Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) Procedures for ALTA Language Services, Inc.

The OPI may be taken at the following locations on the following days only for 2011:

Nashville (AOC Office)	**Knoxville** (Supreme Court Building)	**Jackson** (Supreme Court Building)	**Chattanooga** (Appellate Court Building)
January 20 - 21	January 20 - 21	January 20 - 21	January 20 - 21
February 24- 25	February 24- 25	February 24- 25	February 24- 25
March 24 - 25	March 24 - 25	March 24 - 25	March 24 - 25
April 14 - 15	April 14 - 15	April 14 - 15	April 14 - 15
May 26 - 27	May 26 - 27	May 26 - 27	May 26 - 27
June 23 - 24	June 23 - 24	June 23 - 24	June 23 - 24
July 21 - 22	July 21 - 22	July 21 - 22	July 21 - 22
August 25 – 26	August 25 – 26	August 25 – 26	August 25 – 26
September 22 - 23	September 22 - 23	September 22 - 23	September 22 - 23
October 27 - 28	October 27 - 28	October 27 - 28	October 27 - 28
November 9 - 10	November 9 - 10	November 9 - 10	November 9 - 10
December 8 - 9	December 8 - 9	December 8 - 9	December 8 - 9

(1) Schedule interview by registering on-line with ALTA

- When you register on-line with ALTA, you will be provided a confirmation of the testing date and time, and the telephone number to call for the test.

- Tests can be scheduled on the hour and on the half-hour. Please schedule to take the English and target language interviews in 30 minute increments, for example: English OPI at 10:00 a.m., Spanish OPI at 10:30 a.m.

- **IMPORTANT:** Once the interview has been scheduled at any location, please contact Mary Rose Zingale at the AOC, (615) 741-2687 or mary.rose.zingale@tncourts.gov with notification of the location, date, and time of the interview.

- You will be sent an email advising of the specific address to take the interviews along with directions and staff contact information.

- ***Staff at the Tennessee testing sites will be available until 4:00 p.m. Therefore, the latest time an interview can be scheduled is 3:30 p.m.***

- Directions for on-line registration are found on page 5 of this document.

(2) What to bring to the interview

Photo identification of one of the following: i.e., driver's license, passport, employee ID card.

(3) Length of Interview

Each oral test takes an average of fifteen to twenty minutes and is recorded. The evaluator will ask the candidate various questions in order to get a sample of the candidate's ability to speak and comprehend the language. The questions are designed to elicit the full range of the target language, and require the candidate to perform various linguistic tasks (e.g., giving and supporting an opinion, providing a description, explaining something that occurs daily or that occurred in the past). The evaluator is listening for *what* the candidate can do with the language, as well as *how well* the candidate uses and controls the language (i.e., handling structures of the language, etc.).

(4)Test Results

Following the test, the evaluator determines the skill level of the candidate in each subcategory (see Oral Assessment Categories) according to ALTA's Oral Language Testing Protocol. The evaluator then assigns an overall score on ALTA's 1-12 scale (see Performance Levels Description) based on the total test performance. The results will be sent to the AOC and you will be emailed or mailed your scores.

A score of 12 is required to pass the OPI in English and the target language.

1	A level 1 speaker has no ability whatsoever in the language. He/She cannot understand anything and can convey nothing.
2	A level 2 speaker can understand isolated words and simple expressions. He/She can convey isolated words or simple expressions and memorized sentences.
3	A level 3 person can understand and express simple sentences using subjects and verbs in the present tense. The range of vocabulary is limited to elementary needs and basic courtesies.
4	The level 4 person can understand basic sentences around the immediate setting as well as basic questions. He/She can express simple ideas using the present tense and may occasionally use other simple tenses. He/She can convey basic information, but has difficulty even in basic conversations.
5	A person at a level 5 has the ability to participate in basic conversations. The subjects are routine in nature and tend to be repetitive, for example weather. A level 5 speaker uses primarily the present tense and cannot use advanced tenses, thus is very restricted on expressing and understanding any subject other than what is most familiar to him/her. Speech is slow, and he/she requires more

