

COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

November 15, 2024
12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Present: Ms. Laurie Allen; Ms. Elizabeth Carmona; Mr. Juan Carlos Cordova; Hon. Juan Pablo Guzman; Ms. Kathy Schaben; Judge Don Taylor; Judge Joshua Rogers; Ms. Ruth Cruz.

Telephonic: None.

Absent/Excused: Ms. Shifa Alkhatib; Judge Jordan T. Reardon; Judge Catherine Woods.

Presenters/Guests: None

Administrative Office of the Courts: Ms. Kelly Gray; Mr. David Svoboda

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The November 2024 meeting of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee was called to order by Chair Judge Don Taylor, at 12:00 p.m.

B. Approval of the August 2024 Minutes

The draft minutes from the August 9, 2024, meeting of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee was presented for approval. The Chair called for any omissions or corrections to the minutes; there were none.

- Motion was made by Judge Joshua Rogers to approve the August 9, 2024, minutes of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee. Seconded by Mr. Juan Carlos Cordova. Motion passed unanimously.

II. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. ACICP Updates

Mr. David Svoboda, in his role as Language Access Coordinator, presented updates on the Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program (ACICP).

For the July 2024 sitting of the English Written Exam, 45 tests were administered. The pass rate for the July 2024 session of the English Written Exam was 38%. No staff interpreters passed. Of those who passed the test, 18% of them took the preparation class in the past. The average pass rate for the English Written Exam in Arizona is 46% overall, and 48% for staff. As a reminder, the next online English Written Exam Preparation Seminar will be in late November 2024 leading up to the January 2025 sitting of the English Written Exam.

For the July 2024 sitting of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), 25 tests were administered. The pass rate for this session of the OPI was 92%. Two testers failed this session, while one received an Advanced-Low score, four received an Advanced-Mid score, and the remainder scored in the Advanced-High or Superior range. Most of the tests were in Spanish, with others in Arabic, French, Korean, Mandarin, and Swahili.

The Oral Court Interpreter Exam administration was held in late-October/early-November 2024. 39 candidates registered for the exam with a majority being Spanish, however, there were Arabic, Cantonese, French, Korean, Mandarin, and Russian-language interpreters testing as well. Results are expected in February 2025.

The Pima Community College interpreting course began in August 2024. There are 14 students enrolled. These students complete the ACICP online classes, Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), and English Written Exam through their college course. OPIs are underway, and the English Written Exam will be administered on December 3, 2024.

The current compliance period for continuing education for credentialed interpreters pursuant to [ACJA § 7-301](#) ends on December 31, 2024. Credentialed interpreters must report their compliance with the mandate through an Affidavit of Compliance associated with their profile in the Arizona Court Interpreter Registry (“Registry”). There are 503 credentialed interpreters in the Registry. As of November 7, 2024, 112 affidavits have been submitted. Credentialed interpreters receive regular reminders of the deadline via email and are provided information and instructions through the public webpage, including a Q&A video and written instructions.

In January 2025, the verification of compliance period will begin. ACICP staff will randomly select up to 10% of submitted affidavits for audit. Those selected will be asked to provide proof of their continuing education activities for the period. ACICP staff will update this group on the progress of the audit in the March 2025 meeting.

B. 2024 Court Interpreter Coordinator Summit Recap

The annual Court Interpreter Coordinator Summit, titled “Welcoming the Future: Technology, Connection, and Collaboration,” was held in person on October 18, 2024, at the AOC Building in Phoenix. Elizabeth Carmona, as chair of the Summit Planning Workgroup, provided a detailed recap of the event, highlighting the opening remarks by Judge Taylor, the panel discussion on AI, and various breakout sessions.

39 staff from around the state participated in the Summit. Evaluations were very positive with an overall rating of 4.85, or 97%. Several participants requested additional information and training on how AI can help support the work of interpreters and how court staff can facilitate additional training for judges and attorneys on working with interpreters.

C. ACICP Streamlining Workgroup

Ms. Kathy Schaben, chair of the ACICP Streamlining Workgroup, reviewed the workgroup’s recent discussions.

The Workgroup proposes adding descriptive names to the credentialing tiers to better reflect their levels of proficiency and to prevent misuse of the entry-level tier for promotional purposes. The proposed names were Entry Level for Tier 1, Apprentice for Tier 2, Journey for Tier 3, and Master for Tier 4. They also discussed the potential for an interpreter apprentice program, similar to the apprentice program for attorneys, to help increase the number of credentialed interpreters and improve access to justice. The next steps involve finalizing the formal recommendation for the Committee and taking it around to the standing committees for input before any changes are made.

The committee also discussed the future of the Tier 2 designation, considering options such as making it permanent with guardrails, allowing additional time for interpreters to reach Tier 3, or using it in the creation of an apprenticeship program. The consensus was that an apprenticeship program would be a cleaner option. The Workgroup will discuss further and propose recommendations.

D. Interpreter Education Workgroup Update

David Svoboda reviewed the various trainings organized for interpreters, including one on the opioid epidemic and another on interpreting via Zoom.

Upcoming trainings on human trafficking, legislative updates, and basic court terminology are also planned. Additionally, a skills-building session on simultaneous interpreting and a training on automotive and heavy-duty truck terminology will be scheduled in 2025.

The workgroup meets every six to eight weeks and will keep the Committee apprised of its work on these and other trainings it develops.

E. General Language Access Updates and CIPAC 2025 Dates

Mr. Svoboda discussed general language access issues including the 2025 Council of Language Access Coordinators conference and CIPAC meeting dates.

The Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) is supported by the Language Access Services Section (LASS) of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC). CLAC hosts an annual conference for statewide language access program managers from across the country to discuss matters related to language access and interpreting. Phoenix has been selected to host the conference in 2025. The CLAC conference will be held at the AOC's Judicial Education Center in October. Mr. Svoboda suggests that CIPAC could play a role by attending, presenting, or participating in panel discussion at the conference.

In 2025, the CIPAC meetings will continue to be held virtually on the following dates:

- Friday, March 7, 2025: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday, August 8, 2025: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday, November 14, 2025: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

III. CALL TO PUBLIC

A. Call to the Public

A call was made to the public for any comments; there were none.

B. Good of the Order

A call was made for the Good of the Order. There were no comments.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

A. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m.

V. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

March 7, 2025

12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting