

COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

August 14, 2020

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

Virtual Meeting

Present: Judge Don Taylor; Ms. Margarita Bernal; Mr. Juan Carlos Cordova; Ms. Diane Culin; Mr. Alfred Gonzalez; Ms. Kathy Schaben; Mr. Juan Pablo Guzman; Judge Anna Huberman; Judge Danielle Viola:

Telephonic: Judge Catherine Woods

Absent/Excused:

Presenters/Guests:

Administrative Office of the Courts: Ms. Cathy Clarich, Mr. Craig Washburn Ms. Kelly Gray, and Mr. David Svoboda.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Welcome and Opening Remark

The August 14, 2020 meeting of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee was called to order by the Honorable Don Taylor, Chair, at 12:03 p.m. The Chair asked for Committee member roll call and introductions of staff and guests.

B. Approval of the March 6th Meeting Minutes

The draft minutes from the March 6, 2020 of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee were presented for approval. The Chair called for any omissions or corrections to the minutes; there were none.

- A motion was made by Alfred Gonzalez to approve the March 6, 2020 minutes of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Kathy Schaben. The motion passed without objection.

II. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. ACICP Updates

David Svoboda, in his role as Language Access Specialist for the AOC, presented updates from the credentialing program. The written exam prep seminar was held in May. The typical one-day course was split into three shorter sessions and was held online due to COVID-19. The registration and attendance for this event nearly tripled from previous sessions. The sessions were recorded and provided to candidates for their reference after completion of the class.

Written exams were held in July with the oral proficiency interviews being held in early August. The tests were held in-person in both Phoenix and Tucson with restrictions as to the number of candidates per testing session. Social distancing and other recommendations from health authorities were followed. The results from these testing events are still pending.

The April 2020 administration of the Oral Court Interpreter Exam was canceled due to the pandemic. All candidates that were registered for the April 2020 sitting have been moved to the November 2020 sitting of the exam. The November exams will be held in person. Social distancing and other recommendations from health authorities will be enforced.

Due to the cancellation of the April exams, Administrative Order 2020-49 extended the staff deadline to March 2021. This Administrative Order applies only to those interpreters who qualified for the initial extension of the credentialing deadline.

The oral exam preparation seminar for the November sitting, after discussion with the provider, will be held virtually. Mock exams held in conjunction with this seminar will also be held virtually. The provider ensures that the online platform provides a substantially similar experience and level of engagement with the seminar by participants.

The number of credentials issued by the program has not dramatically increased since the last update as tests have not been administered. Reciprocity and transfers of components account for the small increase in issued Credentials.

The fiscal year 2020 personnel survey data is in the process of being collected and that data will be analyzed to provide updated information on the credential status of staff interpreters around the state.

Discussion was held regarding assistance for the limited jurisdiction courts with complying with the staff interpreter requirements.

B. Workgroup Updates

Juan Carlos Cordova in his role as workgroup chair of the Recruitment Packet Workgroup presented the final report of the workgroup. The workgroup was formed about a year prior and met several times to collect and create a packet designed to assist courts in both recruitment and retention of credentialed interpreters. This packet will be great resource for both limited- and general jurisdiction courts.

Motion was made by Juan Carlos Cordova to accept the packet as drafted and to publish the packet to the courts. The motion was seconded by Kathy Schaben. The motion passed without objection.

Juan Pablo Guzman in his role as the Summit Planning Workgroup Chair presented the proposed agenda for the 2020 Court Interpreter Coordinator Summit. The summit was originally planned as an in-person event. As circumstances unfolded, the workgroup considered a hybrid event before ultimately voting to move the summit completely online. The proposed Summit would be held in October. The theme of the summit is Lessons of 2020: Linking Language Access Services and Technology.

The format does not allow the networking that normally occurs during the event, but presentations will encourage interaction where possible. The popular breakout sessions will be held on separate dates to allow for more interactivity, and to better accommodate the demands on court leaders' time during the pandemic.

The committee requested that staff work with courts to notify them of technology requirements to better prepare them to attend and participate in the summit.

Juan Pablo Guzman made a motion to accept the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Don Taylor. The motion passed without objection.

Kathy Schaben in her role as chair of the Streamlining Workgroup presented the progress of the workgroup since the last meeting of this committee. The membership has been finalized and they have met once since last meeting. The Interpreter Survey is being conducted for all courts around the state.

The credentialing tiers and continuing education for court interpreters were the two main topics discussed. The workgroup is considering proposals to rename the credential tiers to clarify their meaning for courts and interpreters. The workgroup also addressed credential requirements for contract interpreters. Continuing Education Units (CEU) were addressed as a requirement to maintain the credential. This would result in continued improvement of the knowledge, skills, and abilities on credentialed interpreters, as well as a

reduction of inactive interpreters in the Registry. The addition of continuing education requirements to an existing program is not unusual.

