

Why continuing education is important

By Colin Brehm

The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) promotes excellence among those who capture and convert the spoken word to text and is committed to supporting every member in achieving the highest level of professional expertise. NCRA's Continuing Education Program was established and is administered by the authority of the Council of the Academy of Professional Reporters (CAPR). CAPR's operation is mandated by the Bylaws of NCRA, and its members are appointed by the NCRA Board of Directors.





court reporters and captioners use cutting-edge technology to bring the spoken word to text accurately in realtime. NCRA members are highly tech-savvy as they rely on the latest in technology to get their jobs

done. Today's court reporters can write 225 words per minute or more when capturing the spoken word. The professional certifications offered by NCRA reflect the commitment to service and self-investment.

When asked why being certified is crucial to the industry, Lisa Selby-Brood, RMR, a freelance court reporter from Clearwater, Fla., shared why it is important to have those certifications and CEUS.

"I can tell you horror stories that you would not believe." Lisa went on to say that a person who was not certified by NCRA opened a court reporting business in their apartment in Florida, putting a sign in their window. "Well, one day, lo and behold, as attorneys were scrambling trying to find their transcripts, they finally went to this apartment and the person was gone. This apartment complex had a storage facility ... and there were literally boxes with exhibits and CDs, and discs and files, and paper notes just sitting in banker boxes out in the elements. Just shoved in there.

"This is what happens when we are not policed properly. And that is why it is so important we get certification and that we have a national organization [NCRA] that's got our backs," Selby-Brood said.

The field of captioning and court reporting demands that its practitioners acquire and maintain a broad base of knowledge. The body of knowledge in the world changes rapidly and with this spiraling explosion of information, court reporting professionals must keep up, keeping their mind open to new ideas, honing their skills of learning, and developing as a well-rounded professional. You can review your Continuing Education Transcripts through your NCRA profile at NCRA.org.

If you still need CEUs before September 30, 2022, be sure to visit the NCRA Learning Center (learningcenter.ncra.org) for the latest webinar sessions available for purchase. Earn CEUs with the click of your mouse by registering for and attending all online courses.

"We look forward to continuing to identify ways to offer additional learning opportunities in the near future to ensure all NCRA members — no matter what area of the profession they practice in — have access to the quality education they need to reflect their skills and talents," said Cynthia R. Bruce, Senior Director of Education and Certification.

If you still need CEUs before September 30, 2022, be sure to visit the NCRA Learning Center (learningcenter.ncra.org) for the latest webinar sessions available for purchase.

The Learning Center gives 30 days from the date of purchase to complete all required elements unless otherwise noted and is the best way to earn those CEUs in a timely manner.

"Whether you are new to the profession or have been in your career for many years, continuing education is so important to keeping us up to date and ready to adapt to the challenges we face," said Lynette L. Mueller, FAPR, RDR, CRR, who chairs CAPR. "If you need CEUs — as a third of members do each year — please look around to see the options you have for learning and make sure you get them to the NCRA Continuing Education department. Getting a broader understanding of certain topics can help brainstorm different ways to approach a task or challenge, which is why it's vital to attend learning events."

Colin Brehm is NCRA's Content Manager. He can be reached at cbrehm@ncra.org.

Questions about Continuing Education and CEUs can be sent to ContinuingEd@ncra.org.

FIVE QUICK WAYS TO EARN CEUs

JUST ADDED!

Attend an ewebinar

NCRA has recently added some recorded sessions from the 2022 Conference & Expo, so if there are sessions you missed or you weren't able to make it to Orlando to attend them live, now's your chance. See what's new in the catalog at learningcenter.ncra.org.

1

Attend a pre-approved event, including state association conferences

Many state associations and other court reporter–related organizations are hosting conferences and seminars in September. In-person events give you the opportunity to network with other reporters and captioners while earning CEUs. Check out the full calendar of pre-approved events in the *JCR* calendar or online at [NCRA.org](https://ncra.org) by searching “pre-approved calendar of events.” The online calendar includes the dates, location (geographic or online), and number of CEUs.

2

Learn CPR or first aid

The American Heart Association, the American Red Cross, and other organizations often host seminars on CPR or first aid. Perhaps you can organize a few colleagues from your firm, court, or even your local area to team up for an event nearby. Court reporters and captioners have to be prepared for anything, so why not add safety to your list of skills? Learn more about the requirements for earning CEUs by learning CPR or first aid at [NCRA.org/WaysToEarn](https://ncra.org/WaysToEarn).

3

Transcribe oral histories

Members who participate in the Oral Histories Program through the National Court Reporters Foundation (NCRF) may earn Professional Development Credits for their time. Members can apply up to 1.0 PDC to their CEU requirement per cycle. Transcribe a 30- to 90-minute pre-recorded interview of an American veteran, Holocaust survivor, or attorney who has provided pro bono services through Legal Aid. Many people find participating in the Oral Histories Program to be especially rewarding. “As court reporters, we sometimes are too focused on the financial side of what we do, but (volunteering) is giving back. Anyone thinking of participating in one of these events should just jump right in and do it. It's well worth it,” said Kimberly Xavier, RDR, CRR, CRC, CMRS, CRI, an official court reporter from Arlington, Texas, who has participated in the program. Learn more at [NCRA.org/NCRF/OralHistories](https://ncra.org/NCRF/OralHistories).

4

Get credit for past events

You may have already participated in activities that have helped you earn CEUs or PDCs during the last year, and the only thing you need to do is fill out the proper form to get credit. If you promoted the profession at a career fair, law school, or other event; provided pro bono services; served on a state association board or committee (including the United States Court Reporting Association); or participated in a formal mentoring program, you may qualify for credit for your volunteerism. You can submit these CEUs and PDCs through the NCRA Learning Center (LearningCenter.NCRA.org).

5

Cycle extensions

If you need a four-month cycle extension (to Jan. 31) to finish those last CEUs, you can fill out the CEU extension request form by Sept. 30. Note that the deadline to complete CEUs or to request an extension is the same date. If you have any questions, please contact the NCRA credentialing coordinator at continuinged@ncra.org.