New Hampshire had struggled with court reporter shortages for many years; cases in the Supreme Court were stalled due to the court reporter’s inability to meet timelines and justices and court staff dealt with the constant receipt of motions to extend the time for filing transcripts. The evolution of transcript production began in the mid-1990s when a policy decision was made regarding the long-term evolution to electronic recording and the courtrooms in a new courthouse were designed workspace for a court reporter. The New Hampshire Administrative Office of the Courts initially certified transcribers and established a statewide transcript production center to prepare all transcripts from electronic recordings. This practice was discontinued after a 2003 state audit report analyzed and described the transcript center’s operation and the cost per page of transcript it produced.

By 2008, the state had contracted with a single transcript provider based in New York and serving surrounding states. After several years, that vendor was struggling with the volume of transcript requests and quality control became a problem. In 2012, a request for proposal was issued and the initial vendor was replaced with another that operated on a national scale.

The new vendor developed an online transcript request process that was integrated into the Supreme Court’s webpage. In 2014, performance reports submitted to the Court indicate that 97% of all transcript requests were prepared and filed with the Court within the 45 days permitted by the appellate rules. Although the ownership of the vendor changed several years after the initial contract, the Supreme Court reports that the service, reliability and accuracy of transcripts remains excellent. Lawyers from the appellate defender, attorney general and private civil practice indicated that transcripts are timely, the transcript request process is easy, customer service is good and accuracy is equivalent to transcripts produced by stenographic court reporters. They also noted that the quality control process is quicker and easier because the hard copy can be readily compared to the audio recording.