



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PROVIDING ACCESS AND
FAIRNESS LANGUAGE ACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING

April 2, 2024
12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

Advisory Body Members Present: Hon. Victor A. Rodriguez, Chair, Ms. Janet Hudec, Ms. Shirley Luo, and Ms. Fariba Soroosh

Advisory Body Members Absent: Hon. Richard Y. Lee, Hon. Amy Guerra (ITAC Liaison), and Ms. Julie Paik

Others Present: Ms. Irene Balajadia, Mr. Douglas Denton, Ms. Tatjana Gruner, Ms. Eunice Lee, Mr. Russell McGregor, Ms. Cynthia Miranda, Ms. Elizabeth Tam-Helmuth, and Ms. Charina Zalzos

OPEN MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call

The chair called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m., and staff took roll call.

Approval of Minutes

The Subcommittee reviewed and approved the minutes of the April 25, 2023, meeting.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS (ITEMS 1-3)

Info 1: Update from Language Access Subcommittee Chair

Justice Rodriguez shared today's meeting focuses on the 2024 language access projects and a presentation by staff on the newly redesigned Language Access Services webpages, which soft launched on February 20, 2024. He was particularly excited about the new language access project that will provide training to court staff on the appropriate use of machine translation tools. Machine translation, such as Google Translate, relies on software instead of a person – specifically, a qualified translator – to translate text from one language into another. Machine translation often include inaccuracies especially when it comes to complex text, such as legal content. It does not translate nuances and cannot solve ambiguity. Justice Rodriguez noted this is a worthy project for the subcommittee and staff to explore and work on this year. Also, he acknowledged Judge Amy Guerra, who is our new liaison to the Information Technology Advisory Committee.

Info 2: Review Approved 2024 Language Access Projects

Senior Analyst Elizabeth Tam-Helmuth reviewed the status of the three language access projects:

1. Develop Training for Court Staff on Appropriate Use of Machine Translation Tools

Language Access Subcommittee will partner with Judicial Council staff from the Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC) and Information Technology (IT) and will work with a consultant to develop training webinars and visual handouts. The training will focus on the California Courts Translator application, which provides real-time voice-to-text transcription and translation services to support language access. This tool is currently in use in 31 courts statewide. Training will highlight situations where an in-person or telephonic interpreter may be needed, to help protect legal rights and remedies, reduce misunderstandings in communication, and when to consult legal experts. Staff plans to secure a consultant by June 2024.

2. Public Outreach for the Online California Courts Self-Help Guide

The new language drop down menu on the Self-Help Guide is in development and will house public outreach multilingual materials, in the top eight languages in the state. These materials include printed infographic materials, videos, and public service announcements, to help LEPs understand if they need an interpreter, how to request an interpreter for court, and basic information about court processes. Also included are materials for LEPs on how to participate in remote hearings and information to file language access and interpreter complaints. Plans are underway to push out the language drop down feature live this summer and staff plans to conduct outreach to various stakeholders in the Fall.

3. Language Access Signage and Technology Grants, Fiscal Year 2024-25, Cycle 6

The subcommittee will continue to oversee and disburse ongoing monies (\$2.35 million each year) from the 2018 Budget Act as grants to trial courts for language access signage and technology initiatives on an annual basis. Staff launched the Cycle 6 application last month, on March 12 and completed applications are due on April 2. Staff provided a presentation at the March 13 Language Access Representatives webinar and provided a demonstration of the single SharePoint application for courts to apply online for various grant opportunities. The draft recommendations and proposed allocations will go through the advisory committees for review and approval prior to council approval in September 2024.

Info 3: New Language Access Services Webpages Presentation

Senior Analysts Elizabeth Tam-Helmuth and Cynthia Miranda provided a presentation of the new Language Access Services webpages and showcased the newly reorganized language access content on the new Drupal site, making language access resources more accessible.

A D J O U R N M E N T

There being no further open meeting business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Approved by the advisory body on August 22, 2024.