

**NATIONAL VERBATIM  
REPORTERS ASSOCIATION**

**CERTIFICATION TESTING:  
RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES**



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# NATIONAL VERBATIM REPORTERS ASSOCIATION®

## CERTIFICATION TESTING: RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

This manual has been developed to provide current and prospective NVRA members thorough and complete information regarding NVRA's certification testing rules, policies, and procedures. Should you have additional questions after a careful and thorough review of this manual, please direct your inquiries to NVRA Membership Services at [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org). This manual will be updated periodically so that NVRA members will be as fully informed as possible.

**By signing in on test day for any NVRA-administered test, you acknowledge that you understand and agree to abide by the rules, policies, and procedures contained in this manual. Failure to follow these or any NVRA rules, policies, and procedures may result in disqualification and being barred from participating in NVRA-administered tests for the remainder of the testing year, or permanently, depending on the nature of the violation.**

**It is not necessary for you to bring this manual to the test, but you may do so if you wish. The test administrator(s) will have a copy available on-site for your use.**

Many sections of this manual contain "Special Notes." Please review these notes carefully. NVRA reserves the right to amend the Certification Testing: Rules, Policies and Procedures document as required.

### TEST FEES

CVR® Workshop	\$125
CVR® Skills Test	\$150
Written Knowledge Test	\$125
Certificate of Merit Skills Test	\$150
NSC: No charge with convention registration fee	

### CVR® AND CM CERTIFICATION TESTS

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

- A registration form for the CVR® Workshop, CVR® Skills Test and Written Knowledge Test is located on the NVRA Web site, [www.NVRA.org](http://www.NVRA.org). You may register for any or all of these tests on the registration form.
- The information contained in this manual will not be repeated prior to beginning the test, and information covered herein will not be answered at the test site.

- The dates and times of the CVR® workshop and test will be listed on the online registration forms. Except at convention, the workshop will normally be held on a Saturday from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m., and the dictation skills portion of the certification test for CVR® and CM will normally be held the next day, Sunday, beginning promptly at 8:30 a.m.
- Questions regarding prior test scores and all other questions and/or concerns regarding certification testing should be addressed to NVRA. You may e-mail Membership Services at [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org).
- All transcription must be performed by the test participant unless prohibited by a medical condition. In that case, a completed NVRA Medical Release Form must be submitted with the test registration. The Medical Release form is appended to this manual. Please be sure the form is fully completed, including the portion your physician must complete and sign.
- You may attend as many certification tests as necessary to achieve CVR® and/or CM certifications; however, you must maintain continuous membership in NVRA in order to carry forward test scores. If your NVRA membership lapses, your test scores are not maintained. Once you have passed any segment of the CVR® or CM skills test, the passing grade on that segment does not expire but will be maintained by NVRA, provided that your NVRA membership does not lapse.
- The written portion of NVRA's CVR® test will be offered online at Comira testing facilities during the two-week period immediately following administration of the dictation skills test. See complete information under "Written Knowledge Test."
- Computer spell-check functions, dictionaries, and other reference materials may be used in the transcription portion of the test. All spelling, hyphenation, and compound word determinations shall be based on Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition.
- Outside microphones or hidden recordings of any kind will NOT be tolerated and are grounds for immediate disqualification and grounds for dismissal from NVRA membership and further testing.
- Once a test participant registers and enters the test room, leaving the test premises is not allowed until all testing materials have been submitted to the proctor.
- Rest room and smoke breaks will not be allowed after the door to the test room is closed at 8:20 a.m. until the dictation skills portion of the test is complete. Breaks will be allowed immediately following the dictation skills portion of the test and following each 1-1/4 hour transcription segment.
- There is a "no-talking" rule in place from the time test participants enter the test room until participants exit the test room at the conclusion of the test. This rule will be strictly enforced.

## CRITERIA FOR CVR<sup>®</sup> and CM CERTIFICATIONS

- The test for Certified Verbatim Reporter (CVR<sup>®</sup>) is comprised of the following five-minute dictations and must be passed with 95% accuracy:
  - 200 wpm literary (50 errors)
  - 225 wpm jury charge (56 errors)
  - 250 wpm two-voice question-and-answer (63 errors)

In addition, the Written Knowledge Test must be passed.

