



Judicial Council of California

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FACT SHEET

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Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program

The Judicial Council's Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program supports trial courts with the expansion of signage and technology initiatives to increase language access for limited-English-proficient (LEP), deaf, and hard of hearing court users.

Background

In January 2015, the Judicial Council adopted the [Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts](#) (Language Access Plan). The Language Access Plan provides recommendations, guidance, and a consistent statewide approach to ensure language access for all of California's approximately 6.4 million LEP residents and potential court users, as well as those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The Budget Act of 2018 included ongoing funding of \$1 million per year for language access signage and \$1.55 million per year for language access technology infrastructure support and equipment needs. Of the \$1.55 million for technology, \$200,000 is dedicated to the Judicial Council for language access resource development, including [in-language resources](#) on the California Courts Self-Help Guide and translation of court forms and web content. The amount available to trial courts for technology is, therefore, \$1.35 million each year. With the \$1 million available for signage funding, the total grant amount available to trial courts each year is \$2.35 million.

On September 24, 2019, the Judicial Council adopted a process to annually disburse these grants to courts and directed Language Access Services staff to review grant applications and develop recommendations for review and approval by the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness, the Information Technology Advisory Committee, the Technology Committee, and the Judicial Council.

Project Goals

The goals of the Language Access Signage and Technology Grants include:

- Supporting courts with the development of multilingual signage to help court users navigate the courthouse;
- Assisting courts that may need equipment or software that will facilitate communication with court users;
- Allocating funds to as many trial courts as possible within the given budget to support language access signage and technology initiatives;
- Funding enhancements that provide court users with greater access to the courts and to information in the languages needed to serve court users; and
- Encouraging courts to establish an ongoing plan that coordinates with other facilities planning or with planned or ongoing technology initiatives that support language access as a core service of the court.

Grant Categories

Courts may use grant funding for facilities modification costs that directly relate to the grant purpose for signage or technology if the anticipated facility modification costs are built into the total grant amount.

Signage Grant Projects

The table below shows allowable categories for signage grant projects:

Category Number	Project Category Description
1	Translation of Signage ¹
2	Court Website Translations
3	Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies
4	Automated Queue Management System
5	Multilingual Nonelectronic Signage

Technology Grant Projects

The table below shows allowable categories for technology grant projects:

Category Number	Project Category Description
1	Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions ²
2	Interpreter Equipment
3	Virtual Assistance, Scheduling, or Other Software
4	Multilingual Videos
5	Audiovisual Systems Upgrades
6	Multilingual Kiosks

Application and Timeline

The Language Access Signage and Technology Grant application process typically launches in January. Judicial Council Information Technology releases a memorandum to courts on how to request funding for various technology grant opportunities via a single application process. The applications are reviewed and approved in the spring by the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness, the Information Technology Advisory Committee, the Technology Committee, and then the Judicial Council in July. Upon approval, courts are provided with intrabranh agreements for their approved signage and technology grant projects. Courts have approximately 20 months to complete their projects, submit invoices for reimbursement, and submit a final grant report for each completed project.

Application Maximums

The maximum application amount is set to no more than \$200,000 (20 percent of the \$1 million signage allocation) for any one court for signage, and no more than \$270,000 (20 percent of the \$1.35 million

¹ Plain-language editing and professional translation of signage language that is unavailable in the [Glossary of Signage Terms and Icons](#).

² Courts that participate in the grant program and request funding for video remote interpreting equipment will be asked to follow [VRI guidelines for spoken languages](#) and [American Sign Language](#).

technology allocation) for any one court for technology. If total requests are under the annual allocation for each category, then larger amounts may be requested and approved by the council to expend funding. For each grant cycle, any funding that is unallocated has been set aside as contingency funding to be used in case of need by the awarded courts to help them finish their signage or technology project.

Final Reporting

The Language Access Signage and Technology Grant requires participating courts to submit a final report on each project completed at the end of each grant cycle. This reporting is used to identify successful signage and technology projects, which allow the branch to share best practices and innovations with courts statewide and with the public. Courts must upload supporting documentation and photographs and complete the report in its entirety.

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Additional resources:

[Judicial Council Language Access Services website](#)

[Judicial Resources Network](#)