

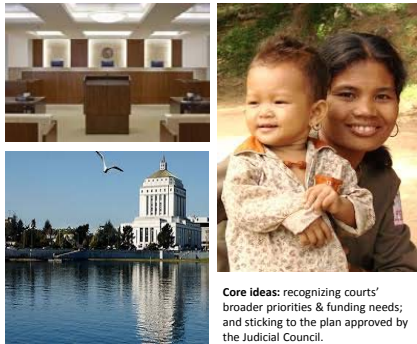
Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts & Update on Implementation



Presentation to AB 1058 conference August 2016
Presented by: Hon. Manuel J. Covarrubias & Douglas Denton
Language Access Plan Implementation Task Force

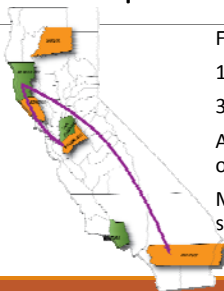
Overview

- Background on Planning Process
- Progress Report on Language Access Implementation Task Force
- Major steps involving interpreters, tools for courts, technology, and education



Core ideas: recognizing courts' broader priorities & funding needs; and sticking to the plan approved by the Judicial Council.

The backdrop



Fifty eight counties
164,000 square miles
39.5 million people
Approximately 1,600 judicial officers and 1,850 interpreters
More than 200 languages spoken

How: Joint Working Group

- Access and Fairness & CIAP
- Included:
 - Bench officers & court administrators
 - Court interpreters
 - Education representative
 - Legal aid & public defender representatives



How: Planning Process



Stakeholder input was essential

(Interpreters, legal aid attorneys, court users, judges, court administrators, educators, and others)

How: Public Hearing



(Interpreters, closed captioning, meeting transmission provided)

How: Public Voices



“There is a need for a fundamental change in culture. Language access should be as integral and critical to court operations as keeping on the lights.” – Legal Services Attorney

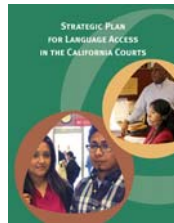
(Limited services, though tending to be of excellent quality; taking account of California's size; need for a roadmap)

What: Content of the Plan

Set of 75 comprehensive recommendations

Promotes language access as a core court service in every courthouse branchwide

Accommodates individual court need for flexibility



Goal II: Interpreters in all court proceedings

“As soon as it is feasible, but in no event later than 2020, qualified interpreters will be provided in the California courts to LEP court users in all courtroom proceedings and in all court-ordered/court-operated events.”

Key: Identifying funding

One time and ongoing funding required

Executive and Legislative branch support needed

Statutory and rule changes will also be required (already begun with AB 1657)



Implementation

Chief Justice created a Language Access Plan Implementation Task Force (3- to 5-year charge)

Subcommittees are focusing on major LAP areas:

- Budget and LAP Monitoring
- Technological Solutions
- Translation, Signage, and Tools for Courts
- Language Access Education and Standards



The Task Force has held both business and community outreach meetings

Then and Now...

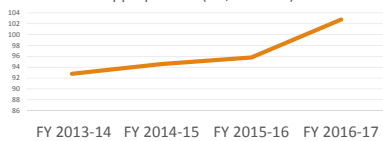
- **THEN:** No Language Access Plan
- Interpreters rarely provided in civil matters
- Program 45.45 funding relatively static
- **NOW:** Passage of AB 1657 (2015), codifying priority order for interpreters in many civil case types
- Courts now routinely provide interpreters in many civil cases; 45.45 fund expected to grow

Why we have an opportunity...

- Growing interest from throughout the branch
- Development and adoption of Language Access Plan



Anticipated Growth of Program 45.45 Fund Appropriation (in \$ Millions)



Strategic Plan for Language Access

- Adopted by the Judicial Council on January 22, 2015
- Contains 75 recommendations
- 26 members, 4 subcommittees

Primary Goal: To develop and support a culture in which language access is considered a core court service in every courthouse

Implementation Task Force

Feedback has been enormously helpful from interpreters, trial courts, lawyers, community groups, and members of the public

We can't do this work without funding.

Stakeholder Input

Interpreters are being provided on an as-available basis, which often means only Spanish-speaking.

We need clear protocols for requesting an interpreter and court staff should be trained on all LAP changes.