- The test for the Certificate of Merit (CM) is comprised of the following five-minute dictations and must be passed with 97% accuracy:
  - 225 wpm literary (34 errors)
  - 250 wpm jury charge (38 errors)
  - 300 wpm two-voice question-and-answer (45 errors)

In addition, the Written Knowledge Test must be passed with a score of 90 or above. If a score of 90 or above was attained for CVR<sup>®</sup> certification, the Written Knowledge Test does not have to be repeated for CM certification.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *All requirements must be met before a CVR<sup>®</sup> or CM certificate will be granted. CVR<sup>®</sup> and CM dictations are not interchangeable.*

## REQUIREMENTS TO TEST

- You must attend a CVR<sup>®</sup> workshop before you may test for the first time.
- You must hold a CVR<sup>®</sup> or RPR to test for the CM.
- You must be a high school graduate and provide documentary proof of high school graduation, GED, or passage of an independently administered test approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education. Documentation of a higher education degree is also acceptable.
- You must be a Student, General, Military, or Honorary member of NVRA, in good standing. NVRA's membership year runs for one year from the date your membership is processed. Dues are to be paid in U.S. funds.
- If you are not currently a Student, General, Military, or Honorary member of NVRA, you may join NVRA online at [www.NVRA.org](http://www.NVRA.org) or you may request an application by contacting Membership Services at [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org).

## TEST REGISTRATION

You may register in one of three ways:

- ONLINE: The registration forms for the CVR<sup>®</sup>/CM Dictation Skills and Written Knowledge Tests are available at [www.NVRA.org](http://www.NVRA.org).
- FAX: The completed registration form(s) and credit card information may be faxed to NVRA Membership Services: 601.582.3354.
- US MAIL: Payment for all workshop/testing fees and membership dues, if applicable, may be made by credit card, or by check or money order payable to NVRA (U.S. funds). Payment and completed registration form(s) should be mailed to: NVRA Membership Services, 629 N. Main Street, Hattiesburg, MS 39401.

Additional registration information:

- Upon registration, you must provide the documentary proof required under “Requirements to Test” as stated above.
- Please refer to the online registration forms for applicable deadlines. You may still register after the deadline date, space provided. A \$50 late registration fee will be assessed. Testing space is limited and reservations are held for paid registrants only. The NVRA cancellation/refund policy is set out below.
- After registration and payment are received and processed, a registration confirmation will be sent to you. This confirmation must be presented, along with a photo identification, for admission to the certification test. Please call NVRA, 601.582.4345, or e-mail [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org) after the registration deadline if you have not received your registration confirmation and Test Checklist.

## CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY

- NVRA reserves the right to cancel the workshop and test. Registrants will be notified if the workshop and/or test is canceled and fees will be refunded.
- Should you need to cancel for any reason, you must contact the NVRA office in writing. If cancellation notice is received 10 calendar days or more prior to a testing event, the registrant will receive one (1) non-transferrable voucher which is valid for one future testing event. The submission of the voucher must be accompanied by a \$50 processing fee.
- Cancellations received nine calendar days or less prior to the test will not receive a voucher or a refund. In the event of an emergency, registrants may make a written appeal to the Testing Committee for additional review and consideration.
- If cancellation notice is NOT received prior to the event, all funds for the event will be forfeited by the individual and a voucher will not be issued.

## PART 1: CVR® WORKSHOP

- The date and time of the CVR® workshop will be listed on the online registration form. It will conclude with a practice test session. Attendance at the practice test session is voluntary. You may record the workshop if you wish.
- Items required for the CVR® workshop:
  - Voice silencer (mask)
  - Dictation recording equipment
  - Earphones and proper adapter
  - Cassette tapes (at least two) if using analog equipment
  - Power strip and heavy-duty extension cord
  - Adapter to disable live microphone on laptop and digital recorders, if applicable

Subjects covered in the workshop include proper dictation techniques; tips on breathing and audibility; read-back situations; discussion of various kinds of equipment; the importance of knowing how to disable the internal microphone on your laptop or digital recorder so that no room track is available for transcription, which is a basis for disqualification; court reporting procedures; ethical practices; and practice dictation using retired tests.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *Test participants who have previously attended the workshop may attend additional workshops for the express purpose of participating in the practice dictation session only. Test participants who wish to participate in practice dictation should inform the workshop instructor early in the day of the workshop or prior to workshop date through Membership Services. Persons should plan to arrive 1 1/4 hours prior to conclusion of workshop, enter workshop, set up quietly and be prepared for the practice session.*

## PART 2: DICTATION SKILLS TEST

### WHAT TO BRING

- **REQUIRED** items you should bring for the dictation skills test:
  - NVRA registration confirmation letter
  - Test Checklist
  - Photo ID
  - Voice silencer (mask)
  - Dictation recording equipment
  - Cassette tape(s) if using analog equipment
  - Power strip
  - Heavy-duty extension cord
  - Transcription equipment (i.e., computer, transcriber, foot pedal,

- headphones, etc.)
- Blue pen for making corrections, if printing your transcripts on-site
- Adapter to disable live microphone on laptop or digital recorder, if applicable
- Sharpie® or marker appropriate for writing on CDs and/or thumb drives

● **SUGGESTED** items you should bring for the dictation skills test:

- Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition
- Thumb drives, if you prefer to download in that manner, rather than using the CDs furnished by NVRA
- Printer, if you prefer proofing a hard copy rather than proofing on your computer screen