A motion to establish education requirements for credentialed interpreters was introduced. This motion was later withdrawn, and the matter was referred back to the workgroup for further discussion and to develop specific recommendations for a CEU requirement.

The Committee discussed credential requirements for Spanish language interpreters regardless of employment status. This would remove the preference requirement in the original administrative order and would require any Spanish language interpreter to be credentialed to work in the Arizona court system. Questions were raised regarding smaller counties with limited interpreter resources and their ability to meet this new requirement, if imposed. Remote appearance capabilities were discussed as an alternative those courts. The workgroup was charged with reconvening to on this topic and bringing further recommendations to the Committee.

C. Language Access Plan Templates

David Svoboda in his role as Language Access Specialist presented a draft of the updated language access plan template. The language in the template seeks to make concrete some of the more aspirational statements in previous templates. The draft would require courts to specify the systems they have in place for using credentialed staff and contract interpreters. The template also includes an update to sections on websites and online access to include translations of vital information and general notices needed for compliance. In addition, a new tool has been created by AOC, which uses census data to assist courts with their language needs assessments.

The Committee discussed the level of specificity of the language access plans as staff turnover may result in needed updates to the plans.

The Committee was asked to provide any additional feedback on the LAP templates to staff in the coming weeks.

D. Programs & Trainings Updates

David Svoboda, in his role as the AOC Language Access Specialist, presented updates on the programs and trainings that are currently in process. The mentorship program as addressed in previous meetings has a draft formal program document that is presented to the committee for review. Discussions have been held with the Arizona Court Interpreters Association to administer the program. The Association is interested in the proposal and additional discussions will be held.

Accreditation of the program for COJET credit has been discussed with AOC Education Services. The train-the-trainer section of the program can be accredited for COJET credit. The self-driven section of the program can only be accredited insofar as specific elements, such as ethics or other components have defined lesson plans to be covered by program participants. Resources for the mentorship program are in development to supplement those already in existence.

Mr. Svoboda then presented on the Pima Community College partnership. The Fall 2020 class for the school has been moved to an online format. A new instructor is listed for the fall session. Talks with Pima Community College have included the logistics for the Oral Proficiency Interviews as well as a larger venue for the administration of the Written Exam this fall. At this time, most students enrolled are local to the Tucson area for the in-person exams. There is the possibility to move fees forward for candidates that are too remote to attend the in-person exams.

A new training program is being developed by AOC Education Services Division. The program is called the Trial Judge Academy. This program is designed for judicial officers who have been on the bench for three to five years as a refresher course. David Svoboda and Kathy Schaben have been asked to present on court interpreter requirements, with a current proposal from Education Services of a 50-minute session. Staff has requested additional time to present. A separate training is also planned to be made as part of the limited jurisdiction new judge orientation program.

Resources have been developed for courts for using the interpreter features on remote appearances platforms. These resources have been added to AOC emergency planning website. Demonstrations have been held to show the feature to courts. Staff has worked with the Education Services Division of the AOC on FAQs to include interpretation features.

The committee discussed the digital divide between the courts and the limited-English-proficient populations. The ability of courts to hold remote proceedings based on their resources was also examined. Concerns were raised about the security of the remote proceedings given recent news. The committee discussed the availability of remote programs and features.

The AOC is working to notify courts of the available language access resources that have been created over the years. Staff intends to start quarterly emails to update courts on language access topics. Topics will be rotated and will act similarly to a newsletter.

Mr. Svoboda informed the Committee of a plan to translate forms with the AJACS case management system. There are about 130 standard forms in the statewide case management system that need to be reviewed and translated

into Spanish. Protective order forms are slated to be reviewed first. Interpreter coordinators throughout the state will be asked to assist with this program as they may have already translated some of the forms. Any forms courts have customized to meet local requirements will not match the translations of the standard forms. Courts will be informed of the need to update translations for any forms they have customized.

E. 2021 Dates

David Svoboda in his role as committee staff presented possible dates for the 2021 calendar year committee meetings. No objections to the dates were raised by the committee.

III. CALL TO PUBLIC

A. Good of the Order/Call to the Public

A call was made for any public in attendance to bring their topic to the committee. There was no response to the call to the public,

IV. ADJOURNMENT

A. Adjourn

A motion for adjournment was made by Juan Pablo Guzman at 2:54p.m. The motion was seconded by Alfred Gonzalez. The motion passed without objection.

V. NEXT COMMITTEE DATE

November 6, 2020
12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting