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Translated Materials

[Informational and instructional materials translated by California superior courts](#)

[Newsletter Library](#)

[Translated Court Publications](#) by the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento. Includes materials regarding domestic violence, family law, juvenile dependency, traffic and unlawful detainers in, among others, Hmong, Korean, Lao, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Tongan, Ukrainian and Urdu.

[Service Delivery Models](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

Translated Judicial Council Forms

Domestic violence forms [Chinese](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Korean](#) | [Vietnamese](#)



Bilingual and/or Translated Court websites

Court	Spanish	Chinese	Korean	Vietnamese	Russian

Cal. Courts	California Courts Self-Help Center				
Los Angeles	Website translation project 				
Fresno	Spanish Self-help Center (Recursos Legales) 				
Santa Clara	Self-help Center 			Self-help Center 	
Riverside	Self-help center 				

Effective programs

"Tip of the Day" Radio Program

Developed by the Superior Court of California, County of Ventura.

Assisting Court Customers with Educational and Self-Help Services (ACCESS)

Implemented in the Superior Court of California, County of San Francisco.

Spanish Resource Guide to Fresno Superior Court . A Spanish resource guide to the court's self-help services and jury services published and distributed to 42,000 subscribers inside an issue of Vida en El Valle, the largest Spanish-language newspaper in the Fresno area.

Welcome from Court Staff – Video  (Available in English, Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi and Tagalog.) (prepared by the Superior Court of Contra Costa ).

Tools for Providing Services to LEP Litigants

Tools for Dealing with Cross-cultural communication Issues (prepared for the California Conference on Self-Represented Litigants).

English/Spanish glossary (prepared by the Superior Court of California, County of Imperial )

Resources for providing services to LEP litigants (prepared for the California Conference on Self-Represented Litigants).

Comparisons between two legal systems (Mexico and U.S.) (prepared by the Superior Court of California, County of Imperial ).

Cultural Competence in a Hotline (prepared by Bay Area Legal Aid <http://www.baylegal.org/> for the California Conference on Self-Represented Litigants).

[Expanding Legal Services: Providing Services to LEP Asians and Pacific Islanders](#) (prepared by the [Asian Pacific American Legal Center](#) )

[Providing Services to LEP Asian and Pacific Islander Litigants](#) (prepared by the [Asian Pacific American Legal Center](#) < <http://apalc.org/>> for the [California Conference on Self-Represented Litigants](#)).

[Borderland Justice: Working With Culture in Courts Along the US/Mexico Border](#) by John A. Martin, Jose Guillen and Diane Altamirano (March 16, 2007)

[Fact Sheet: Domestic Violence-Family Law Interpreter Program](#) (May 2007).
Prepared by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Multi-lingual glossaries

[Legal Glossaries](#) 

In 11 languages, developed by the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento.

[Supreme Court of Arizona Glossary of Legal Terms](#) 

[Spanish Language Style Guide and Glossaries for U.S. Government Web Sites](#) 

A resource on language use and terminology for Web managers dealing with websites in Spanish and/or Spanish language contractors.

[Translating Justice: A Spanish Glossary for New York City](#) . An English-to-Spanish language resource for interpreters and bilingual staff in New York City's courts, justice agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Prepared by the [Vera Institute for Justice](#) .

[Translating Justice: A Traditional Chinese Glossary for New York City](#) . An English-to-Chinese language resource for interpreters and bilingual staff in New York City's courts, justice agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Prepared by the [Vera Institute for Justice](#) .

Interpreter and Translator resources

[Court Interpreters Program](#)

Includes a [database](#) of Certified and Registered court interpreters.

[American Translators Association](#) 

Provides information on over 9,500 translators and interpreters.

[Fact Sheet: Domestic Violence-Family Law Interpreter Program](#) (May 2007).
Prepared by the Administrative Office of the Courts.

National LEP Resources

[LEP.gov](#) 

Clearinghouse for LEP information and tools developed by the Federal government.

[Language Assistance Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance](#) 

A planning and self-assessment tool to assist in planning efforts to ensure programs have meaningful access for limited English proficient individuals.

[Commonly Asked Questions and Answers](#) 
Information regarding Executive Order 13166.

["I Speak Cards"](#) 

In 38 languages to assist LEP individuals to identify the language they speak.

[Breaking Down the Language Barrier](#) 

Video training tool provided by the Department of Justice. For extra copies, contact the Civil Rights Division's Coordination and Review Selection at (2020) 307-2222 or via e-mail at crt.lep@usdoj.gov. This video can be viewed with the Real Player application.

Online translation tools

These translation tools sometimes provide inaccurate translations, and should be used only as a first step in translating simple sentences, words, and concepts. Though they can be of help in communicating with LEP customers, they should not be the only means of providing this assistance and should be reviewed and corrected by a speaker of the target language.