**SPECIAL NOTES:**

- *The same rule applies to thumb drives that applies to CDs/disks: a separate thumb drive is required for each test segment turned in, and the audio file may be saved to any of your thumb drives; however, you must clearly indicate which files are stored on your media. The maximum number of thumb drives you will need is three.*
- *Test participants are encouraged to create one audio file for all test segments.*

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Test participants must sign in with the test proctor stationed at the registration table before entering the test room. Photo identification and the registration confirmation letter on NVRA letterhead are required to validate identification and to gain entrance to the test room. Test participants will not be allowed to enter the test room without these documents.
- A numbered envelope will be given to the test participant upon signing in. This envelope number, plus the participant's NVRA membership ID number, is the participant's unique testing identification number for the day and must be written/typed on any paper, disk, CD, cassette tape, thumb drive, scratch paper, or any other materials used during the day. The NVRA membership ID number can be found on the participant's test confirmation letter.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *If your thumb drives do not contain a space for writing your testing identification number, you must either attach a label to each one or place each one in a separate envelope labeled with your testing identification number.*

- The doors to the test room will open at 7:45 a.m. for equipment setup. No one will be allowed in the test room prior to that time. You are encouraged to be in your seat and ready to test by 8:15 a.m.

- Once you enter the test room, please choose a seat and begin setup of your reporting equipment only. All other equipment, including transcribing equipment, must be left in briefcases, et cetera, and placed in the area designated by the test administrator(s) for storage of personal belongings.
- No talking will be permitted among test participants. A verbal warning will be given to any test participant who violates the “no-talking” rule. No further warning will be given. If the talking continues, the test participant(s) will be asked to leave the test room and will not be permitted to test.
- No assistance may be requested of other test participants or of the test administrator(s).
- Anyone not completely set up and ready to test at 8:20 a.m. will be required to leave the test room, and no refund of test fees will be given. If required to leave, you will be allowed to return and pack up equipment at the conclusion of the administration of the dictation skills test.
- All cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices must be turned off and left in a purse, briefcase, or other container which must be placed in the designated area for storage of personal belongings.
- All questions prior to the beginning of the dictation skills test must be addressed to the proctor or test administrator outside the test room. Should you need to signal a test administrator once the dictation skills portion of the test is complete and transcription has begun, please raise your hand. An administrator will be with you as soon as possible.
- All materials, including any paper, disk, CD, cassette tape, thumb drive, and scratch paper, must be submitted to the test proctor before leaving the test area. **Your name must not appear on any test materials placed in your test envelope. If your name appears on any materials contained in the test envelope, it will result in disqualification and your test(s) will not be graded.**

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- This is a synopsis of what you will experience on test day:
- Register with the proctor
- Doors open at 7:45 a.m.
- Equipment setup. You must be set up and ready to begin at 8:20 a.m.  
*(All transcription equipment, equipment cases, purses, tote bags, etc, must be placed in the area designated for storage of personal belongings. No items may be left in, around, or under the tables. All aisles must be kept clear.)*
- Announcements and introduction

- CVR® skills test begins.
- Upon completion of CVR® dictation; CM dictation begins.  
*(If you are not eligible to test for the CM, turn off your equipment and remain quiet and still. The “no-talking” rule is still in effect. DO NOT mouth along with the dictation. Mouthing along is viewed as a distraction and/or violation of the “no-talking” rule and will be subject to disqualification.)*
  - Setup of transcription equipment
  - Bathroom break *(The “no-talking” rule is still in effect.)*
  - Transcription begins
  - Segments will be turned in at the end of each allotted time block
  - All materials must be turned in to the proctor. Do not throw away any papers: scratch, notes or draft printouts. If you print your test, any paper not to be graded must be torn in two or X'd out in blue ink
  - If you choose not to transcribe any segment, please so indicate on the Test Checklist next to the applicable segment
  - Quietly pack up equipment and exit the test room

### **KNOW YOUR EQUIPMENT**

- As a test participant, you must be completely familiar with all of the equipment you use during the certification test. No assistance by test administrators or other test participants will be allowed. You are required to set up, operate, and put away individual equipment (recording equipment, transcription equipment, computer).

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *While we encourage you to stay abreast of new technology, it is strongly recommended that you not try out new equipment on test day. It is imperative that you test with equipment that you know and trust.*

- Anyone experiencing physical problems with carrying, bending, stooping, etcetera may have assistance with carrying in and placement of equipment. However, all operation of any equipment must be performed by the test participant.
- Test participants using digital equipment are encouraged to create one audio file for all test segments.
- Participants using analog equipment must use the setting for the fastest recording speed. Participants using a four-track recorder must record on Channel 2 at the standard or fastest recording speed.
- Participants using digital equipment must turn in a CD or thumb drive containing their .wav file or voice track. Participants must know how to either: (a) burn a CD that contains their .wav file; or (b) how to transfer their .wav file to a thumb drive or disk. No assistance will be provided.
- Participants using analog equipment must turn in a cassette tape containing their voice track.

