

Court Interpreters Advisory Panel
Annual Agenda¹—2024

Approved by Executive and Planning Committee: March 14, 2024

I. COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Chair:	Hon. Brian L. McCabe, Judge, Superior Court of Merced County
Lead Staff:	Mr. Ray Mata, Analyst, Court Interpreters Program, Center for Families, Children & the Courts
Committee's Charge/Membership: <p>Rule 10.51 of the California Rules of Court states the charge of the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP), which is to: Assist the council in performing its duties under Government Code sections 68560 through 68566 and to promote access to spoken-language interpreters and interpreters for deaf and hearing-impaired persons, the advisory panel is charged with making recommendations to the council on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Interpreter use and need for interpreters in court proceedings; and(2) Certification, registration, renewal of certification and registration, testing, recruiting, training, continuing education, and professional conduct of interpreters. <p>Rule 10.51(b) sets forth the additional duties of the panel that are: Reviewing and making recommendations to the council on the findings of the study of language and interpreter use and need for interpreters in court proceedings that is conducted by the Judicial Council every five years under Government Code section 68563.</p> <p>Rule 10.51(c) sets forth the following membership composition of the committee. CIAP currently has 14 members, which consists of 11 advisory panel members (voting) and 4 advisors (nonvoting) appointed by the Chief Justice to assist the advisory panel. A majority of the members must be court interpreters. The advisory panel must include the specified numbers of members from the following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Four certified or registered court interpreters working as employees in trial courts, one from each of the four regions established by Government Code section 71807. For purposes of the appointment of members under this rule, the Superior Court of California, County of Ventura, is considered part of Region 1 as specified in section 71807, and the Superior Court of California, County of Solano, is considered part of Region 2 as specified in section 71807;	

¹ The annual agenda outlines the work a committee will focus on in the coming year and identifies areas of collaboration with other advisory bodies and the Judicial Council staff resources.

- (2) Two interpreters certified or registered in a language other than Spanish, each working either in a trial court as an independent contractor or in an educational institution;
- (3) One appellate court justice
- (4) Two trial court judges; and
- (5) Two court administrators, including at least one trial court executive officer.

The current committee [roster](#) is available on the committee's web page.

Subcommittees/Working Groups²:

1. Professional Standards and Ethics Subcommittee – Provides review and recommendations on interpreter professional development, as well as adherence to professional standards and compliance requirements.
2. Interpreter Language Access Subcommittee – Works on specific projects related to language access and interpreting services, including recommendations from the [Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts](#) that relate to court interpreters. As appropriate, these projects are undertaken in collaboration with the Language Access Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness.

Meetings Planned for 2024³

Video conference calls – As needed.

In-person meeting – One in-person meeting if requested by the committee members.

Professional Standards and Ethics Subcommittee – Video conference calls as needed.

Interpreter Language Access Subcommittee – Video conference calls as needed.

Check here if exception to policy is granted by Executive Office or rule of court.

² California Rules of Court, rule 10.30 (c) allows an advisory body to form subgroups, composed entirely of current members of the advisory body, to carry out the body's duties, subject to available resources, with the approval of its oversight committee.

³ Refer to [Operating Standards for Judicial Council Advisory Bodies](#) for governance on in-person meetings.

II. COMMITTEE PROJECTS

#	New or One-Time Projects ⁴	
1.	Project Title: Implementation of Assembly Bill 1032 Court interpreters – Interpreter Language Access Subcommittee (ILAS)	Priority⁵ 1(c) Strategic Plan Goal⁶ III
<p>Project Summary⁷: Assembly Bill 1032 (Stats. 2023, ch. 556), amends the Trial Court Interpreter Employment and Labor Relations Act (Gov. Code §§ 71800–71829) with provisions affecting intermittent part-time, employee, independent contractor, provisionally qualified, relay, and privately appointed interpreters. CIAP will propose revisions to California Rules of Court, rule 2.893, interpreter forms, and other guidance materials to conform with the statute. In addition to rule and form changes, staff from the Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) and Human Resources Labor Employment Relations Unit (HR-LERU) will provide educational training to courts regarding changes arising from AB 1032.</p> <p>Status/Timeline: Changes to rules and forms will be presented to the Judicial Council for approval in Fall 2024 to ensure a January 1, 2025, implementation date.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: Any expenses associated with this project will be entirely funded under the Court Interpreters Program budget.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public. Training for courts to be provided by CFCC and HR-LERU staff.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: Rules Committee, Language Access Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness, and the Court Executives Advisory Committee (CEAC)</p>		

⁴ All proposed projects for the year must be included on the Annual Agenda. If a project implements policy or is a program, identify it as *implementation* or a *program* in the project description and attach the Judicial Council authorization/assignment or prior approved Annual Agenda to this Annual Agenda.

