



Judicial Council of California

Advisory Committee on Providing
Access & Fairness

Language Access Subcommittee

Open Meeting Materials Index

August 22, 2024, 12:15 – 1:15 p.m.

1. Notice and Agenda for August 22, 2024, Subcommittee Meeting
2. Draft Minutes from the April 2, 2024, Subcommittee Meeting
3. California Machine Translation Tools Training Infographic
4. Self Help Guide Outreach Digital Resource Guide
5. 2023 Language Access Data Tool: Highlights of Results



Judicial Council of California

Advisory Committee on Providing
Access & Fairness

www.courts.ca.gov/accessfairnesscomm.htm
lap@jud.ca.gov

Request for ADA accommodations
should be made at least three business days
before the meeting and directed to:
JCCAccessCoordinator@jud.ca.gov

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PROVIDING ACCESS AND FAIRNESS LANGUAGE ACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE

NOTICE AND AGENDA OF OPEN MEETING

Open to the Public (Cal. Rules of Court, rule 10.75(c)(1) and (e)(1))

THIS MEETING IS BEING CONDUCTED BY ELECTRONIC MEANS

THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

Date: August 22, 2024
Time: 12:15 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Public Log-In: [Click this link to join](#); Meeting ID: 160 553 0289, Passcode: 644412

Meeting materials will be posted on the advisory body web page on the California Courts website at least three business days before the meeting.

Members of the public seeking to make an audio recording of the meeting must submit a written request at least two business days before the meeting. Requests can be e-mailed to lap@juca.ca.gov.

Agenda items are numbered for identification purposes only and will not necessarily be considered in the indicated order.

I. OPEN MEETING (CAL. RULES OF COURT, RULE 10.75(C)(1))

Call to Order and Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Approve minutes of the April 2, 2024, Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness Language Access Subcommittee meeting.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT (CAL. RULES OF COURT, RULE 10.75(K)(1))

This meeting will be conducted by electronic means with a listen only conference line available for the public. As such, the public may submit comments for this meeting only in writing. In accordance with California Rules of Court, rule 10.75(k)(1), written comments pertaining to any agenda item of a regularly noticed open meeting can be submitted up to one complete business day before the meeting. For this specific meeting, comments should be e-mailed to lap@jud.ca.gov, attention: Elizabeth Tam-Helmuth. Only written comments received by 12:15 p.m., August 21, 2024, will be provided to advisory body members prior to the start of the meeting.

III. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS (NO ACTION REQUIRED)

Info 1

Update from Language Access Subcommittee Chair

Presenter: Hon. Victor A. Rodriguez, Chair; Associate Justice of the Court of Appeal, First Appellate District, Division Three

Info 2

Review 2024 Language Access Projects

The subcommittee will review its current language access projects, including development of trainings for courts on the appropriate use of machine translation tools, draft outreach materials for the newly translated Self-Help Guide web pages, and an update on the Language Access Signage and Technology Grants, Cycle 6.

Presenters: Mr. Douglas Denton, Principal Manager, Language Access Services
Ms. Elizabeth Tam-Helmuth, Senior Analyst, Language Access Implementation

Info 3

Review 2023 Language Access Data Tool Results

Staff will provide highlights of results from the 2023 Language Access Data Tool to the subcommittee.

Presenter: Ms. Aggie Wong, Senior Analyst, Language Access Implementation

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourn



Judicial Council of California

Advisory Committee on Providing
Access & Fairness

www.courts.ca.gov/accessfairnesscomm.htm
lap@jud.ca.gov

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PROVIDING ACCESS AND FAIRNESS LANGUAGE ACCESS SUBCOMMITTEE

MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING WITH CLOSED SESSION

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.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Approved by the advisory body on X.

Training for Courts on the Use of Machine Translation Tools



June 2024- June 2025 Project Plan

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Judicial Council has contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to develop and present training on the appropriate use of machine translation tools for various court audiences. The materials and training developed will provide guidance on using these tools, including the California Courts Translator voice to text solution currently being used by a number of California courts.

MAJOR STEPS

#1 Landscape Review and Research (July 2024 – November 2024)

NCSC will conduct a landscape review to understand California courts' use of machine translation tools, and specifically the California Courts Translator. This review will cover:

- National and state policies, best practices, and legal frameworks for the use of machine translation tools and voice to text solutions for language access
- Comparative review of machine translation tools and voice to text solutions used in other state court language access programs and industries
- Statewide survey of the California courts using the California Court Translator tool
- Up to 3 statewide focus groups with California court staff using machine translation tools
- Site visits to up to 3 courts and self-help centers with high use of the California Translator tool

#2 Development of Training Curriculum and Resources (December 2024 – March 2025)

Based on the findings from the landscape review, NCSC will develop a training curriculum and resources. The training curriculum will include various methods for discussion, such as audio/visual vignettes and case studies accompanied by written materials, handouts, and job aids.