- Recordings with excessive bleedthrough, erasures, or lacking portions of the dictations will be disqualified. **Your voice track must support the test transcripts submitted for grading.**
- Disabling Computer/Recorder Mic: You must be capable of fully disabling any microphone built into your computer or recorder, whether through use of an external adapter or through changes in the configuration of your computer. You may be required to demonstrate this ability to a test monitor. Turning the microphone to the lowest volume will not suffice. It is your responsibility to ensure that your computer/recorder does not make any recording other than your dictation.

### **READY, SET, BEGIN!**

- When the test administrator(s) determines that an adequate number of test participants are set up and ready, a practice test will be played for warm-up. Participants may practice if they wish.
- The doors to the test room will close at 8:20 a.m. All questions must have been asked and answered by the test administrator(s) outside the test room prior to the test room doors being closed. No questions will be permitted once the doors to the test room are closed. General information will be given to the testers by the test administrator(s).
- After any last-minute announcements, the skills test will begin.
- A two-minute recording will be played for warm-up and volume adjustment, if necessary. The warm-up will be followed, without interruption, by the actual skills portion of the CVR<sup>®</sup>/CM dictation. You are not required to participate in the warm-up.
- The test will not be stopped for any reason. Should a common disturbance occur such as a book falling, et cetera, you should continue your dictation. If such a disturbance should occur, the person who loses the fewest words will set the standard, and everyone will be credited with that number of words.
- Outside microphones or hidden recordings of any kind will NOT be tolerated and are grounds for immediate disqualification and grounds for dismissal from NVRA membership and further testing.
- A total of 3-3/4 hours are allowed for transcription of three segments with 1 1/4 hour (75 minutes) allowed per segment. Time will be allotted as follows:
  - 1 1/4 hour, turn in one segment
  - Second 1 1/4 hour, turn in second segment
  - Third 1 1/4 hour, turn in third segment

Everyone must turn in a segment at the 1 1/4-hour mark(s). Those registered to take only one segment will leave at that point. This same procedure will be followed for those completing either two or three segments. Announcements will

be made at various time intervals before the conclusion of each segment to provide time for printing and/or finalization.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *If you work on a segment and at the end of the allotted time you decide not to turn it in, please so indicate on the Test Checklist next to the appropriate segment. This assists greatly in the grading process.*

### AUDIBILITY TEST

- Monitors will be walking about the test room, checking for audibility for voice writers. A tap on the arm will signify a warning. A tap on the shoulder will signify a disqualification.
- If disqualified, cease operation of reporting equipment and sit quietly. Do not touch your equipment or otherwise move around and disturb other testers. A subsequent tap on the shoulder following disqualification may suspend your testing privileges for one year.

### FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

- You will receive blank CDs or disks when you register with the proctor. You may bring your own thumb drives if you prefer to upload in that manner rather than using the CDs furnished by NVRA.

The same rule applies to thumb drives that applies to CDs/disks: a separate thumb drive is required for each test segment turned in. The audio file(s) (your voice track, if applicable) may be saved to any one of your thumb drives; however, you must clearly indicate which files are stored on your media. The maximum number of thumb drives you will need is three. They will be returned to you with your test packet once the deadline for inquiries and appeal has passed.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *Test participants using digital equipment are encouraged to create one audio file for all test segments.*

- Write your testing identification number on all materials before turning them in to the proctor. **Your name must not appear on any testing materials placed in your test envelope. If your name appears on any materials placed in the test envelope, it will result in disqualification and your test(s) will not be graded.** *(If your thumb drives do not contain a space for writing your testing identification number, you must either attach a label to each one or place each one in a separate envelope labeled with your testing identification number.)*

- You must format and produce your test transcript(s) according to the following specifications:
  - The top, bottom, right and left margin must be set at one inch.
  - The font must be either Times New Roman or Courier New, point size 12.
  - All text must be double-spaced and must not be typed in all caps. **Single-spaced documents or documents typed in all caps will not be graded.**
  - A one-line header is required on every page, containing the test location, your testing identification number, the name of the test, the words per minute, and the type of test.

For example, the test is in Georgia and you're turning in the 200 Literary for your CVR®. The header would be written as follows: "GA XX-XXXX CVR 200 LIT." Use the following abbreviations: LIT for literary, JC for Jury Charge, and QA for the two-voice question-and-answer. Use the standard state abbreviation of the test site.

- Page numbers must be inserted in the bottom, right-hand corner of each page.
- You must name each of your test transcript files. The file name should be the same as your header. (See above example.)

Not properly naming your files may be cause for disqualification. It is imperative that the files be named correctly to ensure proper grading and assignment of test grades.

- It is absolutely essential that the test participant verify that the media does, in fact, contain the required files and that they open correctly. Audio files must be formatted so that they will open in Windows Media Player. Text files must be formatted so that they will open in Word®, WordPerfect®, Adobe Acrobat Reader®, or the equivalent thereof.

#### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

- *Transcripts not in required format will not be graded and may result in disqualification.*
- *You are encouraged to save your transcription to your computer's hard drive and not solely to your CD, thumb drive, or disk. Should a malfunction occur and you have not saved to the hard drive, you may lose your transcription.*

## **SUBMISSION OF TEST MATERIALS AND EXITING THE TEST AREA**

- NVRA does not provide any printers at the test site. You may submit your test transcripts in one of the two following ways:
  - You may furnish your own printer, if you wish, and print and submit a hard copy of your test transcript(s). Legible hand corrections in blue ink only are allowed, or
  - Your test transcript(s) may be burned onto a CD or saved to a disk or thumb drive in one of the following formats: PDF<sup>®</sup>, Word<sup>®</sup>, WordPerfect<sup>®</sup>, Microsoft Works<sup>®</sup>, or .rtf. No other formats will be accepted.
- The same rule applies to thumb drives that applies to CDs/disks: a separate thumb drive is required for each test segment turned in. The audio file(s) (your voice track) may be saved to any one of your thumb drives; however, you must clearly indicate which files are stored on your media. The maximum number of thumb drives you will need is three. All materials will be returned to you with your test packet once the deadline for inquiries and appeal has passed.
- Each CD, disk, or thumb drive must be clearly labeled with your testing identification number and the names of the files that are contained on them as defined above. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.
- When you have completed all test segments and you are ready to exit the test area, all materials used during testing must be submitted to the proctor. These materials include, but are not limited to: paper transcripts (if you print your own) or media containing test transcript(s), media containing voice file, Test Checklist, and all scrap paper and/or notes created during the test.

### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

- *If your thumb drives do not contain a space for writing your testing identification number, you must either attach a label to each one or place each one in a separate envelope labeled with your testing identification number.*

## TEST-GRADING POLICY

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- The ruling authority for determining accepted spellings and whether words are hyphenated or compound is Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition.
- The Testing Committee may not grade your entire test. Once approximately 80 errors have been marked, grading is stopped. This is done in order to expedite the grading process. The goal is to have your scores submitted to NVRA Membership Services within 3-4 weeks following the test. After scores are released, test participants have 15 days to appeal their scores.

### GRADING THE TESTS: WHAT IS AN ERROR?

- One Error:
  - Each incorrect word where the same number of words exist in the master transcript
  - Each incorrect word in excess of the number of omitted words, in the case of each area where there is a combination of omitted word(s) and incorrect word(s)
  - Each omitted "Q" and "A" (in transcript only)
  - Each omitted word. In the case of a dictation test that does not end with a complete thought, if the last few words are not transcribed, they are treated as omitted words
  - Each misspelled word, except proper names when the name typed sounds similar to the dictated name and is used consistently throughout the transcript
  - Each extra word
  - Each word made incorrect by pluralization or change of tense
  - Each contraction changed to two words or two words changed to a contraction
  - Hyphenated word or one word changed to two words
  - Two words changed to hyphenated word or one word
  - Two transposed words
  - Omission or improper use of apostrophe in each contraction or possessive word

- Abbreviations not dictated; for example:
  - “1:00” when “one o’clock” is dictated
  - “No.” when “number” is dictated
  - “Ex.” when “exhibit” is dictated
- Omission of period or question mark at the end of a sentence
- Omission of capitalized proper names
- Omission of capitalization of the first letter of the first word following a period
- Misspelled geographical locations that are contained in Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition
- No error:
  - Punctuation\*, defined as follows:
    - Comma
    - Colon
    - Semicolon
    - Double quotation marks
    - Single quotation marks
    - Hyphen used at end of line to divide word
    - Paragraphing\*
    - Capitalization\*
    - Hyphen used with compound modifiers
    - Dash
    - Parentheses when word “parenthesis” not dictated
    - Ellipsis
    - Exclamation point
    - Virgule
    - Brackets when word “bracket” not dictated
  - Misspelled proper name. Name used must sound similar to dictated name and be used consistently throughout the transcript
  - Use of “Miss,” “Ms.,” “Mrs.” interchangeably
  - Qs and As not dictated during two-voice question-and-answer segment

**\*SPECIAL NOTE:** *To ensure readability, it is strongly recommended that transcripts contain punctuation, paragraphing, and capitalization where you believe appropriate and according to commonly accepted grammar rules.*

## DISQUALIFICATION

Possible reasons for disqualification from the certification tests include, but are not limited to:

- Outside microphones or hidden recordings of any kind will NOT be tolerated and are grounds for immediate disqualification and grounds for dismissal from NVRA membership and further testing.
- Voice tracks that do not support the written test transcripts

- Improperly named test transcript files
- Transcripts not comporting with the formal guidelines as set out in this policy manual and on the Test Checklist, including margins, spacing, font, headers, and page numbering
- Test transcripts or other items in your test envelope which contain your name
- Failure to pass the audibility test
- Violation of the “no-talking” rule
- Absence of required header on the test transcripts
- Conduct not in comportment with the NVRA Code of Ethics

### **INQUIRIES REGARDING YOUR SCORES AND YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Once you have received your results notification letter from NVRA, all inquiries regarding the same should be addressed to NVRA within 15 days of the date of your letter.

If you wish to appeal the Testing Committee’s decision, an appeal may be made in writing to the NVRA Education Committee by e-mail to [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org), by fax, or by letter. Appeal must be made in writing within 15 days of the date on your results notification letter.

If any tester has appealed his or her test scores, all packets will be held until the appeal process has been completed.

NVRA contact information:

National Verbatim Reporters Association®  
629 N. Main Street  
Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
Phone: 601.582.4345  
Fax: 601.582.3354  
[NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org)  
[www.NVRA.org](http://www.NVRA.org)

## **EXPIRATION OF SCORES**

- A passing score on the Written Knowledge Test is valid for a period of three years. If you held a passing score on the written test as of December 1, 2007, that score will expire on December 1, 2010, and you must retake the written test in order to achieve your CVR<sup>®</sup>. However, passing scores on any segment of the dictation skills test do not expire. Any current or future score of 90 or above on the CVR<sup>®</sup> written test will be CM-qualified with no expiration.
- You may attend as many certification tests as necessary to achieve CVR<sup>®</sup> and/or CM certifications; however, you must maintain continuous membership in NVRA in order to carry forward test scores. If your NVRA membership lapses, your test scores are not maintained. Once you have passed any segment of the CVR<sup>®</sup> or CM skills test, the passing grade on that segment does not expire but will be maintained by NVRA, provided that your NVRA membership does not lapse.

## **PART 3: WRITTEN KNOWLEDGE TEST (ONLINE)**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- The Written Knowledge portion of the CVR<sup>®</sup> certification test will be offered at online testing facilities during the two-week period immediately following the administration of the dictation skills test. You may schedule a time and date within the testing period that is convenient to you.
- The Written Knowledge Test consists of 100 multiple choice items in the following areas: verbatim record (40%), transcript production (40%), transcript distribution (10%), professional responsibilities (5%), and ethics (5%). It is created pursuant to a validation process which incorporates the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999).
- You will have up to two (2) hours to complete the Written Knowledge Test.
- A criterion-referenced passing score for each test is established using accepted procedures of the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (1999).
- Upon completion of the Written Knowledge Test, you will immediately learn whether you have received a passing grade.

## REGISTRATION

- A registration form is available at [www.NVRA.org](http://www.NVRA.org). You may register for the Written Knowledge Test when you register for the CVR<sup>®</sup> or CM test. Check the NVRA Web site, each issue of eVoice, and any special bulletins for information on NVRA's testing programs.
- To locate a testing facility that is closest to you, copy and paste the following link into your Internet browser: <http://comiratesting.com/html/candidates/locations.html>
- After your registration has been received by NVRA, you will receive a confirmation and the contact information needed to schedule your appointment for the Written Knowledge Test. You must provide an e-mail address or fax number in order to receive confirmation.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *The CVR<sup>®</sup> Workshop is not a prerequisite to taking the Written Knowledge Test, but it must be taken prior to your participation in the dictation skills portion of the CVR<sup>®</sup> examination.*

## STUDY MATERIALS

Study materials and practice tapes can be ordered from NVRA to help you prepare for testing. Order online at [www.nvra.org](http://www.nvra.org). Some examples of available materials are:

Lillian Morson's English Guide for Court Reporters  
Grammar and Punctuation. A must for any reference library.

Nancy L. Tuten's Get It Write: The First Fifty Tips  
Ms. Tuten covers the tips that are most challenging for today's writers.

NVRA Study Guide – Revised April 2008  
Assists with the written portion of NVRA's certification test. Also contains tips for the skills portion of the test.

Practice tapes/CDs containing retired CVR<sup>®</sup> and CM tests are also available.

## SUGGESTED TESTING DOS AND DON'TS

### DO NOT...

- stop your recording equipment or use the pause button during the dictation test. Stops and starts can “eat” words, or you may forget to engage the record feature when the next dictation begins.
- panic when you sense a test administrator near you.
- panic if you realize you have dropped words. If you stop to think about that, you'll drop even more. Pick back up just as quickly as you can.
- attempt to create voice brief forms prior to the test. If you are not accustomed to using brief forms, trying to think of them on the fly during the test may cause you to drop words.
- use preformatted page setups that may contain your name

### DO...

- practice before coming to the test. You should transcribe from your voice track and then proofread from your voice against your transcript. This is the ONLY way that you will know that you can hear and understand yourself.
- check your equipment bags to make sure you have all the equipment you need, both for recording and transcribing.
- test using familiar equipment with which you are comfortable.
- get a good night's sleep prior to the test.
- listen to your voice track that you burned to your CD or saved to your thumb drive before turning it in to the proctor to make sure your audio file is accessible and can be played in Windows Media Player.
- take a deep breath and relax.

## CVR® AND CM FAQs

Before submitting a question to [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org), please review these questions and see if the answer to your particular questions is contained here. If not, please contact [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org).

*“Can I bring my own CDs?”*

NVRA will provide CDs. Your test transcript(s) may be burned onto a CD or saved to a disk or thumb drive in one of the following formats: PDF®, Word®, WordPerfect®, Microsoft Works®, or .rtf. No other formats will be accepted.

*“Does my voice track have to be burned on a separate CD?”*

No, it does not. You may burn your test transcript(s) to the same CD as your audio file(s) or you may use separate CDs. If you choose to use more than one CD, each CD must be clearly labeled with your testing identification number and the names of the files that are contained on the CD or disk as defined above. The same rule applies if you use thumb drives.

*“If I drop some words, can I just add some to the end or scatter extra words throughout the test?”*

No, you cannot randomly add words. They have to be the words as dictated.

*“How do you grade the test?”*

We make Xs over wrong words, extra words, or to indicate missing words, as well as to indicate other errors such as punctuation or spelling, and then we count our Xs! Each X represents an error. Please see the section entitled Test Grading Policy contained in this policy manual.

*“If I finish typing and proofing my first segment, can I start the next one?”*

Yes, you may; however, you must turn in the first segment to the proctor before beginning the second segment. Although you may be working on the second segment, you must stop when “time” is called and wait until the bathroom break is over. Everyone will resume working at the same time.

*“Can I keep working while some people are still on break?”*

No. Each segment is timed and everyone must resume working at the same time after everyone has returned to the test room.

*“I have a medical disability and cannot type the test transcripts. What should I do?”*

All transcription must be performed by the test participant unless prohibited by a medical condition. In that case, a completed NVRA Medical Release Form must be submitted with the test registration. This form is located at the end of this policy manual.

*“Do I have to turn in the Test Checklist that NVRA sent me?”*

Yes.

*“Who is the proctor?”*

That is the person stationed at the registration table. The table may or may not be moved inside the test room after the transcription period begins.

*“Who is the monitor?”*

A monitor is one of the test administrators who actually administers the test.

*“How long will it be before we get our grades?”*

The Testing Committee does its very best to complete the grading process and submit the grades to NVRA within three to four weeks following the test. NVRA has to then obtain the written test scores before sending out the notification letters. Please allow four to six weeks to receive your notification letter.

*“Can I get my grade sooner than normal?”*

If you need to know whether you passed or failed in order to secure employment, every effort will be made to provide you “pass” or “fail” information, but a final score will not be provided until all scores have been submitted. Tests are graded “blind;” therefore, you must write [NVRA@nvra.org](mailto:NVRA@nvra.org) and request your score for employment use. You must give your testing identification number so that your test packet can be accessed and graded upon notification from NVRA Membership Services.

*“Is it an error if I don’t say Q and A on my voice track?”*

No. It is an error only if the Qs and As are not contained on your written test transcript.

*“I really feel confident today. May I take more than three segments?”*

No, three segments is the limit. However, if you have already passed one or two segments of your CVR<sup>®</sup>, why not try a couple of CM segments?

## **NATIONAL SPEED CHAMPION TEST**

- The National Speed Champion contest has been in existence since the 1972 national convention. The contest was created by Horace Webb, creator of the original voice silencer, the Stenomask. The test is held each year as a part of the national convention.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- The National Speed Champion test consists of a five-minute question-and-answer dictation at what Horace Webb referred to as a "fast as hell" speed of 350 words per minute.
- No registration fee is required for NSC participation.

### **REQUIREMENTS TO TEST**

- You must hold a CVR<sup>®</sup>-CM or NCRA's equivalent to compete in the NSC.
- You must be registered for at least one full day of convention activities.

### **REGISTRATION**

- Participants must register prior to convention as directed in the convention registration materials. The registration form will also be posted online at [www.NVRA.org](http://www.NVRA.org).

### **RULES**

- A minimum of three (3) participants is required for the NSC to be held.
- The administration of the test follows the same guidelines as the CVR<sup>®</sup>/CM tests.
- A score of 95% or higher is required to place in the competition (first, second, or third place).
- First, second, and third places are recognized and awarded gifts.
- The national champion receives a traveling trophy to hold for the year.
- A winner for three consecutive years retires the trophy and retains it permanently.

- A score of 95% or higher results in the award of five (5) continuing education units.
- Participants are allowed two hours to transcribe the test.
- The NSC will be graded as set out in the section entitled “Test-Grading Policy” in this manual.

