

Committee on Limited English Proficiency
April 24, 2014
225 Spring Street, Wethersfield
Conference Room 133

Members Present: The Hon. Maria A. Kahn, Co-Chair; Ms. Alejandra Donath, Co-Chair; Ms. Karen Chorney; Atty. Richard Loffredo, Atty. Katherine Casaubon

Staff: Melanie Kerr

1. Approval of February 26, 2014 Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the February 26, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved.

2. Report to Chief Justice

The 2013 LEP annual report was submitted to Chief Justice Chase T. Rogers on March 17, 2014. Copies were provided to Judge Carroll and Judge Solomon, Joseph D'Alesio, and current LEP Committee members. Copies were also forwarded to former Committee members Dan Horowitz and James Maher. The report will be posted on the LEP Website.

3. Access to Justice Recommendations

Committee members discussed those recommendations pertaining to the LEP Committee which were included in the 2012 Access to Justice Commission Annual Report. Judge Kahn will work with Melanie Kerr to draft responses to the recommendations and share with Committee members prior to the next meeting.

4. Outreach to Colleges and Universities

It was agreed that the LEP Committee will continue to conduct outreach to Connecticut colleges and universities and will consider developing (with guidance from the Court Operations' Legal Services Unit) a Request for Information (RFI) to explore further opportunities for collaboration.

5. Staff Opportunities for Conversational Spanish

Over the last year, the Committee has explored numerous options for offering classes in conversational Spanish for Branch employees. After thorough study and consideration of potential labor and quality assurance issues, it was determined that offering such classes is not a feasible option. Alternatively, the Committee recommends that the Court Operations/Staff Development Unit encourage Branch employees to independently pursue additional language studies.

6. DOJ Language Access Planning Tool

The Committee will reconstitute a workgroup to review and comment on the DOJ language access planning tool. Melanie Kerr will circulate potential dates for the workgroup to convene.

7. Trial Preparation for Interpreters

The LEP Committee will inquire if a notice could be sent to judges from the Chief Court Administrator to advise that when using interpreters for hearings or trials, it is most effective if attorneys provide documents (i.e., police reports, victim statements, financial records) to interpreters in advance for their review. It will advise judges that interpreters are trained to request those documents from attorneys and may request assistance from Judges in obtaining the

documents in advance. The notice will encourage Judges to direct attorneys to follow this guidance.

8. LEP Training Evaluation Forms

Committee members discussed the evaluation forms currently used for LEP proficiency classes. Karen Chorney will circulate the evaluation form which is currently in use. At the next LEP Committee meeting, the Committee will discuss the retention of evaluation forms; the pros and cons of electronic versus hard copy evaluations; and compare the current evaluation form to the one used by other training programs within the Branch including those developed by the Judge's Education Committee.

9. Translation

Richard Loffredo reported that Interpreter and Translator Services (ITS) staff continue to respond to occasional requests from judges to translate forms in addition to those identified through the formalized vital documents translation process.

10. Vital Documents

Committee members discussed the status of those vital documents identified for translation and agreed that all should be completed as scheduled by the end of the 2014 calendar year.

11. Video Remote Interpreting

Richard Loffredo reported that the video remote interpreting system is in place and operational in Derby. ITS is exploring options for expansion to other Judicial Districts.

12. Universal Advisement of Rights

Karen Chorney reported that she is continuing to work with the Chief Clerks to use a recorded Spanish version of an individual's Advisement of Rights in Family Support Magistrate Courts in all Judicial Districts. The project is ongoing.

13. LEP proficiency Classes

Karen Chorney reported that classes continue to be offered to Branch personnel on a monthly basis.

14. Next Meeting

The next meeting date has not yet been determined.

15. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM.