

# POINTS OF CONTACT FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) COURT USERS

Two recommendations of the Language Access Plan (LAP) concern bilingual staff stationed at critical points of contact for court users with limited English proficiency.\* The table below outlines the appropriate language standards and language access necessary, as well as resources to help court staff meet the needs of LEP court users at critical points of contact.

POINTS OF CONTACT FOR LEP COURT USERS	LANGUAGE ACCESS NECESSARY	APPROPRIATE STANDARDS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
<p>Local court website pages</p> <p>Signage/postings (including signage/postings at security entrances, which should include language access icons and clear visual tools to help assist and instruct LEP court users)</p> <p>Maps on paper with non-English-language titles for major locations in the courthouse.</p>	<p><b>Translation of key written and visual information located at the courthouse or on the court's website</b></p>	<p>Adopt standards for translation of local court documents in accordance with the Translation Protocol, available on the Language Access Toolkit (<a href="http://www.courts.ca.gov/lap-toolkit-courts.htm">www.courts.ca.gov/lap-toolkit-courts.htm</a>).</p>
<p>Court orders</p> <p>Court referrals &amp; info</p> <p>Pamphlets</p>	<p><b>Translation of key court reference documents and printed information</b></p>	<p>Adopt standards for translation of local court documents in accordance with the Translation Protocol, available on the Language Access Toolkit. For court orders, see translated forms at <a href="http://www.courts.ca.gov/formname.htm">www.courts.ca.gov/formname.htm</a>.</p>
<p>Governmental agencies and professional associations (e.g., court, police, state/local bar associations), documents and educational texts, websites and videos</p> <p>Community-based organizations, like legal aid, and including online help and printed information</p>	<p><b>Translation of documents produced and provided outside the court for court-users</b></p>	<p>Courts should encourage justice partners to ensure that key documents are translated into the county's most common non-English languages.</p> <p>Courts should encourage these organizations and agencies to require multilingual documents from the service providers they use and, especially, refer clients to.</p>

\*LAP recommendation 26: Courts should identify which points of contact are most critical for LEP court users, and, whenever possible, should place qualified bilingual staff at these locations. LAP recommendation 47: Courts must ensure that bilingual staff providing information to LEP court users are proficient in the languages in which they communicate. All staff designated as bilingual staff by courts must at a minimum meet standards corresponding to "intermediate mid" as defined under the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages guidelines. (See Appendix F.) The existing Oral Proficiency Exam (OPE) available through the Judicial Council may be used by courts to establish foreign-language proficiency of staff. Courts should not rely on self-evaluation by bilingual staff in determining their language proficiency. The OPE exam is administered online and is available year round. For more information, see [www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm).

POINTS OF CONTACT FOR LEP COURT USERS	LANGUAGE ACCESS NECESSARY	APPROPRIATE STANDARDS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
Security staff, clerk's office, self-help center, courtroom staff	English-only-speaking court staff use tools to refer LEP court users to available language access	Court staff should have access to "I Speak" cards and be familiar with their court's Notice of Available Language Access Services in order to direct court users to the proper room for assistance. The Language Access Toolkit ( <a href="http://www.courts.ca.gov/lap-toolkit-courts.htm">www.courts.ca.gov/lap-toolkit-courts.htm</a> ) contains "I Speak" cards and a model notice regarding the court's available language access services that has been translated into 9 non-English languages.
Clerk's office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about the steps in the process</li> <li>Filing</li> <li>Processing (such as setting hearing dates, continuances, calendaring requests)</li> </ul>	Bilingual staff in the courthouse*	Minimum standards corresponding to "Intermediate Mid" as defined by the guidelines of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (see LAP Appendix F). The existing Oral Proficiency Exam (OPE) tests whether applicants meet the Intermediate Mid standard identified in LAP recommendation 47. The OPE exam is administered online and is available year round. For more information, see <a href="http://www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm">www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm</a> .  *Activities involving nuanced conversations about legal rights and remedies should use certified or registered court interpreters.
Self-help services for self-represented litigants		
Orientation-type workshops		
General assistance in providing and completing court documents		
Information on procedure/forms		
Jury services		
Payment of fees, fines, bail		
Public information line/desk		
Childcare center		
<b>Postresolution activities (in court)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filings and completion of status reports, accountings, etc.</li> <li>Enforcement-related actions: filings, payments to court, submission of compliance reports</li> </ul>		

POINTS OF CONTACT FOR LEP COURT USERS	LANGUAGE ACCESS NECESSARY	APPROPRIATE STANDARDS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
<p>Court-ordered programs (e.g., treatment, parenting, counseling)</p> <p>Probation meetings/conditions</p> <p>Social worker-related activities</p>	<p><b>Bilingual staff for court-ordered services outside the courthouse*</b></p>	<p>Court should encourage providers of court-ordered services to use bilingual staff who meet the Intermediate Mid standard.</p> <p>*When activities move beyond basic information, paperwork, and referrals to nuanced conversations about resolution, child support, spousal support, and the like, then these organizations should be encouraged to use certified or registered interpreters.</p>
<p><b>Courtroom</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearings and trials</li> <li>Onsite/informal mediation and ADR</li> <li>Interactions with courtroom staff</li> </ul> <p><b>Court-ordered programs (in court)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mediation (e.g., child custody and visitation)</li> <li>Investigations (e.g., juvenile, guardianship, adoption)</li> <li>Mandatory settlement conferences</li> <li>Other mandated ADR</li> </ul>	<p><b>Qualified interpreters in court</b></p>	<p>Qualified (certified or registered) interpreters must pass the bilingual interpreting exam. Registered interpreter candidates must now take an OPE in English and their non-English languages. Court interpreter status may also apply to day-of-court mediation/ADR. For more information regarding interpreting exams, see <a href="http://www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm">www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm</a>.</p>
<p><b>Court-ordered programs (outside of court)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mediation (e.g., child custody and visitation)</li> <li>Investigations (e.g., juvenile, guardianship, adoption)</li> <li>Mandatory settlement conferences</li> <li>Other mandated ADR</li> </ul>	<p><b>Qualified interpreters outside of court</b></p>	<p>Qualified (certified or registered) interpreters must pass the bilingual interpreting exam. Registered interpreter candidates must now take an OPE in English and their non-English languages. Court interpreter status may also apply to day-of-court mediation/ADR. For more information regarding interpreting exams, see <a href="http://www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm">www.courts.ca.gov/2695.htm</a>.</p>