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NCRA monitoring implementation of artificial intelligence in Ohio county courts

RESTON, Va., July 13, 2024 — The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), the country’s leading organization representing stenographic court reporters, captioners, and legal videographers, is closely monitoring an ongoing situation in Ohio where artificial intelligence (AI) is being implemented in a county courtroom. This comes after Summit County Domestic Relations Court has received a \$9,500 grant from the Ohio Supreme Court to purchase AI transcribing equipment according to a July 10 article from [WOSU Public Media based in Columbus, Ohio](#).

“The consequences of relying on artificial intelligence to capture the spoken word are unprecedented and frankly, unreliable, which is exactly why NCRA is closely monitoring this situation in Ohio in coordination with our Government Relations Department to craft a strong and aggressive grassroots campaign to prevent further proliferation of AI in Ohio courtrooms,” said NCRA Executive Director Dave Wenhold, CAE, PLC,

[NCRA previously published a white paper](#) dedicated to raising awareness on the potential impact of AI in court rooms late last year. It has since been cited by [CNBC](#), [Reuters](#), and others.

“The opportunity for misuse of AI in the creation of courtroom transcripts vis-à-vis deepfakes or other forms of manipulation are simply too high to be implemented in Ohio courtrooms, nonetheless at any level in our nation’s judiciary,” said NCRA President Kristin M. Anderson, MA, RPR, CRI, FCRR. “Care, custody, and control are lost when AI is implemented in a courtroom. That is simply unacceptable as well as unprecedented in terms of ensuring equal justice for all under the law,” she added.

The court reporter is the official officer creating the verbatim record of a proceeding. NCRA members are certified professionals who are dedicated guardians of the record, adhering to strict ethical guidelines and industry standards.

A recent, prominent example of the [failures of digital transcription can be cited in the third week of the Alex Murdaugh double murder trial](#), where both the prosecution and defense teams lambasted court transcripts generated digitally while noting the reliable services of professional court reporters typically retained in the South Carolina court. View the working list of recent digital failures in other national, well-known cases compiled by the NCRA [here](#).



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“NCRA will remain vigilant in monitoring the ongoing situation in Ohio, as well as the entire country on behalf of our members in the court reporting, professional captioning, and legal videography community,” said NCRA President-Elect Keith R. Lemons, FAPR, RPR, CRR (Ret.) “The same week the news broke in Ohio, the NCRA Board of Directors announced their support for my proposed rapid response team called the Government Relations Team (GRT),” he added.

The new GRT team will assist NCRA’s Government Relations staff in reviewing state and federal legislative and regulatory actions and suggest grassroots efforts to help our members out in the states. “Ohio very well might meet the tip of this spear if AI is further implemented in their state,” added Lemons.

[NCRA is celebrating its quasiquicentennial](#) and will be hosting their annual [Conference & Expo at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Ky., August 1-3, 2024](#). With more than 12,000 active members, NCRA has been delivering effective advocacy at all levels of government through grassroots mobilization campaigns, federal lobbying, as well as legislative and regulative monitoring.

Court reporters and captioners rely on the latest in technology to use stenographic machines to capture the spoken word and translate it into written text in real time. These professionals work both in and out of the courtroom recording legal cases and depositions, providing live captioning of events, and assisting members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities with gaining access to information, entertainment, educational opportunities, and more.

If you’re looking for a career that is on the cutting edge of technology, offers the opportunity for work at home or abroad, like to write, enjoy helping others, and are fast with your fingers, then the fields of court reporting and captioning are careers you can explore at NCRA/discoversteno.org.

[The NCRA A to Z® Intro to Steno Machine Shorthand](#) program, a free online six-week introductory course, lets participants see if a career in court reporting or captioning would be a good choice for them. The program is an introduction to stenographic theory and provides participants with the opportunity to learn the basics of writing on a steno machine. There is no charge to take the course, but participants are required to have access to a steno machine or an iPad they can use to download the [iStenoPad app](#).

To arrange an interview with a working court reporter, captioner, legal videographer, or a current court reporting student, or to learn more about the lucrative and flexible court reporting or captioning professions and the many job opportunities currently available, contact pr@ncra.org.

[About NCRA](#)

The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) has been internationally recognized for promoting excellence among those who capture and convert the spoken word to text for 125 years.



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NCRA is committed to supporting its more than 12,000 members in achieving the highest level of professional expertise with educational opportunities and industry-recognized court reporting, educator, and videographer certification programs. NCRA impacts legislative issues and the global marketplace through its actively involved membership. [NCRA's STRONG Committee](#) promotes stenographic captioning and court reporting as the best means to maintain the accuracy of the record. One of its missions is to combat false proclamations that digital and automatic speech recognition (ASR) methods of capturing the spoken word are equal to superior to stenographic means and/or that these methods are less expensive.

Forbes has named court reporting as one of the best career options that do not require a traditional four-year degree. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the court reporting field is expected to be one of the fastest areas of projected employment growth across all occupations. According to [247/WallSt.com](#), the court reporting profession ranks sixth out of 25 careers with the lowest unemployment rate, just 0.7 percent. Career information about the court reporting profession—one of the leading career options that do not require a traditional four-year degree—can be found at [NCRA DiscoverSteno.org](#).