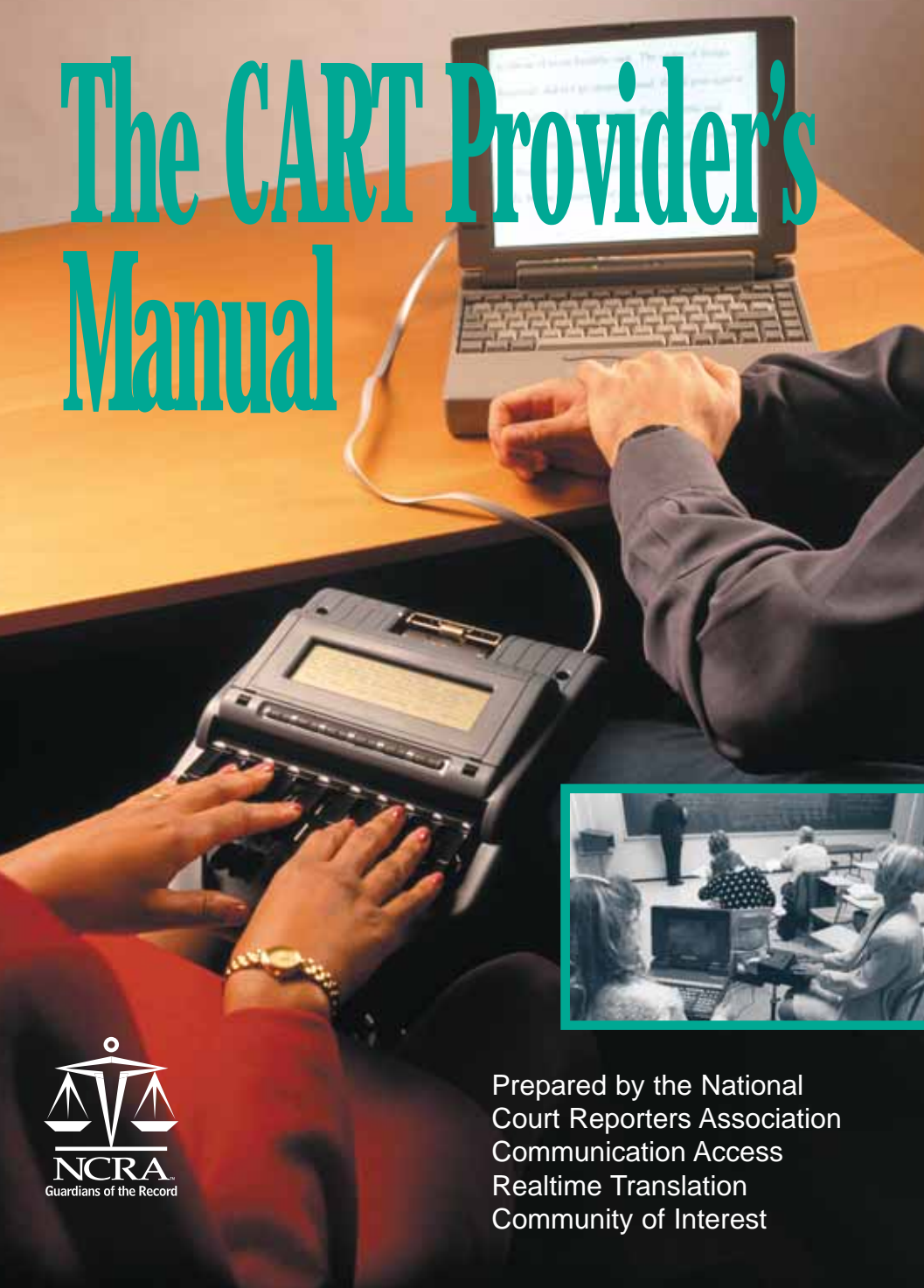




# The CART Provider's Manual



Prepared by the National  
Court Reporters Association  
Communication Access  
Realtime Translation  
Community of Interest

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is a word-for-word speech-to-text interpreting service for people who need communication access. Unlike computerized notetaking or abbreviation systems, which summarize information for consumers, CART provides a complete translation of all spoken words and environmental sounds, empowering consumers to decide for themselves what information is important to them. CART consumers include people with hearing loss; individuals with cognitive or motor challenges; anyone desiring to improve reading/language skills; and those with other communication barriers. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifically recognizes CART as an assistive technology that affords effective communication access.

A CART provider supplies instant speech-to-text translation on a computer monitor or other display for the benefit of an individual consumer or larger group in a number of settings: classrooms; business, government, and educational functions; courtrooms; religious, civic, cultural, recreation, or entertainment events. A CART provider is sensitive to the varying needs of consumers and has had training in conveying a speaker's message, complete with environmental cues. This expertise distinguishes a CART provider from a court reporter in a traditional litigation setting.

Attainment of certification so that an individual's skills and knowledge can be examined objectively is strongly recommended. NCRA's Certified CART Provider (CCP) designation is a nationally recognized standard. The CCP combines a written knowledge test and a skills exam focused on the requirements demanded of a competent CART provider. Other exams that may be relevant to judging an individual's capability to perform the required work are the Certified Realtime Reporter (CRR) and Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) designations. Although both the CRR and RPR also incorporate written knowledge and skills exams, neither tests an individual's knowledge of or capacity to provide CART with the specificity offered by the CCP exam.

For more information on the qualifications expected of a professional CART provider, please review NCRA's policy on providing quality CART services (<http://cart.NCRAonline.org/archives/general/050315qualitycartsvs.shtml>) and the CART Consumer Bill of Rights ([http://cart.NCRAonline.org/consumer/bor\\_consumer.shtml](http://cart.NCRAonline.org/consumer/bor_consumer.shtml)).





## I. PROFESSIONALISM

### A. Sensitivity

The CART provider has general knowledge about the sub-groups of people with hearing loss, including but not limited to culturally Deaf (capital D), late deafened (becoming deaf postlingually), oral deaf, and hard of hearing. It is beneficial for the CART provider to have an understanding of the preferred communication mode of a person with hearing loss.

There is a certain etiquette required when communicating with CART consumers. A CART provider should acquire training in communication techniques through court reporting association seminars, disability agencies, sign language courses, etc. Membership in organizations such as the Association of Late-Deafened Adults, Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People, and the National Association of the Deaf is recommended.

CART trainees may be present at an assignment with a CART provider to gain on-the-job experience only after the CART provider secures the consent of the consumer and client.

CART is provided in a variety of settings such as medical appointments, church meetings, funerals, programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, and police interrogations. Personal settings can be emotionally charged. Self-discipline, self-motivation, and the ability to manage stress and control emotions are important traits of a CART provider.

Additionally, projecting CART to an audience helps to educate others about CART technology and its uses. The CART provider should maintain a positive attitude when responding to questions.

At all times the CART provider should dress appropriately for the setting of the assignment. For example, business attire on a college campus may not be necessary and may make the consumer feel conspicuous.

The CART provider should be aware of the role of the sign language interpreter. Very often an interpreter will be present to serve deaf/hard-of-hearing individuals who prefer using sign language, or to voice for a non-oral individual. It should be stressed that the CART provider and interpreter work as a team, never in competition.



### B. Staying In Role

A CART provider's role is to facilitate communication. The CART provider will at all times stay in role and perform in a manner appropriate to the situation. A CART provider should decline any invitation or suggestion by participants and the consumer to comment, interject, advise, respond to inquiries, or in any way become involved in the assignment outside the role of CART provider. If necessary, the CART provider should politely explain the necessity to stay "in role."

A CART provider may be asked to step out of role to answer questions about the service, to demonstrate equipment during a break, or to schedule future dates. Deviations from role should be the exception and should be discouraged, but may occur with the approval of the CART consumer.

The CART provider must exercise discretion in situations which may warrant interrupting the proceedings to ensure the integrity of the CART translation. Care should be taken not to call undue attention to the consumer or oneself.

At the request of the consumer, the CART provider may voice for the consumer in order to facilitate communication.

### C. Impartiality

The CART provider must be fair and impartial to each participant in all aspects of CART and be alert to conflicts of interest. Such circumstances may include, for example, an assignment involving a participant who is a close friend, family member, or business associate.

Any potential conflict of interest or inability to be impartial shall be disclosed by the CART provider. Failure to do so may make it difficult to prove oneself unbiased if challenged.