⁵ For non-rules and forms projects, select priority level 1 (must be done) or 2 (should be done). For rules and forms proposals, select one of the following priority levels: 1(a) Urgently needed to conform to or accurately reflect the law; 1(b) Council or an internal committee has directed the committee to consider new or amended rules and forms; 1(c) Change is urgently needed to remedy a problem that is causing significant cost or inconvenience to the courts or the public; 1(d) Proposal is otherwise urgent and necessary, such as a proposal that would mitigate exposure to immediate or severe financial or legal risk. 2(a) Useful, but not necessary, to implement changes in law; 2(b) Responsive to identified concerns or problems; 2(c) Helpful in otherwise advancing Judicial Council goals and objectives.

⁶ Indicate which goal number of [The Strategic Plan for California’s Judicial Branch](#) the project most closely aligns.

⁷ A key objective is a strategic aim, purpose, or “end of action” to be achieved for the coming year.

#	New or One-Time Projects⁴	
2.	Project Title: 2025 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study	Priority⁵ 1
		Strategic Plan Goal⁶ IV, VI
	<p>Project Summary⁷: Pursuant to Government Code section 68563, develop the legislatively mandated <i>Language Need and Interpreter Use Study</i>. This five-year study will be due to the Governor and Legislature by July 1, 2025.</p> <p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the current statewide landscape concerning the need and use of interpreting services in California’s trial courts; • Evaluate trends and compare to previous studies; • Develop sound recommendations for the council’s consideration; • Assist the strategic expansion of interpreters into needed areas; and • Continue to address the shortage of court interpreters in key languages. <p>Status/Timeline: The Language Access Implementation unit will develop this study and prepare the report in 2024. The unit will provide CIAP with project status updates throughout 2024. The study is due to the Governor and to the Legislature no later than July 1, 2025.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: There is no fiscal impact associated with this project. Resources are: Governmental Affairs, Court Interpreters Program, and the Language Access Implementation staff.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, the superior courts, the Governor, and the Legislature.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: CEAC.</p>	
3.	Project Title: Certification of Persons with American Sign Language (ASL) Generalist Credentials to Perform Work in the Courts and ASL Guidelines	Priority⁵ 1
		Strategic Plan Goal⁶ IV
	<p>Project Summary⁷: As directed in the November 2023 council report, <i>Language Access Plan: New Requirements for American Sign Language Court Interpreters</i>, CIAP will (1) develop a proposal for the council to certify persons with ASL generalist credentials to perform work in the courts, (2) revise the <i>Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons</i>, and (3) develop a recommendation for a process for approving ASL court interpreter certification programs that</p>	

#	New or One-Time Projects⁴	
	<p>is more responsive to the current interpreter marketplace and testing and certification landscape.</p> <p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the feasibility of a tiered approach to certify persons with ASL generalist credentials to perform work in the courts. • Develop a more modernized approval process for ASL court interpreter certification programs. <p>Status/Timeline: Upon the completion of a Request for Proposal process, a consultant will be secured by summer 2024 to assist with developing an implementation proposal for ASL generalist credentials. This proposal will be presented to CIAP for approval in fall 2024. In addition, CIAP will update the Guidelines and develop a more modernized approval process for ASL court interpreter certification programs by December 31, 2024.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: The estimated one-time cost, which will be funded under the Court Interpreters Program consultant budget for fiscal year 2023–24, is \$200,000 for a consultant to conduct national level research on accepted ASL generalist credentials and tiered approaches. Implementation options will be proposed to CIAP for consideration. Resources include the Court Interpreters Program and the Language Access Implementation Unit, and additional staff time as needed from Legal Services and Human Resources.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community (including ASL interpreters), judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: Consultation with the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness as needed.</p>	
4.	<p>Project Title: Carryover of Bilingual Interpreting Examination (BIE) Scores</p>	<p>Priority⁵ 2</p> <hr/> <p>Strategic Plan Goal⁶ IV</p>
	<p>Project Summary⁷: After consideration of the findings from the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) research on court interpreter test administration and credentialing options from other states, Language Access Services (LAS) staff will draft and propose recommendations for CIAP regarding the feasibility of allowing interpreter candidates to carry over passing scores of 70 percent or higher on two or more exam sections of the Bilingual Interpreting Examination (BIE) from one administration to another within a two-year period. Several states allow this practice to ensure that interpreter candidates stay in the testing pipeline and provide them with two years to pass all four sections of the exam. Candidates failing to pass all four sections of the BIE within this timeframe must restart the process by retaking all sections.</p>	