The Task Force Responds:

- ✓ Budget Change Proposals
- ✓ Survey of trial courts
- ✓ Model Request for Interpreter
- ✓ Development of tools for courts
- ✓ Language Access Toolkit
- ✓ Judicial education

Implementation Highlights

Budget & LAP Monitoring:

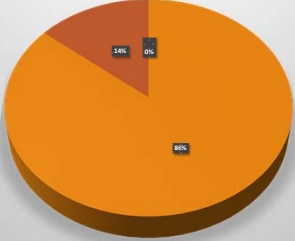
- ✓ \$7M additional funding to expand provision of interpreter services
- ✓ LAP Monitoring Database
- ✓ Language access survey

Implementation Highlights

Budget & LAP Monitoring:

- ✓ Learning from experience and surveying trial courts
- ✓ We separately surveyed appellate courts

**Language Access Survey:
50 of 58 Trial Courts Responded**



Category	Percentage
Orange	80%
Red	14%
Grey	6%

Implementation Highlights

Education & Standards:

- ✓ Redesigned course for judges on spoken language interpreters
- ✓ New video on procedures for appointing spoken language interpreters

Technological Solutions:

- ✓ Development of Video Remote Interpreting Pilot Project

Supporting judicial education...



Implementation Highlights

Translation, Signage & Tools for Courts:

- ✓ Language Access Toolkit

(One-stop online resource for multiple audiences)

**Language Access Toolkit
Resources for the Courts**

Find tools and resources to improve language access at your court

Entrance & Security
There are many ways to welcome non-English speaking members of the public to your court, starting at the front door. This section contains sample signs in various languages and other tools by the entrance to your court. [View Resources](#)

Clerk's Office/Points of Contact
If you work in the Clerk's Office or another point of contact with non-English speaking litigants, you receive many kinds of inquiries on a daily basis. This section contains resources in other languages about court proceedings, as well as information about how to request an interpreter and other language access services may be available. [View Resources](#)

Inside the Courtroom
Common courtroom language needs include the presence of an interpreter and help with legal or court proceedings, such as conferences. You can find these and other resources for the courtroom here.

<http://www.courts.ca.gov/lap-toolkit-courts.htm>

Language Access Toolkit

- LAP Recommendation #37: Provide samples and templates of multilingual information
- LAP Recommendation #38: Post translations of forms and other informational materials on the California Courts website
- LAP Recommendation #66: Create a statewide repository of language access resources

Guiding Principles

- ✓ **One location** for language access resources
- ✓ **Easy to use, practical interface**
- ✓ **Start with the needs of local courts**, then scale up to include resources for bench officers, LEP litigants, other stakeholders

Model Notice for LEP Court Users: Language

- LAP Rec. #5: Courts will inform court users about the availability of language access services at the earliest points of contact between court users and the court

(for signage, flyers, brochures, websites)

A template to adapt (eight languages...)


Need help in your language?

For free help with:

- Interpreters
- Court forms and information in your language
- Bilingual staff

Go to Room _____. Or:

- Call: [Tel]
- Email: [URI]



Technological Solutions

- Not limited to Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)
- Multi Language Kiosks
- Remote access to bilingual staff at counters etc.

(Need integration with branch-wide efforts)



VRI Advantages

ASL VRI pilot found VRI is an important tool for accessing qualified interpreters and for cost savings

Can help avoid conflicts

Pilot indicated high customer and judicial officer satisfaction

Easier to match unusual dialects (e.g., 60 Zapotec dialects)

Implementation & VRI

Minimum Technology Requirements

A spoken language pilot



The challenge continues...

- Adequate funding to ensure civil expansion and other LAP recommendations
- Supply of qualified bilingual staff and court interpreters
- Providing technical assistance re: web pages, and civil expansion
- Training and tools for courts (different regional needs)



And so does the work in 2016...

- Budget Change Proposal (BCP) for FY 2017-2018
- Recruitment strategies for qualified bilingual staff and court interpreters
- Engage courts' language access representatives to provide assistance and promote uniformity among courts
- Promote use of the Language Access Toolkit
- Continue outreach and provide updates to the Judicial Council

Language Access
Plan Milestones



- Language Access Toolkit
- Model Notice of Free Language Access Services
- Request for Interpreter Form (Civil)
- Education and Translation Tools
- Complaint Form and Procedures
- Web guidance materials
- VRI Pilot Project
- LAP Monitoring Database
- Funding