### D. Confidentiality

Courtesy and discretion are required of the CART provider at all times. A casual word or action may betray a consumer's confidences or violate a client's privacy. Confidentiality of the consumer's information and privacy of the person must be maintained.



## E. Professional Development

The CART provider should keep abreast of current trends, laws, literature, and technological advances relating to the provision of CART service.

## II. SKILLS

The following categories outline the minimum foundational skills necessary for rendering proficient and professional CART service.

### A. Preparation and Professional Practice

The CART provider works closely with the consumer, meeting coordinator, classroom teacher, or other appropriate individual to obtain all terminology inherent to the assignment and must research literature (curricula, syllabi, synopses, scripts, texts, meeting agendas, conference programs, and organization or company Web sites) to create a job dictionary and enhance the master dictionary.

Speaker identifiers are entered into the job dictionary prior to the commencement of any assignment. Generic usage (i.e., >> SPEAKER:) is recommended for an unidentified speaker. CART training addresses speaker identification in various settings.

Before providing CART service, one needs to establish a clear understanding of who is hiring the CART provider and whether an electronic file of the roughly edited text with disclaimer is to be preserved. The contents of the computer file may be deemed proprietary and should not be distributed without proper authorization. If providing the file, one should also establish a clear understanding of whether all participants have been informed that an electronic file of the roughly edited text with disclaimer will be preserved and who is entitled to receive a copy of said file.

It is recommended that the following or similar language be inserted at the beginning and end of each file:

“This text is being provided in a rough draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.”

To aid communication with CART consumers and meeting planners, it is desirable for a CART provider to have a TTY, fax machine, and/or e-mail. A CART provider should also know how to use the telephone relay system to contact a CART consumer.

### B. Realtime Writing

The CART provider writes conflict free, includes punctuation, and sustains accuracy for long periods of time. Discrete outlines for prefixes, suffixes, and root words are often considered the foundation of precise writing and word building. Consistency in writing steno outlines increases

accuracy and readability. Word-boundary problems (i.e., contractor/contract or) must be resolved.

Although a 180-wpm literary (CCP speed) is considered a requisite, a reserve of realtime speed is recommended. This allows the CART provider time to add job defines and fingerspell. It is essential that the CART provider can create and retain realtime job defines “on the fly.”

A foolproof number system is necessary. There are many systems and styles of writing that permit accuracy in numbers. The CART provider should be able to write numbers to translate as words (nine), Roman numerals (IX), cardinal numbers (9), and ordinal numbers (9th).

Fingerspelling (writing words letter by letter) is essential. In order to differentiate between initials, words that are spelled out by a speaker, and acronyms, the CART provider should utilize discrete spelling alphabets. Fingerspelled words should always translate with the appropriate spacing.

### C. Dictionary Maintenance

Knowledge and continued growth of the contents of one’s dictionary and job dictionaries are crucial. Names, terms, and places related to current events and culture must be entered into the dictionaries regularly.

Regular dictionary maintenance mandates frequent backup. Dictionary competence includes the ability to import and export ASCII and RTF files.

### D. Software/Computer Knowledge

The CART provider must operate a Computer-Aided Transcription (CAT) program and understand its realtime translation and display functions. It is important to learn to troubleshoot and solve hardware, software, and other technical problems.

In order to meet consumer preferences, the CART provider must know how to activate upper/lowercase, colored backgrounds, enlarged text, and other display options to ensure the professional presentation of all text.

Brackets should not appear around untranslated words. Phonetic translations should appear in the same color as the text. Nontext areas should be the same color as the background.

During realtime, the phonetics table should be used so that untranslates do not appear. The phonetics table should be customized to the steno theory used by the CART provider.

When appropriate, the CART provider is able to furnish the computer file of the session text as requested. Ideally, a rough-edit process should remove any untranslates and glaring mistranslates before the text is delivered.

Simultaneous display is a function of the computer. Not all computers support simultaneous display. A CART





provider must know how to switch between the notebook's LCD screen and the external device (i.e., television monitor, projector). Turning off or blocking the external device display while making job defines is recommended.

