation, and sentence structure. For some of these questions candidates may be required to proof read brief transcript selections/paragraphs and identify errors in grammar, usage, punctuation, sentence structure, spelling and/or vocabulary.
2. **Spelling and General Vocabulary**  
These questions are designed to measure the candidate's ability to spell words and to understand words and phrases that Court Reporters may encounter in their daily work.
3. **Knowledge of Medical, Legal and Technical Terminology**  
These questions are designed to measure the candidate's knowledge of medical, legal and technical terminology that reporters may encounter in their daily work. These questions may include, but are not limited to, terms from fields such as law, forensic science, anatomy, physiology, and medicine.

**SCORING** - The written test is weighted 25%. The passing score for the written examination will be determined at a date following the administration of the examination.

## PERFORMANCE TEST

The performance component of the Court Reporter exam consists of the following **two** parts:

1. **TRANSCRIPTION:** Candidates will be required to take and transcribe an Opening Statement of Counsel (averaging **175** words per minute for **3** minutes) and Testimony involving four voices, including examination of witnesses, objections, rulings, etc. (averaging **190** words per minute for **5** minutes).
2. **READ-BACK:** Candidates will also be required to take and later read back a Judge's Charge (averaging **185** words per minute for **3** minutes). Candidates will be given **5** minutes to study their notes from dictation and **10** minutes to read back the Charge. Candidates must be able to produce a paper record of their stenographic notes and read from these notes for this portion of the examination.

**SCORING** - The performance test is weighted 75%. Candidates must have an average of not more than five (5) errors per one hundred words dictated in order to obtain a passing mark of 70 on the overall performance test which includes both transcription and read-back sections of the test.

**TIMING** - Candidates will be given a total of **2½** hours to complete the transcription and read-back parts of the performance test.

### SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Only manual shorthand or shorthand writing machines will be permitted. Real-time translation is **not** permitted and computers will **not** be allowed to be present during the dictation or the read-back portion of the examination. Audio or video recording devices will **not** be allowed. Candidates using paperless writers must produce paper notes.
2. Stenographic paper, computer disks and flash cards will not be available at the test site. Each candidate must provide his or her own equipment and supplies necessary to record, transcribe and print the exam. Failure of equipment or supplies is the sole responsibility of the candidate.
3. The transcription portion of the dictation must be completed on a typewriter, personal computer, or with the use of computer-aided transcription (CAT). Candidates must provide their own equipment to transcribe the dictation. Laptop computers and compact printers are preferred since transcription space will be at a premium. Typewriters and computers will **not** be available at any of the examination sites.
4. All notes, tapes, and diskettes must be given to the Monitor at the close of the examination. Candidates who plan to use stenographic machines requiring diskettes must bring a blank diskette to the examination. After the exam, candidates using stenographic machines with internal memories or who use a memory flash card, will be asked to reformat the writer's memory or delete any files from the memory flash card. Candidates must turn off the power to their machines at the close of the examination. Therefore, they should be careful to arrive at the examination with no files stored in memory or on the memory flash card.
5. Use of dictionaries (English, Legal and/or Medical) will be permitted during the performance component of the examination **only**. Candidates must supply their own dictionaries. Sharing of dictionaries is **not** permitted.

## GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES USING **COMPUTER-AIDED TRANSCRIPTION (CAT)**

1. Candidates are responsible for producing their own transcripts without assistance. Candidates must use their own dictionary, and perform their own translating, editing, and printing functions.
2. Additional transcription time will **not** be allowed for equipment failure, candidate mishaps such as accidental erasing of computer files, or forgotten items (e.g., cables, power cords).
3. Applicants are personally responsible for the functioning, or the failure to function, of their machines. Should any equipment not perform properly, be dropped, stolen, broken, etc., neither the site, the Chief Examiner, nor the Office of Court Administration is responsible.
4. Candidates are responsible for all necessary hardware and software including **CAT** writers, computers, security keys, blank disks, printers, cables, extension cords, adapters, and surge protector/power strips.
5. The printing of rough drafts is permitted; however, the following rules apply:
  - **All** rough draft pages must be turned in with the final test transcript.
  - **All** rough draft pages must be clearly marked "Rough Draft" and a large "X" marked across the page to separate them from final copies.
  - No printer may be shared with another candidate. In the event of a printer failure the candidate may use the remaining test time to transcribe the dictation on a personal typewriter that he or she brings to the test center.
6. Candidates are prohibited from viewing or handling another candidate's test material. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in automatic disqualification.
7. Candidates, including those withdrawing from the examination, are required to turn in the following items to the room monitor:
  1. Writer Disk (with 9-digit Social Security Number on it)
  2. **All** rough drafts
  3. Final transcript.
8. If your writer does not use a disk, e.g., a RAM memory or memory flash card, you will be asked to reformat your writer's memory after the exam. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you eliminate any jobs that may be in the memory prior to arriving for your exam.
9. Laptop computers and compact printers are preferred since transcription space will be at a premium.