# National Verbatim Reporters Association Medical Release Form:

**To be completed only if testing candidate is medically unable to perform task of transcription.**

All transcription must be performed by the individual test participant, EXCEPT in a situation where a medical doctor has diagnosed a condition(s) that would prohibit the test participant from personally performing the task of transcription.

In this situation, the original and properly executed Medical Release Form must be returned to NVRA Member Services prior to the specific test for which the test participant is registered. Medical Release Forms are valid only for the specific test. A new Medical Release Form must be executed and returned to NVRA Member Services for each registered test.

**Please return this form to NVRA Member Services along with registration packet.**

Certification Test Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

As a medical doctor licensed to practice in the State of \_\_\_\_\_, license number \_\_\_\_\_, I have diagnosed \_\_\_\_\_ with a condition known as \_\_\_\_\_, which would prohibit her or him from personally performing the task of transcription. I understand "transcription" to mean the act of typing words via typewriter or computer.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number, Including Area Code \_\_\_\_\_

# NATIONAL VERBATIM REPORTERS ASSOCIATION TEST CHECKLIST

## TO BE TURNED IN ON TEST DAY

**YOU MUST BRING THIS PAGE TO THE TEST AND SUBMIT IT TO THE PROCTOR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SKILLS TEST.**

As you prepare your test transcript(s), please use this checklist to ensure you have followed the required transcript format specifications:

**(Note: Deviation from these requirements may result in disqualification. Transcripts and voice files not in required format will not be graded and will result in disqualification.)**

- Top, bottom, and side margins: 1 inch
- All text: double-spaced (**Single-spaced documents will not be graded.**)
- All text: Lower case with appropriate capitalization. (**Text typed in all caps will not be graded.**)
- Font: Times New Roman or Courier New, point size 12
- One-line header on every page, containing the test location, your testing identification number, the name of the test, the words per minute, and the type of test. *For example, if you are testing in Georgia and you're turning in the CVR® Literary at 200 words per minute, the header would be written as follows: "GA XX-XXXX CVR 200 LIT." Use the following abbreviations: LIT for literary, JC for Jury Charge, and QA for the two-voice question and answer. Use the standard state abbreviation of the test site. (See above example.)*
- Page numbering: bottom, right-hand corner of each page. Each segment of dictation must begin with page 1.
- Test transcript files named in the same manner as transcript headers. (See above example.)

### Final Checklist

- Is my file in one of the following formats: PDF®, Word®, WordPerfect®, Microsoft Works® or .rtf? **No other formats will be accepted.**
- Have I named my computer files correctly?
- Have I burned my files to the CD, disk, or thumb drives correctly? *Note: creating a "shortcut" and burning that shortcut to your media will NOT result in your file being present on the media.*
- Does my .wav file open with Windows Media Player?
- Have I turned in the final test segment to the proctor?
- Have I turned in my .wav file or audio tapes to the proctor?
- Have I turned in all scratch paper, notes, etc., to the proctor?
- **I must check off each test submitted and turn in this form!**

**Please check off each test as you submit it to the proctor:**

_____ CVR® 200 LIT	_____ CM 225 LIT
_____ CVR® 225 JC	_____ CM 250 JC
_____ CVR® 250 QA	_____ CM 300 QA

**Please list your:** Testing ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Location of Test: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample: Standard Results Notification Letter

Date:

ID No:

Name and address of tester

Dear (Name of tester):

Re: NVRA Certification Test Results  
CVR®/CM Testing: (Date/Test Location)

This is your official notification of grades from the recent test noted above.

You submitted tests for grading. Your current standing is:

<b>Test:</b>	<b>Errors Allowed</b>	<b>Your Errors</b>	<b>Score or Previous Standing</b>
CVR® 200 wpm literary	50 errors allowed		
CVR® 225 wpm jury charge	56 errors allowed		
CVR® 250 wpm Q/A	63 errors allowed		
Written Knowledge Test:			

<b>Test:</b>	<b>Errors Allowed</b>	<b>Your Errors</b>	<b>Score or Previous Standing</b>
CM 225 wpm literary	34 errors allowed		
CM 250 wpm jury charge	38 errors allowed		
CM 300 wpm Q/A	45 errors allowed		
Written Knowledge Test:			

\*Indicates test segment turned in for grading at this testing location.

In an effort to assist you in being successful on future tests, the testing committee is listing the number of errors for each test segment.

In an effort to assist you in being successful on future tests, the testing committee is listing the number of errors for each test segment. The testing committee is also willing to critique your errors and advise you of the specific types of errors you made for a \$25.00 fee. If you choose to take advantage of this assistance, please return the attached form with valid payment to Membership Services. You **MUST** include your test ID number when making the request.

Inquiries regarding the test should be addressed within 15 days of the date of this letter. NVRA will retain on file all testing materials relative to the test for a 30-day period, after which time the transcripts, voice files and written material will be destroyed.

Good luck as you continue your work toward attaining NVRA certification.

Sincerely,

Kelly Evans  
Membership Services