### E. Language Comprehension

Knowledge of grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, spelling, vocabulary, high-frequency colloquialisms, and slang is crucial. The CART provider must listen for continuity, sense, and detail of the proceedings, anticipating and preventing errors in translation.

### F. Research

Research, job dictionary preparation and material organization is very important to successful CART. Agendas, job dictionaries, name lists, prepared speeches, printouts of media presentations, lists of steno outlines and briefs need to be organized and placed in a conspicuous place so they can be referred to quickly while writing realtime. Each job is unique and requires its own research, information extraction and organization.

## III. LOCATION SETUP

### A. Positioning

Room setup considerations include:

- Lighting. Overhead lights, uncovered windows, or mirrors may cause glare on the screen. Consider these influences when choosing a place to sit.
- Seat location. When choosing a place to sit, be guided by the consumer's preference. Position for line of sight to overheads, slides, blackboards and other media displays. Coordination with sign language interpreters, speakers, audiovisual technicians, consumers, and other ancillary workers is important.

Keep equipment and cords out of frequently used aisles and pathways.

When providing large screen CART, the CART provider is often located near the projector, platform, lectern, or sound mixer board.

### B. Display Options

The options for display should be discussed and arranged with the CART consumer and/or client before the assignment. Some of the display options include:

- Laptop or computer for one-on-one CART.
- TV to serve up to three or four people, depending on the screen size. Several TVs can be placed around the room and the signal can be sent from one TV to another in a daisy chain.
- Large Screen with a front or rear projector. (Projectors are normally

positioned to display forward onto a screen. A rear projector will display the image onto the screen from behind it, eliminating the problem of people walking between the projector and screen and blocking the image.) The screens can vary in size, from a 4-by-4 to a 10-by-10-foot screen. A single consumer may prefer a large-screen projection display to allow for more participation and interactivity with the group as a whole.

- L.E.D. Display (Light-Emitting Diode), often used during theater productions and graduations.

### C. Films And Videotapes

Films and videos are shown frequently in classrooms and other settings. Uncaptioned films need to be realtime translated. Some suggested tokens are:

- >> MAN:
- >> WOMAN:
- >> VOICE:
- >> NARRATOR:
- >> CHILD:

Televisions made after June 1993 have built-in decoder chips for display of captions. Some videos and television programs are already captioned, so it is helpful to know how to turn on the caption feature.

### D. Seating

For comfort and stress reduction, it is necessary to locate a suitable chair without an attached desk. The CART provider may need to take a portable stand for the computer.

### E. Access To Electricity

It is important to carry an extension cord, a surge protector, and a 3-to-2 ground cord adapter. For everyone's safety, securing electrical cords with duct tape or gaffer's tape is recommended.

### F. Audio

Sometimes ambient room noise or the sound of the projector detracts from obtaining good audio. The CART provider can use an Assistive Listening Device (ALD).

Audio can be obtained off the audio mixer board with headphones, preferably headphones with volume adjustment.



## IV. THE LEGAL SETTING

CART may be provided in a court or deposition proceeding for a litigant, juror, judge, attorney, witness, or other participant. The court reporter for a trial or deposition and the CART provider perform different functions. For example, a CART provider may accompany a consumer into the jury room or into confidential discussions with attorneys.

Additionally, when providing communication access, the CART provider must include parentheticals to describe environmental sounds (i.e., alarm ringing), laughter, or anything that detracts attention from the proceeding. Synonyms may be necessary to assure effective communication. The synonyms and environmental sounds would not ordinarily appear in an official certified verbatim transcript.

Before the proceedings begin, the CART provider should discuss with the judge and attorneys his or her role as an interpreter and agree on a method of interrupting if the CART provider cannot hear or understand a speaker.

A clear understanding should be established regarding who is hiring the CART provider; the role played by the CART provider in assisting with communication as opposed to the role of the Official Reporter of Proceedings in providing a verbatim record; the fact that no roughly edited electronic file is to be produced; and the need to preserve the unedited text file with disclaimer (as suggested previously) in accordance with statute or court order, or for a period of no fewer than five years.

In a confidential setting (i.e., legal discussions, jury deliberations, attorney/client discussions), the display should not be visible to others. The CART provider should delete all files immediately after the assignment unless requested not to do so, or ordered by the Court.