### PLEASE NOTE:

- **TYPEWRITERS AND TRANSCRIPTION PAPER ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT ANY TEST SITE. YOU MAY BRING YOUR OWN TYPEWRITER. YOU MUST INDICATE THIS ON YOUR APPLICATION IF YOU BRING AN ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER. IF YOU BRING AN ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER YOU MUST ALSO BRING AN EXTENSION CORD AT LEAST 10 FEET LONG. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU BRING AT LEAST 50 SHEETS OF TRANSCRIPTION PAPER. YOU MAY ALSO BRING ADDITIONAL TRANSCRIPTION PAPER TO INSURE THAT YOU HAVE A SUFFICIENT SUPPLY.**

**ISSUE DATE: December 8, 2008**

## **INFORMATION FOR OPEN-COMPETITIVE CANDIDATES - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

**APPLICATION:** Applications (UCS-19) may be obtained from the courts and court agencies of New York State or by writing to the Examination Unit, Office of Court Administration, Room 1081 25 Beaver Street, New York, N.Y. 10004. Separate applications must be filed for each examination. When requesting an application by mail, specify examination number and title, show the work "EXAMINATION" in the lower left-hand corner of the envelope, and enclose a stamped self-addressed, legal-size envelope. Additional or revised information, such as a change of address after the application has been filed, must be provided in writing to the Office of Court Administration at the address. The application form can be downloaded from our website: [http://www.nycourts.gov/careers/USC\\_Form19\\_proof4.pdf](http://www.nycourts.gov/careers/USC_Form19_proof4.pdf).

**FILING FEE:** A filing fee is required to apply for this examination. The amount is noted on the examination announcement. **Your application must be accompanied by a money order payable to N.Y.S. Office of Court Administration. DO NOT SEND CASH OR CHECKS.** The following information should be written on the money order: Applicant's name, Social Security Number, home address, title of the examination and examination number for which application is being filed. **Filing fees are not refundable.** Compare your qualifications carefully to the requirements stated on the announcement before submitting your application.

An exception to the fee requirement will be made for employees of the Unified Court System.

An exception to the fee requirement will be made also for persons receiving Supplemental Social Security payments or Public Assistance (Home Relief or Aid to Dependent Children, provided Foster Care, or are certified Job Training Partnership Act eligible through a state or local social service agency, or are receiving public assistance from the New York City Department of Social Services). All claims are subject to later verification and, if not supported by appropriate documentation, are grounds for barring or rescinding an appointment. An exception will also be made for applicants who are unemployed and primarily responsible for the support of a household.

**VETERANS CREDITS:** Disabled and non disabled veterans who are eligible for extra credit will have 10 and 5 points respectively, added to their scores, if they are otherwise successful in the examination. Eligible veterans should claim those credits when they file their application. Further information regarding instructions for filing and eligibility is contained in the application. If veterans credits are granted, eligibles will have an option to waive them anytime prior to appointment.

**VERIFICATION OF QUALIFICATIONS:** The Office of Court Administration may refuse to examine an applicant, or after examination, to include a candidate on the eligible list, or may remove or restrict from the eligible list an applicant who is found to lack any of the established requirements for admission to the examination or for appointment from the resultant eligible list.

**EXAMINATION RATINGS:** Examination final ratings are reported on a scale of 100 with the passing mark set at 70. The passing raw score for the written examination will be determined at a date following the administration of the examination.

**SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS:** Candidates who, for religious reasons, cannot be tested on a Saturday must indicate this information on their application. All other requests for alternate test dates must be submitted at least one month prior to the examination date, and will be reviewed on a case by case basis for compliance with the Alternate Test Date Guidelines of the Unified Court System. Applicants with disabilities who require special arrangements should contact the Coordinator of Special Accommodations at (212) 428-2574 or TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf) (212) 428-2781 by the close of the filing period for the examination.

**WARNING:** Anyone found unlawfully possessing or disclosing questions and answers from civil service examinations, or giving or taking test information from another candidate during the examination, or anyone found taking a civil service examination for someone else or enlisting another person to take an examination for another will be subject to being disqualified from that examination and may be barred from taking any further examinations with the Unified Court System and may be subject to other penalties as prescribed by law.

**CANDIDATES SHOULD CONTACT THE OFFICE OF COURT ADMINISTRATION AT (212) 428-2580 IF THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED THEIR ADMISSION NOTICE THREE (3) DAYS BEFORE THE EXAMINATION (April 25, 2009).**

**The Unified Court System is an Equal Opportunity Employer. M/F**