

ISLAND COUNTY SUPERIOR AND JUVENILE COURT LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

1 PURPOSE

This language access plan (LAP) provides a framework for the provision of timely language access services that ensure access for all limited English proficient (LEP), deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind (D/HH/DB) persons accessing Island County Superior and Juvenile Court services and programs.

2 COURT POLICY REGARDING LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES

Under Washington state law (chapters 2.42 and 2.43 RCW), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Safe Streets Act), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the regulations implementing these federal laws, Washington courts are required to provide language access services to all LEP and D/HH/DB individuals in civil and criminal court proceedings and in all court-managed services and programs and to develop a written language access plan pursuant to RCW 2.43.090.

It is the policy of Island County Superior and Juvenile Court to provide interpreter services at no cost to limited English-proficient (LEP) parties, witnesses, victims, and others with an interest (e.g., parents, legal guardians, custodians) in all court proceedings and operations, both civil and criminal, other than when it is the responsibility of other government bodies pursuant to state law. It is also the policy of this court to provide sign language interpreting services at no cost to persons who are D/HH/DB as required under applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

The court will provide accessible information to LEP and D/HH/DB persons on how to request these language assistance services and vital documents as part of its notice to the public about its language access services.

Although D/HH/DB individuals are covered under the ADA and chapter 2.42 RCW rather than Title VI and the Safe Streets Act, this plan covers the appointment and provision of interpreters for both D/HH/DB and LEP individuals.

3 NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 COMPILATION AND REVIEW OF LANGUAGE DATA FROM REPUTABLE SOURCES

As appropriate, the court will compile or review demographic data regarding the anticipated language needs of its service area. Reputable sources that the court will consult or has consulted include the following:

- The Language Interpretation Needs Dashboard, available through the AOC website ¹
- Most recent decennial US Census
- The American Community Survey (ACS), an annual component of the 10-year Census
- Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and/or local school districts in Island County.
- Superior Court Programs

Other, local sources of reputable data that have been consulted include:

- County health department
- Public Defender's Office/Office of Assigned Counsel
- Prosecuting Attorney's Office

This data will be reviewed according to the schedule indicated in Section VII of this plan to help the court analyze its allocation of language access resources, and make adjustments as needed.

Currently, the following spoken or signed languages other than English indicated by reputable sources as likely the most commonly used by persons in the court's service area, in rank order:

1. Spanish
2. American Sign Language
3. Portuguese
4. Tagalog

3.2 TRACKING AND MONITORING LANGUAGE ACCESS DATA

¹ [Language Interpretation Dashboard](#)

In order to help plan for future provision of language access services, and to make the most efficient use of court resources, the court will track the following information for cases involving language access:

- Language
- Case number
- Case type (e.g. family law, criminal, guardianship, etc.)
- Client
- Proceeding (e.g. trial, arraignment, initial appearance, etc.)
- Cancellations, stricken or continued hearings
- No interpreter available

Tools or methods used to track data include:

- Spreadsheet
- AOC Interpreter Reimbursement Data

4 POINTS OF ACCESS: PROVIDING NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY & IDENTIFYING NEEDS

4.1 NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AT POINTS OF ACCESS

In order to help facilitate communication with LEP and D/HH/DB court users, the court has identified or will identify procedures to alert court users of available language access services. The court has done this or will do this in the following ways:

4.1.1 WEBSITE

As indicated in Section V of this plan and consistent with RCW 2.43.090, the court will make available on its website translated information to inform the public of how to access the court's language access services. The court will provide this information in five or more languages other than English that reputable data demonstrates are the most commonly used in the court's service area.

4.1.2 TELEPHONE:

- The court: Uses telephonic interpretation services, which allows court staff to access interpreters in many languages through a conference call service.
- Provides information regarding available services by telephone and email.

4.1.3 IN-PERSON:

- The court uses the multilingual poster with the heading "Your Right to an Interpreter" which includes directions translated into 24 languages other than English, informing the public of the services available.
- The court uses "I-Speak" Cards, which serve as a complement to the multilingual poster, and allow an LEP court user to identify their language.
- Uses telephonic interpretation services, which allows court staff to access interpreters in many languages through a conference call service.

As indicated in Section VI of this plan, court staff are provided orientation/training on the availability and use of these materials.

4.2 POINTS OF ACCESS

- The court considers telephonic, online, and in-person interactions as points of access to the court and its services. The physical points of access include: Telephone calls to Court Administration: 360-679-7361
- Front counter/ Jury Offices located: Island County Law & Justice Center, 101 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
- Security screening at facility entrances at the following courthouse: Island County Law & Justice Center, 101 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
- Clerks' Office at the following location: Island County Law & Justice Center, 101 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
- Courtrooms at the Island County Superior Court: Island County Law & Justice Center, 101 NE 6th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
- Court Facilitator or pro se services provided by the court located at: Island County Juvenile and Family Court Services, 501 North Main Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
- Court-managed programs and services located at: Island County Juvenile and Family Court Services, 501 North Main Street, Coupeville, WA 98239

Coordination with Justice Partners

To ensure the earliest possible identification of the need for language access services, the court has established internal protocols with the various justice partners which routinely interact with this court in order for these partners to communicate to the appropriate court staff the needs of LEP or D/HH/DB participants who will be coming into contact with the court. While justice partners themselves may be under a separate legal obligation to provide language access services to their clients, the court will be notified of any services that fall under the responsibility of the court no later than 10 days prior to the hearing, or as early as possible for

hearings scheduled with less than 10 days' notice, so services may be provided in a timely and efficient manner. Examples of justice partners to be notified include:

- Juvenile and Family Court Services
- Jail staff
- Juvenile Detention Staff
- Social Workers
- Attorney/public defender
- Court facilitator
- Law enforcement

Guiding Principle in Identifying Language Needs: When it appears that an individual has difficulty communicating due to a language barrier, court staff will inform the LEP or D/HH/DB person of his or her right to have language access services provided by the courts at no cost to them, even if the LEP or D/HH/DB person has not made a request for the language access services.

5 LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES

A designated person or office is indicated as the central point of contact for language access services. These consist primarily of interpretation and translation services. In some cases, services can be provided directly in a language other than English, generally through communication with bilingual court personnel. Interpretation can be provided in spoken languages or in sign languages. These services are provided, as appropriate, for situations within the courtroom setting and outside of the courtroom setting, as indicated below. The provision of these language access services is realized through the appointment of interpreters in ways consistent with best practices in the field of court interpretation and with existing federal and state policies. These practices help assure that steps are taken to appoint appropriately credentialed or vetted interpreters, to do so in as efficient a manner as possible, and in ways that take into account the availability of interpreters.

5.1 DESIGNATED LANGUAGE ACCESS CONTACT

The court has designated the Superior Court Coordinator to oversee the coordination of language access services and to manage requests for interpreters and other language access services. This designated person or office oversees the following:

- Developing lists of interpreters and securing interpreter services
- Receiving and tracking language assistance requests
- Addressing gaps in interpreter services by conducting outreach as needed

- Providing information to assist LEP and D/HH/DB individuals to secure language access services
- Assisting or providing referrals to attorneys, justice partners, and other relevant persons to secure language access services for their clients and constituents
- Assisting court staff with securing language access services
- Answering questions from LEP and D/HH/DB individuals, and the public at large, regarding the court's available language access services

LEP and D/HH/DB individuals, attorneys, justice partners, government agencies, and any other entities in need of language access services for court programs or activities or to acquire such services or information for themselves or their clients, may contact:

Island County Superior Court Administration
 101 NE 6th Street (physical)
 1 NE 7th Street (mailing)
 Coupeville, WA 98239
 Phone: (360) 679-7361
 Email: SuperiorCourt@islandcountywa.gov

5.2 APPOINTMENT OF INTERPRETERS FOR IN-COURT PROCEEDINGS

When a determination has been made that a court user requires the services of an interpreter, court personnel will follow the following guidelines when meeting the need for an interpreter.

5.2.1 CREDENTIALLED INTERPRETERS:

This court appoints court-credentialed spoken language or court-credentialed sign language interpreters whenever such persons are available. To secure appropriate interpretation, the court uses the following:

- Independent contractor interpreters, using AOC's registry of credentialed spoken language interpreters
- Independent contractors sign language interpreters, using DSHS' Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) website

5.2.2 NON-CREDENTIALLED INTERPRETERS:

When credentialed interpreters are not available, or for languages for which interpreters are not credentialed, the court takes steps to locate those interpreters who might still be able to provide acceptable services.

With a finding of good cause, the court may appoint a non-credentialed interpreter, first making a determination that the interpreter is able to interpret accurately and completely all communications to and from LEP or D/HH/DB persons in that particular proceeding.