	rephrasing and repetition to understand a native speaker.
6	A level 6 person can use and understand the present, past and future tenses with some errors. He/She does not use advanced tenses. He/She can easily participate in a conversation on basic subjects like weather, but not in a general conversation. He/She usually cannot understand normal native rates of speech.
7	A person at a level 7 cannot easily participate in general conversations. He/She can participate in conversations that are routine or on topics that are well known to the person. He/She will have trouble with a native speaker's normal pace. He/She will use simple tenses with a few errors, but will avoid advanced tenses. A candidate at this level in a general conversation will cause misunderstandings between himself/herself and the listener based on lack of ability to convey clearly his/her message.
8	A person at a level 8 can participate in general conversations surrounding routine and topics in most social and work-related settings. He/She will have trouble with some normal speed conversations and with topics that are more advanced or specialized. He/She may lack the capability to speak at a normal speed, and will not use advanced grammatical structures or will make many mistakes. A candidate at this level will potentially cause misunderstandings between himself/herself and the listener based on some lack of ability to convey clearly his/her message.
9	A person at a level 9 can successfully handle in-depth conversations in the target language, on a broad range of subjects and at a normal rate of speech. He/She has difficulty understanding some slang or idioms or some advanced grammatical structures, but can figure out what is said by the context of the discussion. When speaking, a person at a level 9 can express himself/herself over a broad range of topics at a normal speed. He/She may have a noticeable accent and will make grammatical errors, for example with advanced tenses, but the errors will not cause misunderstanding to a native speaker.
10	A person at a level 10 can handle all of the tasks that a level 9 can, with the addition of demonstrating skills such as selling and persuasion. He/She can successfully handle in-depth client questions, and does not require as much contextual support for understanding of slang and idioms. A person at this level is able to select vocabulary that conveys a finer shade of meaning with more precision than a level 9 and can better support his/her opinions. Errors in speech are few, are limited to advanced grammatical situations and do not affect understanding.
11	A person at a level 11 is nearly fluent. He/She can handle a wide variety of communicative tasks with finesse. His/her communication is close to that of a well educated speaker, and only encounters difficulty if speech is highly abstract. Errors in speech are very few, are limited to advanced grammatical situations and do not affect understanding.

12	The level 12 oral skills are equivalent to native fluency. The person can understand everything said in the language and can speak with precision and finesse using the full range of grammar, vocabulary, idioms and expression.

Test results are reported to the AOC the next business day following the interview. Once results have been received, candidates will be notified within 5 business days.

Oral Assessment Categories

The ALTA evaluation process assesses the level of skill in two areas – speaking and listening – which are further subdivided into the scoring subcategories as shown below:

Communication – Communication consists of four elements:
ACCENT: What degree of non-native accent and pronunciation does the candidate have?
SCOPE: How easily can the candidate express ideas?
SPEED: How rapidly can the candidate speak and how much does the candidate hesitate?
STRUCTURE: How well does the candidate use the complexity of the language?

Comprehension – Comprehension consists of three elements:
SCOPE: How wide is the candidate's range of comprehension?
SPEED: What speed of talking by a native speaker can the candidate understand?
STRUCTURE: What complexity of speech can the candidate understand?

Grammar – Grammar consists of three elements:
NOUNS: How well does the candidate use proper gender and cases (where applicable)?
STRUCTURE: How well does the candidate use complex structures?
VERBS: How well does the candidate use correct conjugations, subject-verb agreement, mood and voice?

Vocabulary – Vocabulary consists of one element:
SCOPE: How wide is the candidate's range of vocabulary and how precise?
All oral evaluations are scored across these subcategories according to ALTA's scoring protocol, which encompasses each of these elements. An overall score is provided which is a holistic measurement of performance with respect to performance in all of the scoring subcategories.

Testing Limitations (NEW)

The candidate may take the English and target language interview as many times as needed until receiving a passing score of 12 on each interview. Please follow the same registration procedures.

ALTA Registration Information

ALTA Language Services, Inc.
Tel: 404-920-3800 Fax: 404-920-3801 www.altalang.com

Candidate's Guide for Purchasing Tests Online

To purchase your test(s), go to the following website: http://www.altatesting.com/purchase

Enter your email address, and create your account by following the instructions on the screen.

You will need to enter your full name, your email address, your password, and your group code WHICH IS **"ACTN"**

Please note that passwords must be 4 to 15 characters in length. Do not give your password to anyone else. This is for your records only, and will be used to access your account.

Once you have created your account, you will be taken to the Main Menu, where you can:
• Purchase one or more tests
• View your purchase history
• View or edit your profile
• View or edit your addresses
• Change your password
• Logout of the system

Select the "Purchase one or more tests" option to order your test(s). Clicking the link will take you to the "Purchase Tests" page. Enter the number of tests you wish to purchase.

Please note that refunds will not be made, so you should only purchase the number of tests you intend to take.

From this page, you will also enter your address and your payment information. When finished, click "Review Order" to go to the Order Confirmation Page.

On the Order Confirmation Page, review your order to make sure it is correct. You may edit your billing and payment information if needed by clicking "Edit" below each of these fields. If your information is correct, click "Place Order" to purchase your test(s).

Once you have placed your order, you will receive an email to the address you provided with your confirmation code and the instructions for scheduling your test.

You will need to provide your confirmation number when you call or email to schedule a test with ALTA.

Please note it can take up to 15 minutes for your order information to reach our scheduling department. Be sure to allot at least 15 minutes after placing your order and before contacting ALTA.

You can check the status of all of your purchases at any time by viewing your purchase history on the Main Menu. You can also return to the Main Menu to view or edit your profile, view or edit your addresses, change your password, and logout of the system.