#	New or One-Time Projects ⁴
	<p>Key considerations for CIAP include determining whether LAS staff can implement the carryover practice already established by other states. LAS staff will develop recommendations, including an assessment of potential costs, benefits, drawbacks, and operational feasibility.</p> <p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the current testing requirements for attaining certified court interpreter status. • Explore the feasibility of allowing candidates to carry over passing scores on two or more exam sections of the BIE from one administration to another within a two-year period. • Evaluate the potential costs, benefits, drawbacks, and operational feasibility associated with adopting this practice which is already implemented in other states to expand their interpreter credentialing pool. <p>Status/Timeline: December 2024.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: Any expenses associated with this project will be entirely funded under the Court Interpreters Program budget.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: None.</p>

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities ⁴	
1.	Project Title: Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters	Priority⁵ 2
	Strategic Plan Goal⁶ III	
<p>Project Summary⁷: Consider recommendations to modify the annual court interpreter renewal and compliance process to be more efficient, clear to interpreters, and in alignment with operational improvements. Consider recommended updates to the Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters so that it incorporates modifications to the compliance process.</p> <p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess shortening the current 10-month compliance cycle, which traditionally runs from September through June. • Consider making the cycle end and start in the same calendar year. • Assess transitioning to a biannual cycle instead of remaining with the existing annual cycle. • Consider moving all interpreters into one common cycle so that the deadlines for their compliance requirements are the same instead of staggered. • Determine alternatives to permanent revocation of credentials for interpreters who do not meet the compliance requirements, such as long-term suspension. • Consider updating the continuing education requirements to include a refresher in ethics training for interpreters who have been credentialed for more than two years. • Update the Compliance Requirements for Certified Court and Registered Interpreters to incorporate the committee’s proposed modifications to the compliance process and operational improvements. <p>Status/Timeline: Court Interpreters Program staff has developed recommendations that the committee will consider in 2024. If approved, the recommendations will be presented to the council for its consideration later that year.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: Any expenses associated with this project will be entirely funded under the Court Interpreters Program budget.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: None.</p>		

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴	
2.	Project Title: Interpreting Skills Assessment Process – Professional Standards and Ethics Subcommittee	Priority⁵ 1 Strategic Plan Goal⁶ IV
<p>Project Summary⁷: To further support implementation of the California Court Interpreter Credential Review Procedures, consider a proposed process to assess an interpreter’s ability to interpret if a complaint alleging gross incompetence is lodged against the interpreter, and if following review and investigation, the complaint is deemed to have merit. This project originated with Recommendation #64 of the Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts (LAP) and Government Code section 68564(g), which states that the Judicial Council shall establish a “...procedure for Judicial Council and local court review of each court interpreter's skills and for reporting to the certification entity the results of the review.”</p> <p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and recommend a process that strengthens the Judicial Council’s ability to assess an interpreter’s interpreting abilities in a fair and thorough manner when the subject of a valid complaint concerning interpreting ability. <p>Status/Timeline: Court Interpreters Program staff is working under a contract with the National Center for State Courts to develop a skills assessment process for the committee’s consideration in 2024. If approved, the recommendations will be presented to the council for its consideration later that year.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: Any expenses associated with this project will be entirely funded under the Court Interpreters Program budget. <input type="checkbox"/> This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: None.</p>		
3.	Project Title: Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters – Professional Standards and Ethics Subcommittee	Priority⁵ 2 Strategic Plan Goal⁶ V
<p>Project Summary⁷: Consider recommended updates to The Professional Standards and Ethics for California Court Interpreters Manual, which informs interpreters of their professional and ethical responsibilities. The manual was last updated in 2013.</p>		