Good cause is found when:

- (i) Given the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the proceeding and the potential penalty or consequences involved, the services of an in-person credentialed interpreter are not reasonably available to the appointing authority; or
- (ii) The current list of credentialed interpreters maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts does not include an interpreter in the language spoken by the LEP.

Consistent with policy, once good cause is established on the record, the court will take steps to help assure the proposed interpreter has the ability to interpret accurately and completely. The appointing authority shall satisfy itself on the record that the proposed interpreter:

Is capable of communicating effectively with the court or agency and the person for who the interpreter would interpret; and

Has read, understands, and will abide by the code of ethics for language interpreters established by court rules, as established in GR 11.2

The court will follow standard practices for determining the proposed non-credentialed interpreter's ability to interpret accurately and completely, referring as needed to Page 3 of the Bench Card for Spoken Language Courtroom Interpreting ², last updated by the Interpreter Commission in July 2025. In the case of signed language interpreters, the court will refer as needed to the Bench Card for Hearings with Sign Language Interpreters, last updated in 2021.³

Guiding Principle: The court will not appoint as interpreters those persons determined to have a potential conflict of interest in the proceeding or those determined to not have the ability to interpreter accurately and completely, including the following: minors; friends and family of

² [AOC Bench Card for Courtroom Interpreting](#)

³ Ibid

the LEP or D/HH/DB person; advocates and attorneys; justice partner bilingual staff; or anyone deemed unqualified after colloquy by the court.

5.3 LANGUAGE SERVICES OUTSIDE THE COURTROOM

The court is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP and D/HH/DB persons have meaningful access to services outside the courtroom. It is the practice of the court to provide interpreters for court-managed services, programs and operations consistent with state and federal language access mandates. In compliance with such mandates, the court shall provide language access services at:

- VGAL Programs
- Court facilitator services
- Guardians Ad Litem
- Information counters
- Juvenile detention
- Juvenile diversion programs
- Juvenile probation offices
- Mandatory mediation
- Parenting classes

5.4 THE PROVISION OF INTERPRETATION SERVICES

The court has adopted practices, procedures, and systems for the provision of interpretation services, including the use of appropriate modalities of interpreting, accounting for longer interpreted sessions, and calendaring/scheduling. Regardless of the modality used to provide interpretation court proceedings, the court will provide interpreters consistent with RCW 2.43 and the processes outline in section “Appointment of Interpreters for Court Proceedings.”

5.4.1 INTERPRETING MODALITY

In-person Interpretation; Video Remote Interpretation (VRI); Telephonic Interpretation

5.4.1.1 IN-PERSON INTERPRETATION

- The court uses in-person interpreters as indicated: The court uses only in-person interpreters for evidentiary proceedings

- The court uses in-person interpreters whenever possible, and uses Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) as an alternative as needed

5.4.1.2 VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETATION

When the court makes use of the modality of Video Remote Interpretation (VRI), it does so in a manner consistent with GR 11.3 and in a manner that meets requirements for providing effective communication, including:

- Real-time, full-motion video and audio;
- A clear, large image;
- A clear transmission of voices;
- Adequate training of staff in utilizing the equipment; and
- Use of Certified interpreters with legal training
- While providing appropriate VRI services is a viable means of meeting language access needs, doing so successfully requires dedicated equipment and familiarity with processes. The court uses VRI in ways consistent with these requirements in order to assure appropriate access.
- The court has established procedures, has secured the requisite equipment, and has court staff with training on providing VRI. The court uses VRI as a regular component of providing interpreter services.
- The court uses VRI as a last resort for non-evidentiary proceedings

5.4.1.3 TELEPHONIC INTERPRETATION

The court makes use of telephonic interpretation for interactions with persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) that are relatively short in nature and generally not of a legal nature. These interactions typically take place at points of contact such as court clerk's office, cashier's office, front counter, and other such places. The court has the following arrangement for telephonic interpretation services:

- Contract or agreement with a telephonic service provider

5.4.2 TEAM INTERPRETING:

The court will take into account the anticipated length of interpreted proceedings to determine appropriate interpreter scheduling. Such consideration is generally applicable in longer hearings. The assignment of multiple interpreters is a quality assurance provision to help ensure accuracy. Consistent with GR 11.4, the court will assign interpreters as indicated below:

Spoken language	Signed Language	Assign
More than 1 hr. Simultaneous	More than 1 hr.	2 interpreters
More than 2 hr. Consecutive	n/a	2 interpreters
When a team of interpreters is not readily available and good cause is found on the record to proceed with one interpreter, the interpreter is to be provided a 10 minute break after every 20 minutes of interpreting.		

5.4.3 CALENDARING AND SCHEDULING OF INTERPRETERS

In order to schedule interpreters in a manner that serves the needs of LEP and D/HH/DB court users while doing so as efficiently and effectively as possible, the court has adopted or will adopt the following practices:

- Contracting with agency or independent interpreters for half-day or full-day blocks, during which the interpreters are available for a range of interpretation needs

5.4.4 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE APPOINTMENT AND USE OF INTERPRETERS

- In appointing interpreters, court staff will ensure that the interpreter and the LEP or D/HH/DB participant can effectively communicate. It is also the practice of the court to:
 - Only allow an LEP or D/HH/DB person to waive his or her right to the assistance of an interpreter if the waiver is knowing, voluntary, and on the record. The waiver of an interpreter may be rejected by the court or later revoked by the person.
 - Require interpreters to provide sight translations for documents related to the court proceedings.
 - Prohibit interpreters from assisting LEP or D/HH/DB with entering information on court forms without the involvement of court staff in the completion of such forms.
 - Provide sign language interpreters for jurors who are D/HH/DB when such persons are called and selected for jury service
- As noted in the policy interpretation section earlier, chapter 2.42 RCW requires that courts provide interpreters for persons who are D/HH/DB when they are required to attend court ordered programs or services.

- The court recognizes that some D/HH/DB individuals may require specialized services such as tactile interpretation or Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDI) for complex legal proceedings. The court will assess such needs on a case-by-case basis.

5.5 TRANSLATED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

5.5.1 STATE TRANSLATED CONTENT

In order to help facilitate communication between the court and LEP and D/HH/DB individuals, and to facilitate the disposition of cases, the court will take steps to evaluate the need for translated materials and to provide those materials. The court refers to the court forms translated into the following languages, and available on the AOC website⁴, and makes these forms available as appropriate:

- Korean
- Russian
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Tagalog
- Chinese (Simplified)

In addition to these court forms, a number of guides or introductions to courts and court processes are available in Spanish, covering these topics:

A guide to the court system⁵

Informational one- and two-pagers on self-representation in Municipal, District, and Superior Courts and an introduction to Small Claims Courts⁶

5.5.2 WEBSITE NOTICE

Consistent with changes in 2025 to RCW 2.43, the court will take steps to make available on its website translated information that informs the public of procedures necessary to access a court's language access services and programs. The information shall be provided in five or

⁴ [AOC Court Forms](#)

⁵ [Guía](#)

⁶ [Pro se litigants](#)

more languages other than English that reputable data indicates are predominate in the court's jurisdiction. In order to achieve this, the court will consider adopting such notice when provided by the AOC, or will prepare its own statement and secure translation.

5.5.3 TRANSLATION ALTERNATIVES

In the absence of written translations of documents in languages other than English, the court will provide alternative forms of access to the content of important English-language written content, such as providing a sight translation. "Sight translation" refers to rendering written content in one language orally into another language. Washington court-certified interpreters are judged competent in providing accurate sight translation.

5.6 PROVIDING EMERGENCY INFORMATION TO LEP COURT CUSTOMERS

The court taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP and D/HH/DB individuals have meaningful access to emergency information should an emergency situation arise. The court provides such information in the following ways:

- There are universally understood emergency signs located in the strategic places throughout the courthouse building;
- Emergency exits are clearly marked
- Evacuation map(s) are located in visible public area points with an indication using the most common non-English language (in addition to English) spoken in the area to designate the evacuation map(s).

6 TRAINING

In order to continue to integrate the provision of language access services into the commonplace operations of the court, and to sustain those services in a viable and robust manner, the court will provide staff training based on the content in this Language Access Plan.

6.1 TRAINING TOPICS

Key areas of focus are the following:

- Initial general language access training and orientation for new staff employees as part of their initial training.
- Identifying language access needs at points of access

- Providing notice in accessible manners about the availability of language access services and how to request or access those services
- Proper appointment and scheduling of interpreters for all court proceedings and court-managed programs and services
- How to qualify a non-credentialed court interpreter
- Role of an interpreter, modes of interpreting, and interpreter ethics and professional standards
- Courtroom management when interpreters are used
- Use of remote technologies for interpreting
- Cultural competence

6.2 MEANS OF PROVIDING TRAINING

In order to best meet these training and orientation needs, the court has adopted or will adopt a targeted approach, and the court's judicial officers and staff will have access to the following training opportunities, as appropriate.

Instructional Format	Item/Topic/Session	Audience, as applicable
Live or recorded in-person or remote sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judicial Conferences with language access presentations • Judicial College (new judicial officers) • 2025 AOC Language Access Webinar Series sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ New Judicial Officers or those new to WA ◦ Court Administrators ◦ Court Clerks ◦ Interpreter Coordinators
Instructional Modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Access Basic Training (LABT) modules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ New employees ◦ New to point-of-access role (front counter, etc.)
Written Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCW changes, 2025 2-Pager • Bench Card for Spoken Language and Sign Language Interpreters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Court Administrators ◦ Judicial Officers

7 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION. STEPS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW OF PLAN.

7.1 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

Consistent with RCW 2.43, this LAP is a publicly available document. Members of the public may access a copy of this plan by:

- Accessing it on the court's website at:
<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/220/Superior-Court>
- Requesting a copy, which can be provided in digital or written form, at the court's discretion.

7.2 FILING A COMPLAINT

LEP and D/HH/DB individuals have an option to file a complaint with the local court using local court customer complaint filing procedures.

This specific complaint process is designed to bring to the attention of the local court allegations filed by LEP, D/HH/DB or SI persons that the local court is out of compliance with its own Language Access Plan, any applicable federal statutes or regulations, state statutory provisions, such as RCW 2.42 or 2.43 and/or any applicable state or local court rules. This is an informal process. The local court complaint rules are as follows:

1. Complainant is required to state his or her complaint in writing on a form provided by the court and available on the court's website. The complaint form is attached to the Language Assistance Plan. Complainant is urged to be specific when stating the facts underlying his or her complaint. The Court's website is:

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/220/Superior-Court>

2. Complainant shall submit their complaint to the Court Administrator at:

Island County Superior Court
101 NE 6th Street (physical)
1 NE 7th Street (mailing)
Coupeville, WA 98239

3. The Presiding Judge shall promptly review the complaint and take such remedial action as the Presiding Judge deems appropriate.

4. The Court Administrator shall provide the Complainant with a copy of the Presiding Judge's response within twenty (20) days of Complainant's initial filing unless expedited review is requested and permitted for good cause shown

7.3 DISSEMINATING THE LAP

In an effort to further disseminate knowledge about this plan, the court will provide notification of its update in the following manners:

- Collaborating with local bar associations, justice partners and other relevant organizations to ensure distribution of information.
- Establishing mechanisms for obtaining feedback from the public, attorneys and justice partners regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the administrative protocol and take this feedback into account at the yearly evaluation of the protocol.

7.4 PERIODIC EVALUATION OF THE LAP

The court will review this LAP to determine updates and revisions that might be needed, according to the following schedule:

- Annually, as part of the court's regular established review schedule
- In preparation for the biennial requirement to submit an updated plan to AOC by Jan 1 of every even-numbered calendar year. In order to prepare for the biennial submission of an updated plan, the court will review this plan according to this schedule:

This periodic evaluation will include an analysis of the number of interpreter requests by language, including signed language, comparing that usage to anticipated usage for the region served by the court based on reputable data sources indicated in Section III of this plan. This analysis will serve to achieve the following:

- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided
- Assessment of whether staff members have received adequate support and training, and determining other appropriate supports
- Identification of challenges or trends the court is experiencing with providing language access services.

Consistent with RCW 2.43, the court will submit its next current Language Access Plan to the AOC by January 1, 2028.

7.5 AREAS OF FOCUS FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENTS TO LANGUAGE ACCESS

As a living document, this LAP will be updated to reflect changes in the provision of services. These changes can reflect the demographics of the court's service area, changes in the availability of interpreters, or efforts to bolster the provision of language access services. Areas of focus for the court include the following:

- Better identifying forms to prioritize for translation consideration. The court will look at the frequency of need to sight translate specific documents, and will highlight those documents and languages for translation consideration
- Referring to the statewide translations of court forms available on the AOC website, and making use of those forms whenever possible
- Consideration of the technical and infrastructure requirements to provide remote interpretation, as a possible means to avoid delays while providing language access

7.6 COURT REVIEW AND APPROVAL:

This Plan has been reviewed by the following person(s) at the court, and is approved to be submitted to the AOC, as indicated in RCW 2.43.090:

Megan Frazier	Court Administrator	(360)679-7361
_____ Name	_____ Title	_____ Contact Information
December 30, 2025	_____	
_____ Date		