- <http://www.freetranslation.com> 
Translation available between English and: Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Chinese.
- <http://translation2.paralink.com/> 
Translation available between English and: French, German, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.
- <http://world.altavista.com/> 
Translation available between English and: Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Portuguese, and Spanish.
- http://www.worldlingo.com/en/products_services/worldlingo_translator.html 
Translation available between English and all languages listed in Altavista above.
- <http://www.babblefish.com/babblefish/> 
Babblefish.com specializes in language translation and money conversion.
- <http://www.aslpro.com/cgi-bin/aslpro/phrases> 
Translation and dictionary between English and American Sign Language
- <http://www.world.altavista.com/> 
Web resource with translation links for multiple languages

Language Access Reference Materials

[2005 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study](#)

[State Bar's List of Published Reports – 2005 on language access](#) 

[APAL's 2006, California Speaks: Language Diversity and English Proficiency by Legislative District](#) 

[Language Barriers to Justice in California: A Report of the California Commission on Access to Justice](#) 

[Action Plan for Justice: A Report of the California Commission on Access to Justice \(April 2007\)](#) 

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PROVIDING LANGUAGE ACCESS:

❖ In the courthouse

➤ *Multilingual signs and directories*

- In English plus top 2 languages spoken in county
 - For most (all?) counties, Spanish plus a third lang.
- Do not overwhelm signs with other languages
 - Sign with too many languages on it would end up being invisible
- Use universal icons whenever possible
- Can supplement signs and directories with written pamphlets in other languages at points of contact with public: clerk counters, public viewing, info kiosks, self-help center, courtrooms, security checkpoint, etc.
- Other courts have gone through sign-creating process and may have sign designs/architecture that may be of use
 - San Francisco has signage schedule for Eng., Sp, and Chinese

➤ *Bilingual staff*

- Have bilingual staff (in most common languages in the county) at points of contact for the public
- Bilingual staff should be clearly identified, with language they speak somehow clearly visible (for e.g. “How may I help you?” buttons in other language)
- When bilingual staff unavailable, have systems in place to provide assistance:
 - phone system so bilingual staff member can be called
 - basic bilingual scripts to communicate information
 - availability of written information clerk can hand out in customer’s primary language
- Staff at these points of contact must be knowledgeable for position

- For some of these positions, volunteers may be used, such as an information kiosk, etc.
 - cross-reference discussion on volunteers below
- *Multi-lingual flyers*
 - Courthouse should have several locations where flyers/pamphlets are posted
 - information kiosk or bulletin board or literature holders
 - upkeep of these areas is key
 - will be very helpful in long run if color of paper for flyers is used in a manner to assist easy identification of flyer regardless of language – e.g. have pamphlet with courthouse hours and location always be reproduced in one color in all the languages.
- *Telephone that directly dials for multilingual assistance*
 - phone at common courthouse locations that dials to multilingual hotline that at least provides multilingual recording with self-help center hours of operation and location

❖ In the courtroom

- *Bilingual staff*
 - Have bilingual staff (in most common languages in the county), especially in courtrooms with heavy SRL calendars.
 - Bilingual staff should be clearly identified, with language they speak clearly visible
 - When bilingual staff unavailable, have systems in place to provide assistance:
 - phone system so bilingual staff member can be called
 - basic bilingual scripts to communicate information
 - availability of written information clerk can hand out in customer's primary language
- *Certified interpreters*
 - Court-provided certified interpreters must be available in criminal cases, juvenile dependency and delinquency, and small claims where litigant has qualified for fee waiver
 - Schedule civil calendars with significant numbers of SRLs at times or locations where certified interpreters already there for mandated matters may be available (because of breaks, finishing early, etc).

- Have centralized schedule showing calendar/courtroom/time and language that certified interpreter is scheduled for and have schedule available for access by courtroom clerks and other court services so they may call to request interpreter if available. Practical examples:
 - if Cantonese interpreter is scheduled for a small claims calendar, a courtroom clerk in a family law case could check schedule if a Cantonese interpreter is needed in his/her courtroom, and call the matter when the small claims court interpreter is finished or otherwise available.
 - if a fee waiver eligible litigant requests a Spanish interpreter for his court hearing, clerk can schedule other Spanish speaking small claims litigants (who may not be fee waiver eligible) for that same hearing date so that interpreter is already there and available.
 - Schedule high SRL calendars on one or two days every week and have certified interpreters present at that location for top 1 or 2 most requested languages at that location on both those days. For e.g. schedule FL law and motion and DV calendars for Tuesday and Wednesday, and have Spanish and Chinese interpreters at the courthouse on both days.

