



COMMITTEE ON LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

2017 REPORT

Committee on Limited English Proficiency

The Committee on Limited English Proficiency was initially formed in 2008 under the Access goal of the Judicial Branch's Strategic Plan and charged with "eliminating language barriers to facilities, processes and information that are faced by individuals with limited English proficiency." The committee is co-chaired by Justice Maria Araujo Kahn and Alejandra Donath, Program Manager for the Interpreter and Translator Services Unit (ITS), and is comprised of the following members¹:

Troy Brown
Karen Chorney
Richard Loffredo
Eduardo Palmieri
Katharine Casaubon (Legal Services advisor)
Melanie Kerr (Support Staff)

The economic downturn that has engulfed the State of Connecticut has continued into 2017. Even with these difficulties, however, the Judicial Branch's commitment to ensuring that limited English proficient (LEP) individuals are able to access its facilities, processes, services and information remained a priority.

In 2017, ITS received nearly 45,000 requests to provide in-person oral language assistance in 75 different languages/dialects and over 15,000 requests to provide over-the-phone interpreting services in 45 different languages/dialects. In addition, ITS translated 159 separate Branch forms as well as 102 case specific documents in 2017.

This report serves as an update of the work of the Committee on Limited English Proficiency in 2017.

¹The Committee would like to acknowledge Attorney Michelle Fica, Connecticut Legal Services. Her attendance and participation in the Committee meetings has been invaluable.

On-Going Initiatives

In its effort to ensure that LEP individuals can access the justice system in Connecticut, the Committee has been working over the past year on the following areas:

Continued LEP Training

In 2008, the Branch developed a mandatory LEP training program for all employees that provides information on the federal requirements, explains the role of the interpreter, and details how to obtain language assistance and translation services. This program also offers cultural sensitivity education. Over 2000 employees have attended this half-day program.

In 2017, the LEP training moved to an online format. This 75-minute course provides an overview of the Branch's obligations to provide services to LEP individuals, details the role of an interpreter, the differences between an interpreter and a translator, and how Judicial Branch employees can obtain language assistance services 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Since its online launch, over 3,300 employees have taken the course.

The Branch also offers a civil rights training program to its contractors, which contains a component on LEP so that service providers understand the Branch's obligations, as well as their own obligations, to provide meaningful access to persons who are limited English proficient. One session was offered in 2017, with 17 service providers attending. The LEP Committee is developing an online training for those entities that contract with the Judicial Branch to provide services to its LEP stakeholders.

Judges and Family Support Magistrates were given LEP training in 2013. Since 2013, LEP training has been incorporated into the new judge orientation program provided to all newly appointed judges. In 2017, 13 new judges were appointed and received LEP training.

Issues surrounding limited English proficiency and the requirement to provide services are part of a larger training that is provided by Justice Maria Araujo Kahn and Justice Richard Robinson. This training also covers implicit bias, cultural competency and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 2017, Justice Kahn and Justice Robinson provided this training to members of the Office of the Attorney General and judges and staff at the Supreme and Appellate Courts.

Vital Documents

The ongoing identification and translation of vital documents has remained a priority of the LEP Committee and the Branch. In 2013, the Chief Court Administrator requested the Judicial Branch's Executive Directors to identify the vital documents utilized by their Division. In 2017, the Chief Court Administrator reissued that request. Interpreter and Translator Services continues

the process of translating these documents into Spanish, Polish and Portuguese. In 2017, 159 vital documents were translated into Spanish, Polish and Portuguese.

Telephonic Bilingual Services

The Judicial Branch has contracted for telephonic language assistance services (TBS), which enable Judicial Branch staff and individuals who are limited English proficient to bridge the language gap and communicate through the use of a telephonic interpreting service.

TBS is available in more than 150 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is available in all Judicial Branch facilities and is also available to staff working outside of Branch facilities, via a cell phone, when needed to communicate with LEP individuals. In 2017, TBS was used over 15,000 times in 45 different languages/dialects.

Updating the Judicial Branch's Internet Site

The overwhelming majority of interpreter requests continue to be for the Spanish language (approximately 88%). The next most requested languages are Polish and Portuguese (approximately 3% each). Accordingly, the Judicial Branch continues to translate pages on its website into Spanish, Portuguese and Polish.

Video Remote Interpreting

A pilot program was launched in 2016 which allows for video remote interpreting between offices. The New Britain Judicial District was selected as the pilot location. Since October 2016, numerous interviews between Judicial Branch staff and limited English proficient individuals within the juvenile probation, adult probation and family relations offices have occurred utilizing video remote interpreting technology. Through this pilot, the Judicial Branch is exploring the feasibility of expanding the use of video remote interpreting by its staff certified interpreters for various types of settings. If feasible, this technology can be utilized in other locations and settings to promote efficient and timely provision of interpreter services.

Language Access Plan

The LEP Committee reviewed and updated the Judicial Branch's Language Access Plan. The updated Plan was subsequently approved by the Chief Court Administrator. The Plan is available on the Judicial Branch's website in English, Spanish, Polish and Portuguese.

Advisement of Rights

In 2012, a pilot program was developed in which the advisement of rights given by Family Support Magistrates was translated into Spanish and recorded on a DVD. Instead of utilizing an interpreter in court to interpret the Magistrate's advisement of rights, the pre-recorded video is played in open court immediately after the Magistrate gives the advisement. The success of the pilot program led to its statewide implementation in the Family Support Magistrate Division of the Superior Court in 2014.

In 2017, the LEP Committee developed a survey to seek input from the stakeholders in Family Support Magistrate court on how the program is working and whether or not it should be expanded to other case types. The majority of the feedback from the responses was positive. Although the program will continue to be used in Family Support Magistrate courts, it was determined that the level of resources and logistics involved with pre-recorded advisement of rights make it not feasible to expand to other areas at this time.

Future Plans

The Committee recognizes the continuing need for the Judicial Branch to provide access to its facilities, processes, and information to all limited English proficient individuals. In the coming year, the Committee intends to focus on the following areas:

Vital Documents

The translation of vital documents is an important initiative that has been underway since 2013. The Interpreter and Translator Services Unit continues to translate vital documents into Spanish, Polish and Portuguese.

The LEP Committee will look into ways to better inform Judicial Branch staff of the documents that have been translated.

In the coming year, the Committee will also work with the External Affairs Division to update the public and stakeholders of the availability of additional translated vital documents.

Video Remote Interpreting

The Committee will also continue to work with the Branch's Information Technology Division and Judge Support Services Unit to develop the video remote interpreting pilot in the New Britain courthouse for in-court proceedings. This will allow a Spanish-language staff interpreter situated in the main office of ITS in Hartford to be available remotely by video technology to provide language assistance services. By using this technology, the Branch maximizes interpreter resources by eliminating the time for an interpreter to travel to the location when an interpreter is not available on-site. It also allows ITS to maximize the services of its highly trained and skilled staff interpreters. Thus, it is a timelier and cost efficient method of providing language assistance services.

The LEP Committee will review feedback regarding the video remote interpreting pilot program to be launched in the New Britain courthouse. Depending on the results of the feedback, the Committee will seek to expand the program to additional courthouses.

Training

Training on LEP issues is an ongoing priority of the LEP Committee and the Branch. The LEP Committee will explore different means of providing additional training opportunities to Judicial

Branch employees, including hands-on tutorials on how to access telephonic bilingual services and utilizing telephonic interpreting in a courtroom setting.

The LEP Committee has developed and will implement an online LEP training module for the Judicial Branch's contracted service providers. This training will be mandatory for all vendors that provide direct services pursuant to their contract with the Judicial Branch.

Justice Kahn and Justice Robinson will continue to provide the LEP, Cultural Competency, Implicit Bias and ADA training program to organizations and agencies that interact with the Judicial Branch. It is anticipated that the training will be provided to state's attorneys and public defenders in 2018.

Outreach

The LEP Committee will create an email account to allow stakeholders to provide suggestions on how the Judicial Branch can better meet the needs of the LEP population. The email account will be added to the Branch's LEP webpage and will be advertised to agencies working with LEP populations.

Additionally, the LEP Committee recently updated its database of all entities, including community organizations that serve or work with LEP individuals. The LEP Committee will conduct outreach to those entities to obtain their input on LEP services and to determine if there are any additional improvements that can be made.

Review Website

The LEP Committee will review the LEP and the LEP Committee webpage on the Judicial Branch's website to see if any improvements can be made to make it more user-friendly.

**INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR SERVICES
YEARLY STATISTICAL REPORT, 2017**

ITS provides in-person language assistance and TBS provides over-the-phone language assistance

LANGUAGE	ITS	TBS
Afrikaans	1	
Afro-Asiatic Languages (Amharic, Somali, Tigrinya)	44	13
Akan languages (Twi,Akan)	21	
Albanian	220	45
Arabic/Moroccan/Egyptian/Levantine	400	75
Armenian	11	1
Baltic languages (Lithuanian)	9	
Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian	20	4
Bulgarian	2	
Burmese/Karen	26	13
Cambodian	14	2
Chinese Mandarin/Cantonese/Taishanese/Fuzhou	514	115
Creole English-based (Guyanese, Jamaican, Krio)	18	
Czech-Slovak	21	
French/French Canadian/Haitian Creole	641	30
Georgian	6	2
German	11	1
Greek	16	
Hebrew	2	
Hungarian	39	2
Indigenous languages of Central America (K'iche)	12	
Indigenous languages of South America (Quechua)	1	1
Indo-Iranian/Indic languages (Azerbaijani, Dari, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Sinhalese, Nepalese, Kurdish, Farsi, Malayalam, Pashto, Tamil, Telugu)	369	75
Italian/Italian Sicilian	59	9
Japanese	14	1
Korean	160	20
Laotian	64	8
Malayo-Polynesian (Tagalog, Indonesian, Malay)	19	3
Niger-Congo languages (Kinyarwanda, Swahili, Wolof)	32	14
Polish	1141	130
Portuguese/Cape Verdean	1640	258
Romanian	57	3
Russian	128	65
Spanish	38868	14,275
Thai	36	9
Tibetan	13	
Turkish	59	8
Ukrainian	103	21
Vietnamese	156	66
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