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities⁴	
	<p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the manual to align with current interpreting practices, evolving technology, remote and hybrid courtroom environments, video remote interpreting, and contemporary ethical issues such as conduct on social media. • Increase interpreters’ accessibility and engagement with the manual by adding scenarios that illustrate ethical considerations. • Align the content with a redesigned live ethics training that is required for new interpreters and a new online ethics refresher training for more experienced interpreters. <p>Status/Timeline: Court Interpreters Program staff has begun developing proposed updates to the manual. It is anticipated that proposed revisions will be presented to the committee for its consideration in 2024.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: Any expenses associated with updating the manual and the electronic dissemination of the updated version will be entirely funded by the Court Interpreters Program.</p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: None.</p>	
4.	Project Title: Designation of Certain Languages as Certified and Registered	Priority⁵ 2
	<p>Project Summary⁷: Following the 2020 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study, consider whether to (1) maintain certain languages as certified, or (2) recommend one or more of these languages be de-designated and reclassified as registered languages to allow candidates to take the Oral Proficiency Exam (OPE) to become registered interpreters in one or more of these languages (Portuguese, Western Armenian, and Japanese, and potentially Khmer).</p> <p>Key Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop recommendations that result in none of the above-mentioned languages being removed from the list of languages for which the council provides an interpreting credential. • Consider the following: number of in-court interpretations; level of interest in becoming an interpreter; costs to develop and maintain examinations; availability of existing examinations; costs to administer testing; and the trial courts’ need for more interpreters. 	

#	Ongoing Projects and Activities ⁴
	<p>Status/Timeline: In December 2023, CIAP approved related recommendations, which will be submitted to the Judicial Council for its consideration after public comment.</p> <p>Fiscal Impact/Resources: Any expenses associated with this project will be entirely funded by the Court Interpreters Program.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>This project may result in an allocation or distribution of funds to the courts. We will coordinate with Budget Services to ensure their review of relevant materials.</i></p> <p>Internal/External Stakeholders: Interpreter community, judicial officers, justice partners, language access court personnel, and the public.</p> <p>AC Collaboration: None.</p>

III. LIST OF 2023 PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#	Project Highlights and Achievements
1.	<p>Requirements for New American Sign Language (ASL) Court Interpreters – In November 2023, CIAP recommended that the council, effective January 1, 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve temporary revisions to the <i>Guidelines for Approval of Certification Programs for Interpreters for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons</i> allowing for exemptions in critical circumstances for a period of four years; 2. Under the exemption, temporarily approve the Texas Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Board for Evaluation of Interpreters as an approved testing entity for ASL court interpreter certification for a period of four years; 3. Direct CIAP to develop a proposal for the council to certify persons with ASL generalist credentials to perform work in the courts; and 4. Direct CIAP to revise the <i>Guidelines</i> and develop a recommendation for an ASL court interpreter certification program approval process that is more responsive to the current interpreter marketplace and testing and certification landscape. <p>The council unanimously approved these recommendations at its November 2023 business meeting. This project is now closed and further work for CIAP as directed by the council is on the 2024 Annual Agenda.</p>
2.	<p>Passage and Credentialing Options for the Interpreting Examinations – In December 2023, after review of other states’ testing and credentialing options identified by NCSC in research findings, CIAP approved the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make no change at this time to the current testing requirement that candidates must pass the BIE with a score of 70 or higher in each of the four examination sections in one sitting; and 2. Narrow the scope of the 2023 project and create a new annual agenda project for 2024 for LAS staff to explore the potential costs, benefits, drawbacks, and operational feasibility of allowing BIE candidates to carryover their passing scores on two more sections of the BIE for two years, which is a practice followed by other states. <p>With the committee’s approval of these recommendations, this project is now closed, and the new project is on the 2024 Annual Agenda.</p>