

Frequently Asked Questions

What is TCRA? The Texas Court Reporters Association, TCRA, is a voluntary association of professional, associate, student, honorary and disability court reporting members.

Why do I need to join TCRA?

TCRA offers its members (1) the opportunity to network with professionals throughout the State of Texas, (2) updates on pending legislation and rules changes affecting the practice of court reporting, and (3) a means of receiving continuing education in all prescribed areas necessary for certification and registration with the Court Reporter Certification Board.

How much are dues?

Profession \$125

Any person who is an Official Court Reporter in the state of Texas using a system of shorthand or stenographic machine or who is engaged in the practice of deposition reporting or general reporting in the state of Texas by shorthand or stenographic machine which employs the use of written symbols of letters and who is a holder of a current "Certified Shorthand Reporter" certificate issued by the Supreme Court of Texas. Said person must solely use the method by which the "Certified Shorthand Reporter" test was passed.

Associate \$125

Any person, firm, corporation, or educational institution interested in the advancement of the shorthand reporting profession in the State of Texas and the advancement of the aims of the Texas Court Reporters Association shall be eligible for Associate Membership. Any person who practices shorthand reporting by their test method and has passed the National Court Reporters Association Registered Professional Reporter or Registered Merit Reporter Exam.

Student \$40 (Any student of shorthand reporting who is certified by a court reporter training program instructor or director as being currently enrolled in said program.

Retired \$40

Any person who has been a professional member for at least ten years and who is no longer engaged in any aspect of shorthand reporting shall be eligible.

Disability \$62.50

Any person who has been a professional member for at least one year, who stills holds a valid CSR certification, and who is not able to work full or part-time due to an illness or disability.

When does my membership expire?

TCRA fiscal year runs September 1st thru August 31st.
Membership runs September 1st, 2007 thru August 31st, 2008.

What is the CRCB? The Court Reporter Certification Board, or CRCB, is the state agency which certifies to the Supreme Court of Texas the mandatory registration of court reporters and court reporting firms under Government Code, Chapter 52.021. For more information go to www.crcb.state.tx.us

How is TCRA different from the CRCB? Membership in TCRA is voluntary registration with the CRCB is mandatory.

Do I have to register with the CRCB? Yes. Registration with the CRCB is mandatory for all court reporting firms and persons whose practice is judicial shorthand reporting in the State of Texas under Government Code, Chapter 52, Subchapter C.

Who qualifies for the designation as a firm? Pursuant to Government Code, Chapter 52.0255, Firm Registration, "A shorthand reporting firm may not assume or use the title or designation 'court reporting firm,' 'court reporting firm,' or 'shorthand reporting firm,' or any abbreviation, title, designation, words, letters, sign, card, or device tending to indicate that the firm is a court reporting firm or shorthand reporting firm, or offer services as a court reporting firm or shorthand reporting firm, unless the firm and its affiliate offices are registered with the board on a form prescribed by the board as required by this chapter."

Further, pursuant to CRCB FAQ 17, "A firm shall be defined as any person or entity that employs Certified Shorthand Reporters and/or engages independent contractors to provide court or shorthand reporting services. A firm shall be required to register any affiliate office under a separate registration number and pay a registration renewal fee. Please be advised that firms who meet this definition must register with the Board office. Those who do not meet this definition are not required to register with the Board office."

Must all firms, including out-of-state-headquartered firms, doing court reporting in Texas register with the CRCB?

Pursuant to Senate Bill 1223, "A firm shall be defined as any person, or entity that employs certified shorthand reporters and/or engages independent contractors to provide court or shorthand reporting services. A firm shall be required to register any affiliate office under a separate registration number and pay a registration renewal fee."

What does it mean to be registered as a firm or as a court reporter? Registration is the process by which a court reporter or court reporting firm complies with the mandatory requirements of the Court Reporter Certification Board.

Does my firm have to register with the CRCB? Yes Registration is required under Rule 12 of the Rules of Judicial Administration. For more information go to www.crcb.state.tx.us.

How do I know what reporters and/or firms are registered with the CRCB? Go to www.crcb.state.tx.us for a listing of registered reporters and firms.

What is the UFM (Uniform Format Manual)? The UFM is a document which provides transcript formatting requirements for judicial reporting, both official and freelance, with respect to cases filed in the state courts of Texas.

Who may file a grievance with the CRCB? Pursuant to Government Code, Chapter 52.027(a), any person.

Do Texas court reporters have a code of ethics? Yes. Go to www.crcb.state.tx.us for The Code of Professional Conduct.

Is continuing education mandatory? To maintain certification, yes. Go to www.crcb.state.tx.us and click on Continuing Education Requirements for the complete set of requirements.

Who keeps track of my continuing education (CE) points? It is the responsibility of every court reporter to maintain records of his/her continuing education. Also, per section (f) (2) of the CE Rules ... "These records verifying CE compliance shall be maintained by the renewal applicant for a minimum of two consecutive renewal periods or four years."

How many CEUs do I have?

If you are a member of the Texas Court Reporters Association, simply enter the Members Only Section and check the status of your CEUs earned at TCRA seminars/conventions. If you are not a member of the association, TCRA can mail or fax you a copy of the CEUs you earned at any TCRA event, call (903) 675-1806 or email us at: texasra@embarqmail.com TCRA does not keep track of CEUs earned at non-TCRA events.

How do I get my CE points? Per Continuing Education Rules for Court Reporters found at www.crcb.state.tx.us, (b) How to Acquire CEUs: (1) CEUs may be earned from:

(A) Verified attendance (e.g., certificate of attendance or certificate of completion) at or participation in a program, activity or course ("program") presented by a continuing education sponsor in subsection (c) below.

(B) Verified attendance at a program presented by a continuing education sponsor in subsection (c) below that is of general information value to shorthand reporters but does not directly relate to the reporter's ability to produce an accurate and timely transcript.

(C) Verified personal preparation of educational presentations pertaining to the profession of court reporting and serving as an instructor, speaker or panel member at a Board-approved CEU seminar will be allowed for CEUs as follows: (1) A reporter participating as an instructor in different courses in pre-approved CE programs shall be eligible for the same number of CEUs as approved for each presentation. (2) CEUs for preparation time of up to .25 CEUs. (3) CEUs for preparation time(s) and presentation time(s) within the same two-year renewal period shall not be allowed for repetitious presentations.

(D) Writing articles pertaining to the profession of court reporting and published in a state or nationally recognized professional journal of court reporting or law. No more than .25 CEUs may be earned under this category in any one renewal period. The published article must be Board approved to receive continuing education credit. Credit will not be allowed for the same article published in more than one publication.

(2) Additionally, CEUs may be earned from: (A) Courses successfully completed with a grade of "C" or better or a "Pass" on a pass/fail system that are a part of the curriculum of a university, college or other educational institution that leads to an academic degree (e.g., associate, bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree) directly related to the Certified Shorthand Reporter's knowledge, ability or competence to perform his/her duties as described in subsection (c)(3)(i-viii). One semester of course work is equivalent to a maximum of .40 CEUs. Applicants wishing to obtain CEU credit for degreed programs may only acquire CEU for the core college courses for that particular program. When submitting CE Compliance forms for renewal and/or when applying for approval of degreed programs, the applicants shall submit a copy of the curriculum or course outline for said program. Electives are not eligible for CE compliance. Courses must be completed within the renewal period.

(B) Qualifying and participating in TCRA and/or NCRA Sponsored Speed Contest, TCRA Sponsored CRR contest, passing National sponsored RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR examination, and/or attainment of TCRA sponsored CART certification at level 3, 4 and 5, as follows (no application for CEU under the following categories will be grandfathered):

RPR - .15 CEUs for passing

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RDR - .15 CEUs for passing

CRR - .15 CEUs for passing

CMR- .15 CEUs for passing

CART level 3, 4 & 5 - .15 for passing each level

Texas Court Reporters Association Sponsored Speed Contest - (qualify & participate) .15 CEUs

National Court Reporters Association Sponsored Speed Contest - (qualify & participate) .20 CEUs

Are your seminars approved by NCRA and the CRCB?

TCRA requests approval for each seminar. As each seminar is approved we post them on the website: <http://www.tcra-online.com/calendar.htm>. You can also check with TCRA HQ to learn the status of NCRA and CRCB approval by calling: (903) 675-1806 or by email at: texasra@earthlink.net

When does my CSR license expire?

Please refer to your CSR license card or contact the Court Reporters Certification Board www.crcb.state.tx.us (512) 463-1630 or info@crcb.state.tx.us

When is the next exam?

Please contact the Court Reporters Certification Board www.crcb.state.tx.us (512) 463-1630 or info@crcb.state.tx.us, they are the state agency that tests and licenses court reporters in the state of Texas.

I haven't received any information on my CSR license renewal?

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