A CART provider should refrain from working in the dual capacity of Official Reporter of Proceedings and CART provider. However, when no other option exists, the role performed is that of the Official Reporter of Proceedings.

## V. BROADCAST CAPTIONING

While broadcast captioning falls under the CART umbrella in its broadest sense — communication access — it is considered a separate specialty. The software, hardware, and technical knowledge base will not be addressed in this document. See <http://www.NCRAonline.org/captioning/index.shtml> for additional references.

## VI. REMOTE CART

When providing remote CART, the provider is in one location and the consumer is in another. The CART provider is listening to voices via the phone or over the Internet, translating the speech to text in realtime, and

transmitting the text to a designated Uniform Resource Locator (URL), Web page, Internet site, other locations or devices. This is particularly helpful in areas where there is a lack of CART providers. Special technical training and support is necessary when providing this service. For equipment requirements, see Remote CART below.

When providing remote CART:

- Speakers should be identified whenever possible. It is often helpful to at least “lock onto” the moderator’s voice.
- When others join the call, there is often a bell or beep, and that is important to indicate in the text.
- All environmental sounds and even “silence” or “papers shuffling” should be noted.
- When audio is not discernible, a parenthetical such as “(inaudible)” may be written one time to let the consumer know there are audio difficulties.
- If given permission by the consumer, the remote CART provider may interrupt the session and ask for a repeat or for a microphone to be readjusted.

Speakerphones with extension microphones are often used for remote CART or a speaker may wear a wireless microphone with the speakerphone. Other options for acquiring audio for remote CART are: Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), Instant Messaging (IM) audio, or a phone line.

## VII. EQUIPMENT

It is important to keep current with rapidly advancing technologies in order to meet consumer preferences. The following is a listing of the displays known at this time for CART.

The CART provider should furnish and know how to operate all equipment necessary for BASIC DISPLAY. Backup equipment, computer, and software key/code should be readily available.

Asterisked items are recommended but not required.

### A. Basic Display

- Stenotype machine with realtime cable
- Notebook computer
- CAT/realtime software
- Text-enlarging capability
- Diskettes/CDs\*
- Extension cord
- Surge protector with indicator light
- 3-prong to 2-prong ground cord adapter
- Duct tape or gaffer’s tape for taping down cables
- Additional realtime cable



- 25-foot realtime cable\*
- Notebook computer tray/tripod\*
- Equipment case with wheels\*
- Chair (make arrangements)\*
- Infrared/FM listening device\*

## B. Advanced Display

Some or all of the additional equipment necessary for the following displays may be furnished either by the CART provider or the hiring party. In all cases, before accepting an assignment to display with external monitors or equipment, the CART provider must establish and test hardware and software compatibility.

### Computer Monitor Display

- Splitter box for additional monitors
- 25-foot monitor cables
- Multi-line block or digital sharing device (for interactive realtime)

### Television Display

- Digital signal converter (computer to television)
- Coaxial cable to “daisy chain” multiple TV monitors

### Projection Screen Display

- LCD projector
- Projection screen
- Extra projector light bulbs (must know how to replace)

### L.E.D. Display

- L.E.D. message boards in various sizes and colors for indoor use
- L.E.D. message board for outdoor use

### Encoded Display

(closed-circuit sites such as conventions or classrooms)

- Captioning software (requires training)
- Encoder or character generator
- Camera
- BNC cables
- Null modem cable and/or modem

### Remote CART

- Telephone line(s)
- Emergency contact capability (cell phone, instant messaging, etc.)
- High-speed Internet connection
- Voice/data modem (for use with single phone line)
- Special microphone (for speaker)
- CAT software which supports Remote CART
- Communication software (computer to computer)

## VIII. COMPENSATION

The CART provider will request compensation for services and ascertain particulars of billing/payment in a professional and judicious manner. Details regarding payment for CART service, rates, and text files should be arranged in advance.

## IX. GETTING STARTED

Court reporters interested in getting started as CART providers should review the content available in the CART Community of Interest on NCRA's Web site (<http://cart.ncraonline.org/index.shtml>) and participate in the CART section of NCRA's Online Forum. If you have additional questions, contact NCRA's Member Services and Information Center at 800-272-6272 or [CART@ncrahq.org](mailto:CART@ncrahq.org).







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