#3 Presentation of Webinars (April 2025 – May 2025)

NCSC will coordinate and facilitate up to three live virtual training sessions for court clerks, self-help center staff, and court Language Access Representatives.

#4 Development of Project Report (May 2025)

NCSC will develop a preliminary report to document all the work completed under this contract, including research findings and recommendations for additional training efforts on the appropriate use of machine translation tools for the Judicial Council to review.

#5 Presentation to the Judicial Council's Providing Access and Fairness (PAF) Language Access Subcommittee (May 2025)

NCSC will virtually present to the PAF Language Access Subcommittee about the training components for this project, findings from research and webinars, and a summary of written training/guidance materials that have been prepared under the project.





California Courts Self-Help Guide

Multilingual Resources and Language Pages

Contact: LAP@jud.ca.gov

August 2024

Have questions about going to court?

The Self-Help Guide to the California Courts has answers



Get help with

- Starting and finishing a court case
- Finding the right court forms
- Understanding your options if you've been sued
- Preparing for your day in court
- Finding free and low-cost legal help

Divorce | Child Custody | Eviction | Restraining Orders
Small Claims | Guardianship | Debt Collection

Disponible en español



Find out more at
selfhelp.courts.ca.gov



The [California Courts Self-Help Guide](#) is designed to provide the types of legal information needed by self-represented litigants. There are resources and information to help court users navigate their court case, including step-by-step guides for following procedures and help them with understanding their options

California Courts Self-Help Guide is entirely translated into Spanish

CALIFORNIA COURTS
SELF-HELP GUIDE

Tipo de caso ▾ Información de la corte ▾ English English Buscar 🔍

Guía de ayuda de las Cortes de California

Recursos e información para ayudarle a entender y manejar su caso legal en la corte. Incluye instrucciones paso a paso para cumplir con las reglas y procedimiento legal y entender cuáles son sus opciones.

¿Qué quiere hacer?

Obtener ayuda con papeles que he recibido

Seleccione el número del formulario que ha recibido para ver sus opciones. (Puede encontrar el número del formulario en la parte superior del papel).

Formulario ▾ Ir

Comenzar un caso en la corte

Encuentre el tipo de caso para empezar

Elija tema ▾ Ir

Trabajar en mi caso

Tome el siguiente paso, actualice una orden, vea todas las opciones durante o después de su caso

Tipo de caso ▾

Elija acción ▾ Ir

California Courts Self-Help Guide

New: Resources are now available in *other* languages.

- Arabic
- Chinese, Simplified
- Chinese, Traditional
- Farsi
- Korean
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

Click on “Languages”
and choose your language

The screenshot displays the California Courts Self-Help Guide website. The header includes the text 'JUDICIAL BRANCH OF CALIFORNIA' and 'CALIFORNIA COURTS SELF-HELP GUIDE'. A navigation bar contains 'Type of Case', 'Court Information', and a 'Languages' dropdown menu. The 'Languages' menu is open, showing options for English, Español, Arabic, Simplified Chinese (简体中文), Traditional Chinese (繁體中文), Farsi (پسرفا), Korean (한국어), Punjabi, Russian (русский), Tagalog, and Vietnamese (Tiếng Việt). Below the menu, there are three main sections: 'Get help with papers I was served', 'Start a court case', and a section for 'What would you like to do?'. Each section has a dropdown menu and a 'Go' button.

Drop-down menu by language leads court user to information about:



Filing a case



How to ask for an
interpreter



Attending court by
telephone or video
conference



Basic information
about court
processes



Filing a complaint

California Courts Self-Help Guide

Learn about court interpreters and how to ask for an interpreter

CALIFORNIA COURTS SELF-HELP GUIDE

Type of Case ▾ Court Information ▾ Español E.g. divorce, name change

Self-Help Guide to the California Courts

Resources and information to help you navigate your court case, including step-by-step guides for following procedures and help with understanding your options.

What would you like to do?