- Use technology
 - Use of video-conferencing for interpreters who may be at one location but needed at another—particularly useful for short matters such as continuances, returns for review by bench officer, etc.
 - Use language line —particularly useful for short matters such as continuances, returns for review by bench officer, etc.
 - use of videos/DVD/powerpoint to give orientation to courtroom re. courtroom procedures (bilingual)

➤ *Trained volunteer interpreters (cross-reference Training of volunteers section below)*

- Local bar may have volunteer interpreter panel or may be interested in creating one
 - local bar may have training workshop/program already set up
 - local bar may already have a pool of volunteers and may be able to attract more if opportunities to volunteer at court are offered

- Contact and partner with local interpreter schools to offer practical experience in the courtroom
 - Note that instructors at some school may feel that courtroom interpretation is not appropriate for student interpreters but can still be used for other court services (such as SHC and mediation)
 - schools may be willing to offer their students credit for internships interpreting at the court

- Contact and partner with local law schools, paralegal schools, colleges and other schools who may have students who are fully bilingual
 - Note that just because student may be bilingual, doesn't mean s/he is trained so must still be appropriately trained (see training section below)
 - schools may be willing to offer their students credit for internships interpreting at court
 - colleges may have student organizations aimed at particular ethnic groups that have bilingual students wanting to do public service (e.g. API groups, Latino groups, pre-law groups, etc.)
 - schools often have public service offices that are always looking for placement opportunities for their students

- Explore use of JusticeCorps volunteers (again, with appropriate training for interpreting)

- Courtroom should be flexible to accommodate the schedules/needs of volunteer interpreters – similarly to how pro bono attorneys may be accommodated by calling their matter first, etc.

- On appropriate matters, consider having volunteer interpreters be available by phone (like Language Line type model).

❖ In Self-Help Center

➤ *Bilingual staff*

- Key in self-help center situation that as many of the staff as possible be bilingual in more common languages in the county

- Bilingual staff should be clearly identified, with language they speak somehow clearly visible (for e.g. “How may I help you?” buttons in other language)
- When bilingual staff unavailable, have systems in place to provide assistance:
 - phone system so bilingual staff member can be called
 - basic bilingual scripts to communicate information
 - availability of written information staff can hand out in customer’s primary language
- Staff at these points of contact must be knowledgeable for position
- Use of trained volunteer interpreters can be a good support for staff
 - should not be relied upon instead of bilingual staff
 - must be carefully supervised by staff knowledgeable in that language

➤ *Strategies for offering multilingual SHC services with limited staff*

- Partner and collaborate with community agencies
 - many counties have community service providers (legal and social services) that target specific ethnic populations or have language access capabilities that the court doesn’t have
 - community agencies can help educate court providers as to best ways to reach particular communities and can serve as “inside person” to establish relationships
 - for e.g. churches may be very effective way to reach certain communities
 - by partnering/collaborating, SHC can offer services to non-English speaking communities with the assistance and expertise of community partners
 - by partnering/collaborating, SHC can use physical space of these agencies, take advantage of their location (esp. when integrated into specific ethnic communities), and offer services after hours without having to arrange for courthouse security
 - these partnerships give legitimacy to SHC among populations traditionally distrusting of government/courts/authority

- partnerships ensure referrals (to and from SHC) are appropriate and accurate
 - partners can help reduce foot traffic at SHC by providing SRLs assistance with research, writing declarations, etc that would otherwise be very difficult for SHC to assist with
 - partners can be a source of community volunteers
- volunteers from community agencies and community members
 - having volunteers from the community helps ensure cultural competence and language access
 - by having minority communities engaged with the courts, helps improve public trust and confidence
 - having minority communities engaged with the courts served to educate the public and language minorities re. legal system
 - training, initial assessment and supervision is particularly key issue for these volunteers who may have no knowledge of legal issues, government, legal system, etc.
- volunteers from interpreter programs, paralegal programs, schools
 - see discussion for volunteer interpreters under the Courtroom section above
- media (newspapers, radio, t.v.)
 - many communities have media that specifically targets diverse non-English speaking populations
 - Often, these forms of media are the primary source of information and education to non-English speaking communities
 - media can be used to disseminate legal education and information about court services, as well as help with recruitment of community/bilingual volunteers
 - use of media and recognition from media can give legitimacy to court services in traditionally disenfranchised communities that distrust the courts
 - Contact ethnic media newspapers: often willing to publish short articles, public service announcements, etc for free if it benefits their community

- local radio and t.v. programs aimed at local communities may be interested in regular appearance by court personnel/attorneys if goal is to educate communities about the law and services available
- local universities/state colleges may have public radio/t.v. station or programming and be willing to broadcast educational shows or interviews

➤ *Multilingual instructions and packets*

- Take advantage of numerous translated materials already developed by other counties and the AOC
- Stay consistent with translation/terms used throughout
- Focus should be beyond language to cultural issues as well, with information on cultural differences and explanation of the difference in US legal system
- Ensure staff can easily identify materials even when staff cannot understand the language of materials (use of colored paper, icons or graphics, for e.g.)
- Even when litigant is provided brochure/info in their primary language, English version should also be available to them so they can learn English terminology they will be encountering in paperwork, court, etc.
- Simply translating the terms is often not sufficient when concepts do not exist in native language/country, so further explanation of legal concepts often necessary.

➤ *Multilingual flyer re. SHC services*

- Must clearly state what languages services are available in
- If certain languages only available on certain days, must be clearly stated and consistent
- Must be kept current
- Distribute to different courthouse locations, community agencies, lawyer referral services and local bar

➤ *Multilingual phone hotline*

- Hotline hours and languages available must be clearly publicized and be consistent
- supervision of hotline staff is essential
- if resources are limited, counties can collaborate and pool resources so that a bilingual staff at one county can also answer questions from another county
- hotline should not take messages nor be designed to return calls
- staff assigned to answering hotline must be highly trained and have an attorney to ask for help with at all times

➤ *Email access*

- Emails can be accepted and answered by bilingual staff within prescribed amount of time (e.g. 24 hours)

➤ *Multilingual media: videos, dvds, websites*

- Bilingual videos (web based or otherwise) can be effective way to educate communities in other languages.
- Many courts and the AOC have created instructional videos available in a number of languages that can be linked to from court websites
- Videos can be provided through SHC or other court locations, law libraries and community agencies
- Videos/DVDs are good strategy for reaching non-English speaking populations when literacy in their primary language may also be an issue.
- Can be viewed at night, from home, or more convenient locations, for more access and less foot traffic at court

❖ At Filing Window

➤ *Bilingual Staff*

- Have bilingual staff (in most common languages in the county) at filing windows whenever possible, esp. windows where high number of SRL filings
- Bilingual staff should be clearly identified, with language they speak somehow clearly visible (for e.g. “How may I help you?” buttons in other language)
- When bilingual staff unavailable, have systems in place to provide assistance:
 - phone system so bilingual staff member can be called
 - basic bilingual scripts to communicate information
 - availability of written information clerk can hand out in customer’s primary language
- Staff at these points of contact must be knowledgeable for position
- For some of these positions, volunteers may be used, such as an information kiosk, etc.
 - cross-reference discussion on trained volunteer interpreters

➤ *Multilingual instructions and packets*

- See section under SHC instructions and packets since these will often be the same packets as provided at and created by the SHC
- Should include multilingual referrals/flyer to SHC or other legal services agencies where appropriate

❖ At other court services such as mediation

➤ *Bilingual staff*

- Have bilingual staff (in most common languages in the county)
- When bilingual staff unavailable, have systems in place to provide assistance:
 - phone system so bilingual staff member can be called
 - basic bilingual scripts to communicate information
 - availability of written information that can hand out in customer’s primary language

➤ *Interpreters*

- If no bilingual mediators, provide certified interpreters for Family Court Services mediation if available, or at least trained interpreter
 - see discussion under Courtroom access for interpreter possibilities
 - students at interpreter schools may be good source of interpreters here and school instructors are likely to sanction this type of training for their students

➤ *Multilingual information*

- information should be provided re. mediation process in various languages
 - mediation, as a concept, may not be common in other countries, so care should be taken to explain the process
- educational information about legal rights and responsibilities in area to be mediated must be available – in collaboration with SHC

FURTHER IDEAS AND APPROACHES FOR LANGUAGE ACCESS

❖ County-wide Self-represented Task Force

- Involve judicial officers, court administrators, court clerks, SHC staff, legal services providers, local bar representatives and leaders of different ethnic communities
- Meet on a regular basis
- Work on and develop strategies for better serving the communities' needs
- Court must be responsive to communities' concerns

❖ Sources of volunteers

- Colleges and universities
- Paralegal programs
- Interpreter programs
- Graduate program students (e.g. social work, psychology, film)
- Minority student groups
- Pre-law and criminal justice student groups
- Churches
- community social service providers
- senior centers
- high schools (in combination with government classes or certain student groups, in collaboration with school principals/teachers)

❖ Training of volunteers

- Different types of volunteers may require different training
- Should be carefully screened
- Will need specific training regarding legal terminology (in English and other language), interpreter ethics, interpretation skills
- Will need close supervision and wherever possible by staff bilingual in language the volunteer speaks
- Must acknowledge they will not seek private business or promote their business to customers