

LEP Plan

Superior Court of San Francisco
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan

I. Legal Basis and Purpose

This document serves as the plan for the Superior Court of San Francisco to provide services to LEP individual in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.; 45 C.F.R. § 80.1 et seq.; and 28 C.F.R. § 42.101-42.112). The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who are Superior Court of San Francisco court users.

This LEP plan was developed to ensure meaningful access to court services for persons with limited English proficiency. Court interpreters for persons with a hearing loss may access additional resources from the Court Interpreters Unit with compliance of the Americans with Disabilities Act rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and therefore will not be addressed in this plan.

II. Needs Assessment

The top five non-English languages and dialects spoken in San Francisco County are:

1. Spanish;
2. Cantonese (Dialect – Chinese);
3. Mandarin (Dialect – Chinese);
4. Russian;
5. Vietnamese.

This information is based on data collected from the Judicial Council of California, Court Interpreters Data Collection System, Census, and the Court's experience.

This information is based on data collected from the Court Interpreter's Data Collection System (CIDCS). The data is collected continuously and reported to the Judicial Council of California

III. Language Assistance Resources

A. Interpreters

The court's policy, given available resources and in accordance with applicable law, is to provide an interpreter at no cost to parties, witnesses, and persons with significant interest in a case; for all courtroom proceedings and all court-ordered, court-operated programs. Court-ordered, court-operated programs include any program, service, or event that is both ordered by the court and operated or managed by the court.

Where immediate expansion of language access into all civil proceedings overburdens a court's resources, either in terms of availability of qualified interpreters or availability of funding for

interpreting services, the court follows the priorities established in *California Code, Evidence Code - EVID § 756*. In a case where the court is mandated to provide an interpreter, but one is not available at the time of the proceeding, even after the court has made all reasonable efforts to locate one, the case will be postponed and continued on a date when an interpreter can be provided. Interpreters for courtroom hearings should be in compliance with the rules and policies set forth by *California Code, Government Code - GOV § 68561* and *California Rules of Court, Rule 2.893*.

B. Bilingual Staff:

The court has bilingual staff to help LEP users in their language in person or by telephone. At the time this report was prepared, the languages spoken by the court's staff, in addition to English, include:

- Spanish;
- Cantonese (Dialect – Chinese);
- Mandarin (Dialect – Chinese);
- Russian;
- Vietnamese.

C. Translated Forms and Documents

The court provides multilingual information in the following ways:

- Written educational and informational handouts and brochures in the following languages:
 - Spanish;
 - Cantonese (Dialect – Chinese);
 - Mandarin (Dialect – Chinese);
 - Russian;
 - Vietnamese.
- The Superior Court of San Francisco currently uses Judicial Council forms and instructional materials translated into commonly used languages.
 - These translated forms and materials are available at the court's website for internal use and available to the public at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/forms.htm> as well as at the court's self-help center at <https://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/self-help>;
 - The court also has access to instructional materials that have been translated by other courts at <http://www.courts.ca.gov/partners/equalaccess.htm>;
 - Pursuant to *California Rules of Court, Rule 2.851* the court has created and established a language access services complaint form available in the Administrative Office and posted online below the LEP Plan. The complaint form

can be accessed at <https://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/general-info/administration-information>;

IV. Notification of Language Access Services

The court notifies court users of available language access services and how to access them in the following ways:

- Via the Court's website at: <https://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/divisions/interpreters>
- The display of signage

V. Education of Court Staff and Judicial Officers

The Superior Court of San Francisco is committed to providing LEP training opportunities for all judicial officers and staff members. Training and learning opportunities currently offered by the Superior Court of San Francisco will be continued and/or expanded as needed. Those opportunities include:

- Interpreter coordinator training;
- Diversity and Cultural competency training;
- LEP plan training;
- Statewide conferences on language access or conferences that include sessions dedicated to topics on language access;
- New employee orientation training; and
- Judicial officer orientation on the use of court interpreters and language competency.

VI. Public Notification and Evaluation of LEP Plan

A. LEP Plan Approval and Notification

The Superior Court of San Francisco's LEP plan is subject to approval by the Presiding Judge and Court Executive Officer. Upon approval, the LEP plan will be forwarded to the Judicial Council of California. Any revisions by the Judicial Council to the plan will be submitted to the Presiding Judge and Court Executive Officer for approval, and then forwarded to the Judicial Council of California. (Digital/electronic versions) copies of Superior Court of San Francisco's LEP plan will be posted on its public website at <https://www.sfsuperiorcourt.org/general-info/administration-information> .

B. Annual Evaluation of the LEP Plan

The Superior Court of San Francisco will routinely assess whether changes to the LEP plan are needed. The plan may be changed or updated at any time, but a review must occur at least once a calendar year.

Each year the court 's LEP Plan Task Force (addendum of divisions included on task force) will review the effectiveness of the court's LEP plan and update it as necessary. The task force must include, but is not limited to the following members,

- Chief Human Resources Officer or designee,
- Chief Administrative Officer or designee,
- Presiding Judge or designee,
- Court Reporters and Interpreters Division manager,
- A Full-Time-Equivalent Court Interpreter

The task force evaluation will include, any policies highlighted in the plan which are not being adhered to and the development of corrective action strategies. Elements of the evaluation will include:

- Number of LEP persons requesting court interpreters;
- Number of LEP persons requesting language assistance related to court services;
- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided;
- Solicitation and review of feedback from LEP communities within the county;
- Assessment of whether court staff adequately understand LEP policies and procedures and how to carry them out;
- Review of feedback from court employee training sessions; and
- Customer satisfaction feedback

C. Local Contact:

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D. State Contact:

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E. LEP Plan

a. **Effective date:** *January 1, 2008*

b. **Updated date:** *January 1, 2023*

F. Approved by:

a. **Presiding Judge:**



b. **Court Executive Officer:** *Mark Culkins*