- Get help with papers I was served
Look up by form number to understand your options. (Find the form number in the upper right or upper left corner of your papers.)
Choose form ▾ Go
- Start a court case
Find your case type to get started
Choose case type ▾ Go
- Work on my court case
Take the next step, change an order, see all the options during or after your case
Choose case type ▾
Choose action ▾ Go
- Get information about a legal topic
Get general information and learn about your options
Choose topic ▾ Go
- Look up a court case or citation
Find a traffic ticket or court case using the county court's website
Choose county ▾ Go
- Choose resource
Ask for a Fee Waiver
Ask for an interpreter
Ask for disability accommodation
Find a court form
Find a courthouse
Find your self-help center
Ask for an interpreter ▾ Go

CALIFORNIA COURTS SELF-HELP GUIDE

Type of Case ▾ Court Information ▾ Languages E.g. divorce, name change

Arabic
Chinese, Simplified
Español
Filipino
Korean
Persian, Farsi
Punjabi
Russian
Vietnamese

< Previous Page

Request an interpreter

If you don't speak or understand English very well, you may need a court interpreter to help you in court. Even if you speak English in everyday life, the situations and language in court can be very difficult. An interpreter can help make sure that you understand and can communicate as well as possible.

What to know about court interpreters

- Court Interpreters are provided **free of charge**
- You must **request an interpreter in advance**
- Ask the court to provide an interpreter **as soon as you find out** that you need to go to court

Court interpreters must follow specific rules for what they can and can't do

- They must interpret what is being said in the courtroom into your language and interpret your words into English
- They must keep all communications between you and your lawyer confidential
- They must disclose any conflicts of interest they may have with your case
- They cannot give you legal advice

Court interpreters cannot typically provide services outside of the courtroom

Some courts have interpreters available in their Self-Help Centers to assist with interpretation outside of the courtroom. You can contact your court's Self-Help Center to find out if this is available at your court.

Highlights of Results

2023 Language Access Data Tool

August 22, 2024



Data Tool

Short annual survey to obtain data from Language Access Representatives (LARs) on

- Language access services complaints
- Language access needs
- Interpreter hiring and recruitment
- Interpreter compensation
- Hybrid proceedings

Data Tool

- Helps with planning and developing funding requests
- LARs were asked to provide information regarding activity completed in FY 2022-23 or estimate their needs for FY 2023-24
- The survey was completed by 57 courts

Key Findings

- The number of complaints regarding language access is still extremely low on a statewide basis (less than 10)
- The type of complaints have shifted from non-satisfactory quality of interpreter services to availability of interpreters, indicating a greater need for more court interpreters

Key Findings

- Slightly more than half of all courts surveyed were able to routinely provide a certified or registered interpreter in the court's top 5 languages during FY 2022-23
- This is an improvement from FY 2021-22, where about half of the courts indicated a shortage of interpreters. Spanish remains the top language shortage for courts.

Key Findings

- Other languages most in need of more court interpreters:
 - Punjabi
 - Tagalog
 - Arabic
 - American Sign Language (ASL)

Key Findings

- Slightly more than half the courts indicated positions are open for full-time Spanish interpreters
- Total reported full-time interpreter employee vacancies for all languages (as of 6/30/23): 186.25

Key Findings

- Courts were unable to hire a certified/registered or non-certified/non-registered contractor at the current standard rate roughly 70% of the time
- Increasing pay and incentives was most mentioned by courts to help with hiring and recruitment efforts for employees

Key Findings

- 57% of courts indicated additional language access funding needs for FY 2023-24
- Top needs were for bilingual staff, interpreter equipment, and VRI equipment
- There was also significant need for software to schedule interpreters, software to submit and receive requests for available interpreters, and translation of court forms

Key Findings

- Hybrid court proceedings remain prevalent for courts, with 86% having used an independent contractor interpreter for hybrid hearings in FY 2022-23
- Courts anticipate an increase in interpreter usage for hybrid cross-assignments in FY 2023-24, with most interpreters providing both consecutive and simultaneous interpretation

Summary (1 of 2)

The Data Tool confirms several language access trends and challenges for courts:

- Securing enough interpreters, including in Spanish
- Higher rates being charged for contractors, including rates over the current Judicial Council standard rates
- The need for financial incentives to attract more interpreters to the profession
- The need for interpreter equipment, software, and translation

Summary (2 of 2)

There are several initiatives underway to address challenges:

- Monitoring of court interpreter funding to plan for growth of resources
- Prioritization of recruitment efforts to expand interpreter pool
- Launch of the California Court Interpreter Workforce Pilot Program to assist courts with filling vacancies
- Continued support for courts through the Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program
- Expanded training efforts for prospective and current court interpreters