

Clerk of the Superior Court for Maricopa County

Language Access Plan (LAP)

I. Legal Basis and Purpose

This document serves as the plan for the Clerk of the Superior Court in Maricopa County (Clerk's Office) to support the Judicial Branch's efforts to provide to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) services that are in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.; 45 C.F.R. § 80.1 et seq.; and 28 C.F.R. § 42.101–42.112) and Arizona Supreme Court Administrative Order 2011-96. The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the Clerk's Office.

This language access plan (LAP) was developed to ensure meaningful access to court services for persons with limited English proficiency. Although court interpreters are provided for persons with a hearing loss, access services for them are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and therefore will not be addressed in this plan.

II. Needs Assessment

A. Statewide

The State of Arizona provides court services to a wide range of people, including those who speak limited or no English. From a statewide perspective, the following languages were listed with the greatest number of speakers who spoke English less than "Very Well" in Arizona (according to the American Community Survey estimate report from the U.S. Census Bureau dated April 2013):

1. Spanish
2. Navajo
3. Chinese
4. Vietnamese

B. Clerk of the Superior Court in Maricopa County

The Clerk's Office is responsible to provide services identified in this plan to all LEP persons. However, the following list shows the foreign languages that are most frequently used in the Clerk's Office in this geographic area:

1. Spanish
2. Vietnamese
3. Arabic
4. Mandarin

This information is based on data collected from Clerk's Office staff and a 2015-2016 12-month report from Language Line.

III. Language Assistance Resources

A. Determining the Need for an Interpreter

The Clerk's Office may determine whether a customer has limited English proficiency. Identification of language needs at the earliest point of contact is highly recommended. The need for an interpreter may be identified by the LEP person or on the LEP person's behalf by Clerk's Office staff, counter staff, self-help center staff, family court services, or outside justice partners such as the court, probation and parole officers, attorneys, social workers and correctional facilities. When an interpreter need is identified and Clerk's Office staff become aware that the LEP person has a pending court case, Clerk's Office staff are instructed to attach an interpreter flag to the person in the iCIS case management system.

Signage throughout court buildings indicating interpreter services are available may also help to identify LEP individuals. The Superior Court of Maricopa County will display this sign at locations to be determined by the Court.

B. AOC Interpretation Resources

Court Interpreter Registry and Listserv

Arizona's Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) maintains a statewide roster of individuals who indicate they have interpreting experience and have expressed interest in working in the courts. This roster is available to the Clerk's Office on the Internet at <http://www.interpreters.courts.az.gov>.

Additionally, the AOC created a statewide listserv to allow courts to communicate via email on court interpreter-related matters. The listserv is an excellent resource to locate referrals for specific language needs. Access codes and instructions to join the listserv may be obtained from the AOC Language Access contact person.

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

The AOC has installed video conferencing equipment at the State Courts building that will allow courts with compatible technology to remotely conference an interpreter from the Phoenix metro area or from another court jurisdiction into their court to improve resource allocation and reduce time and costs associated with interpreter travel. Contact the AOC Language Access contact person for more information on VRI connectivity and checklist for court proceedings most appropriate for video.

C. Language Services Outside the Courtroom

The Clerk's Office is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP individuals have meaningful access to all Clerk's Office services and programs. Contracts with vendors that provide direct services to Clerk's Office customers must include the requirement that the vendor provide language services, including interpreters, for all LEP individuals.

1. Assistance to Understand Court Procedures and Policies

Services offered by the Clerk's Office generally to English-speaking customers pursuant to the Employee Code of Conduct (ACJA §1-303) must also be provided to LEP litigants in their language.

2. Assistance to Fill-out Court Forms and Pleadings

The Clerk's Office will assist in the filling-out of court forms for those LEP customers who are unable to do so either by themselves or with the assistance of another competent adult proficient in English and able to render assistance in a timely manner.

The Clerk's Office uses the following resources to facilitate communication with LEP individuals and Clerk's Office staff to the degree resources are available:

- Bilingual employees;
- "I Speak" cards, to identify the individual's primary language;
- Multilingual signage provided by the Judicial Branch in Maricopa County or the AOC;
- Telephonic interpreter services from Language Line;
- Automated translation of the Clerk's Office website into a user-selected language;
- Spanish language versions of court forms;
- A website link from the Clerk's Office website to the AOC's Spanish-translated webpage at <http://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio>;
- A public phone line with key instructions provided in Spanish to request Clerk's Office services; and
- Video remote interpreting services (where available).

D. Translated Forms and Documents

The Arizona courts understand the importance of translating forms and documents so that LEP individuals have greater access to the courts' services. The Clerk's Office currently uses forms and instructional materials translated into Spanish. These documents are located on the Clerk's Office website at <http://www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/CATALOG.htm> and the Clerk's Office links to the Arizona Supreme Court's Spanish-translated webpage at <http://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio>.

1. Sight Translation

The Clerk's Office will provide assistance so LEP persons may understand court-issued documents provided in English through sight translation or other reasonable means.

E. Website/Online Access

To ensure LEP customer access, the Clerk of the Superior Court's website (www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov) includes the following:

- A hyperlink from the home page to a notice written in Spanish about the availability of language services.
- Hyperlinks from the home page and within the Clerk's Language Access Plan to the Arizona Supreme Court's Spanish-translated webpage at <http://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio>.

IV. Clerk's Office Staff

The Clerk's Office is an equal opportunity employer and recruits and hires bilingual staff to serve its LEP customers. Primary examples include but are not limited to:

- Bilingual staff to serve at public counters; and
- Bilingual staff available on call to assist with contacts from LEP individuals as needed.

V. Clerk's Office Staff Training

The Clerk's Office is committed to providing language access training opportunities for all staff members. Training and learning opportunities currently offered will be expanded or continued as needed. Those opportunities include:

- Diversity Training;
- Cultural competency training;
- LAP training;
- New employee orientation training;
- AOC's Language Access in the Courtroom Training DVD; and
- Language access online training videos.

VI. Public Outreach and Education

A. General

The Clerk's Office will monitor the need for public outreach or education programs and they will be made accessible to LEP persons as they are developed to inform community service

organizations on how LEP individuals can access Clerk's Office services.

B. Videos, Webinars, On-line Classes, In-person Classes and Other Similar Instructional Methods

New public-facing videos designed to assist litigants or the public more broadly will be in English and Spanish.

Those videos, webinars, and instructional materials currently in existence which are deemed to be "vital" will be made available in Spanish.

The Clerk's Office will determine whether any existing videos, webinars, and instructional materials should be made available in languages other than English and Spanish by considering the Department of Justice's four-factor analysis.

VII. Formal Complaint Process

If an LEP customer believes meaningful access to the Clerk's Office was not provided to them, they may file a complaint with the Clerk's Language Access Plan Coordinator. The complaint process requires the following:

- **The customer** must obtain and complete a complaint form, available at the end of the Clerk's Language Access Plan online at <http://www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/LAPplan2016.pdf>, available from the Clerk's public counters upon request, available by request through emailing CoCCustomerRelations@mail.maricopa.gov, and available by calling 602-372-5375.
- **The customer** must return the completed form to the address pre-printed on the form (620 W. Jackson St., Phoenix, AZ 85003).
- **The Clerk's Office** will respond to any complaint within 30 days of receipt and the records will be maintained as public records.

VIII. Public Notification and Evaluation of the Language Access Plan

A. LAP Approval and Notification

The Clerk's Office's LAP is approved by the Clerk of the Superior Court. Upon approval, a copy is forwarded to the AOC Court Services Division, posted on the Clerk's Office website, and is available to the public on request.

B. Evaluation of the LAP

The Clerk's Office will routinely assess whether changes to the LAP are needed. The plan may be changed or updated at any time but will be reviewed at least once each year.

Each year the Clerk's designee will review the effectiveness of the Clerk's Office's LAP and update it as necessary. The evaluation will include identification of any problem areas and development of corrective action strategies. From time to time, the Clerk's Office may consider using a survey sampling of data collection for a limited time period which involves assessing language access requests to assist in the evaluation of the LAP.

Elements of the evaluation will include:

- Number of LEP services requested;
- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided;
- Assessment of how well Clerk's Office staff understand LEP policies and procedures and how to carry them out;
- Review of feedback from Clerk's Office employee training sessions;
- Customer satisfaction feedback; and,
- Review of any language access complaints received during the review period.

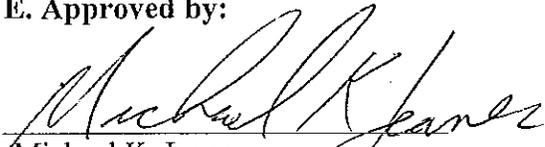
C. Clerk's Office Language Access Plan Coordinator:

Aaron Nash, Special Counsel and Public Information Officer
620 W. Jackson Street, Suite 3017
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

D. AOC Language Access Contact:

David Svoboda
Court Services Division
Administrative Office of the Courts
1501 W. Washington Street, Suite 410
Phoenix, AZ 85007
(602) 452-3965
dsvoboda@courts.az.gov

E. Approved by:


Michael K. Jeanes,
Clerk of the Superior Court in and for Maricopa County, Arizona

Date: 12/19/16

Clerk of Superior Court for Maricopa County, AZ

(Court Name)

Language Access to Court Services Complaint Form

The court may be required to provide interpreters at no cost for court users, including litigants, victims, and witnesses who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. If you believe you have not been provided effective language assistance for any court or probation proceeding or other service provided by the court, please complete this form and return it to: Clerk of Court, ATTN: Aaron Nash DJC/GC, 620 W. Jackson St., Phoenix, AZ 85003

(Address of Court)

The submission of a complaint will NOT affect the outcome of any court matter.

The court will address your concerns within a reasonable time not exceeding 30 days after submission of this form.

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE IN OTHER LANGUAGES UPON REQUEST.

PLEASE COMPLETE:

Today's Date: _____

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ / ____ / _____

Home Telephone: (_____) _____ - _____

Mobile Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Email Address: _____

Primary Language: _____

Date of Incident: _____

What problem did you have with language assistance?

- The court did not provide an interpreter
- The interpreter did not interpret correctly or did not speak my language
- Other- please describe:

(Nombre del Tribunal)

FORMULARIO DE QUEJA Servicios de Traducción e Interpretación

Para garantizar la participación en las diligencias y los servicios judiciales, se le proveerá un intérprete sin costo alguno a las personas tales como litigantes, víctimas, ofendidos y testigos que no hablen el inglés como idioma principal o a aquellos que no sepan escribir, leer, entender o hablar el inglés. Si Ud. cree que no le han facilitado servicios de interpretación en el tribunal, o para gozar de los servicios de régimen a prueba, por favor, llene este formulario y envíelo a: Clerk of Court, ATTN: Aaron Nash DJC/GC
620 W. Jackson St, Phoenix, AZ 85003

*Ninguna causa pendiente se verá afectada por haber sometido una queja.
Este tribunal tratará de abordar su queja en un plazo de 30 días después de haberla sometido.*

PUEDE OBTENER ESTE FORMULARIO EN OTROS IDIOMAS SI LO SOLICITA

LLENE LOS ESPACIOS EN BLANCO:

Fecha: _____

Nombre: _____

Apellido(s): _____

Dirección: _____

Ciudad/Estado/C.P.: _____ / ____ / _____

Teléfono: (_____) _____ - _____

Celular: (_____) _____ - _____

Correo electrónico: _____

Idioma principal: _____

¿En qué fecha sucedió el incidente? _____

Explique cuál fue el problema:

- El tribunal no me proporcionó un intérprete
- El intérprete no interpretó de manera adecuada o no hablaba mi idioma.
- Otro motivo; anote los detalles:

