

## ***Agenda and Minutes***

### **Translation Guidelines Work Group LEP Committee Public Service and Trust Commission**

January 21, 2010  
225 Spring Street, Wethersfield  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room  
8:30 – 10:00 AM

#### **Present:**

Jim Maher (Chair), Rena Goldwasser, Dan Horwitch, Deborah Tvaronitis, Gabrielle Winter, Faith Arkin (LEP Committee Chair), Karen Chorney (Staff)

#### **1. Welcome**

Jim Maher welcomed the work group members.

#### **2. Review Goals of Work Group**

- ◆ gather information from the LEP Survey Work Group and the LEP Media and Community Outreach Work Group to consider the legal ramifications of translated materials
- ◆ recommend priorities for translated materials to recommend to the LEP Committee
- ◆ develop a set of guidelines for prioritizing translation requests to recommend to the LEP Committee

Jim Maher reviewed the goals of the work group and noted that they are not listed in a particular order therefore, "...develop(ing) a set of guidelines for prioritizing translation requests..." will probably come before "...recommend(ing) priorities for translated materials..." to the LEP Committee.

Jim suggested that the work group review the list distributed by Karen Franchi at the January 2009 LEP Committee meeting indicating the forms commonly stocked by the Court Service Centers (CSC), filtered by business unit and CSC location.

Questions were raised regarding the ability to delete obsolete and duplicate translated forms. Jim will look into the possibility of developing a searchable database of translated materials.

Dan Horwitch was asked to present Legal Services' view of the issues and requirements regarding translated materials and the courts. He spoke to Legal Services' reviews of documents for accuracy, comport with legal requirements and reflection of the laws to which they relate. Legal Services also follows new legislation with an eye toward which forms will need to be created, changed, etc. It is possible for many iterations of the same form to be in use as a result of older versions not being discarded when appropriate. Legal Services has also discovered many forms being used that have not been reviewed

officially for compliance with statutes, practice book, rules, etc. On other occasions, English versions have been updated while Spanish versions have not. All divisions are invited to inform Legal Services when forms need to be created, updated, or otherwise revised in accordance with laws, practice, or policy.

It is the general policy of Legal Services that it is appropriate to provide Spanish versions of informational materials, which include those documents that describe the services of the Branch, responsibilities of various parties, procedures, resources, etc. In addition, Dan noted instructions for any form can be provided in any language.

It is also the policy not to provide translations of any forms that are filed with the court. Filing non-English forms with the courts would hinder the functioning of the court because it presents a tremendous burden if courts are required to accept non-English forms and then required to determine what they mean and what the person intended. There is no statutory requirement that all court forms be in English but there is support in case law.

Dan concluded his presentation by discussing a few of the ways in which court forms have been handled to preserve the rights of non-English members of the public.

At the request of Faith Arkin, Dan agreed to present this information at the next LEP Committee meeting.

Jim summarized the work group's goal to give a framework to prioritizing translations ordered by the court, forms currently being updated in English, forms created by new legislation, translations requested prior to Legal Services' official reviews (5-6 years ago), and forms previously translated outside of the Interpreters and Translation Services Unit.

### **3. Develop Plan of Action**

- ◆ Establish protocol for translations between field offices of the same unit, division, etc. (i.e., common definition of "legal implications".)
- ◆ Consider recommending that forms not be pre-printed, but be accessed through link on Intranet to get to latest version in use. Educate employees to change how they work.
- ◆ Consider recommending that a decisions panel be established to prioritize translations requests; consider establishing an appeals panel as well.

### **4. Next Steps**

- ◆ The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 5, 8:30 a.m. in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room on left, at 225 Spring Street, Wethersfield.
- ◆ Create database to look for versions of materials in other languages, to see if a request has been filed, to check the date of the last revision, etc.