



JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

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LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

MINUTES OF OPEN MEETING

April 29, 2015

12:00 to 1:00 p.m.

Conference Call

Advisory Body Members Present: Hon. Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar, Chair, Hon. Manuel Covarrubias, Vice-Chair, Ms. Naomi Adelson, Hon. Steven Austin, Mr. Kevin Baker, Hon. Terence Bruiniers, Ms. Tracy Clark, Hon. Jonathan Conklin, Hon. Michelle Williams Court, Hon. Janet Gaard, Ms. Susan Marie Gonzalez, Hon. Dennis Hayashi, Ms. Janet Hudec, Ms. Oleksandra Johnson, Ms. Joann Lee, Hon. Miguel Márquez, Ms. Ivette Peña, Hon. Jonathan Renner, Mr. Michael Roddy, Ms. Jeanine Tucker, Mr. José Varela, Hon. Brian Walsh, Ms. Leah Wilson, and Hon. Laurie Zelon.

Advisory Body Members Absent: Ms. Ana Maria Garcia and Dr. Guadalupe Valdés

Others Present: Ms. Dianne Bolotte, Ms. Carmen Castro-Rojas, Mr. Douglas Denton, Ms. Diana Glick, Ms. Donna Hershkowitz, Ms. Bonnie Hough, Ms. Anne Marx, Ms. Sonia Sierra Wolf, Mr. Victor Rodriguez, and Ms. Elizabeth Tam-Helmuth

OPEN MEETING

Call to Order and Roll Call

The chair called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. and took roll call.

Approval of Minutes

No prior minutes to approve.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

Introduction

Justice Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar shared that the Chief Justice made her final appointments and we now have a Language Access Plan Implementation Task Force of 26 members. Justice Cuéllar underscored the very practical impact the Task Force can have on the state's limited English proficient (LEP) population and court users. Justice Cuéllar pressed upon the need for uniformity and flexibility, as well as utilization of available and new resources. Judge Manuel Covarrubias reviewed the core principles of the *Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts*, which sets forth a consistent statewide approach to provide language access to the courts for California's approximately 7 million LEP residents and potential court users.

Item 1

Task Force Charge (Discussion Only)

Judge Covarrubias reviewed the charge of the Task Force, which will be three to five years. Among its duties, the Task Force will develop an implementation plan for presentation to the Judicial Council, and will identify the costs associated with implementing the plan's recommendations.

Item 2

Task Force Logistics and Organization (Discussion Only)

Justice Cuéllar announced the formation of four proposed Task Force subcommittees, creating an infrastructure that will enable the Task Force to commence its work as quickly as possible. Each Subcommittee will be led by a Chair (or Co-chairs) and supported by a staff person. The 75 LAP recommendations have been grouped by major topics into the four Subcommittees:

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

One of the first tasks of the Subcommittees will be to develop a work plan regarding their assigned phase 1 recommendations, so that the Task Force can prepare an overall phase 1 LAP implementation plan for presentation to the Judicial Council. Ideally, the work of each Subcommittee will be tasks that could be completed within a year (i.e., June 2015 to June 2016), and will produce some sort of demonstrable deliverable or end product.

Justice Cuéllar also reported that he has worked closely with staff to develop a Task Force timeline between now and July 2016. The Task Force has a very ambitious schedule, with business and community meetings, including an in-person Task Force meeting on June 17th.

Item A

Possible Language Access Plan Priorities for 2016–2017 Budget (Action Required)

The Trial Court Budget Advisory Committee (TCBAC) meets in May to review Budget Change Proposal Concepts for presentation to the council in June/July. In the interest of time, six potential funding priorities have been identified for LAP implementation.

Interpreter Services in Civil Matters

The LAP recommended expansion of court interpreters in civil proceedings. With many courts expanding into civil, and the goal of the Language Access Plan that we begin to fully cover civil matters, it is recommended that the General Fund be augmented to Program 45.45, which funds court interpreter services.

Training and Signage Grant Program for Trial Courts

The plan recommended training for interpreters on civil cases and remote interpreting, and appropriate signage and way finding throughout the courthouses. A grant program for courts to

apply and use for training or signage would be a way to allow courts to determine what makes the most sense for their court and users.

On-Site Trial Court Support for Language Access

The plan also included a recommendation to designate a language access office or representative in each court. A General Fund augmentation for three language access specialists for each of the four interpreter bargaining regions (with a total of 12 language access specialists, to be hired and housed at one or more courts in each region) would assist all courts to assess language access needs and help promote a focus on implementation and training.

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

The plan recommended conducting a Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) pilot project to collect data on due process issues, participant satisfaction, the effect on the use of certified and registered interpreters, the effectiveness of a variety of available technologies, and a cost benefit analysis. A General Fund augmentation would help implement a pilot in up to 10 courts, using multiple technologies at each court to evaluate and implement different technologies.

Form Translation and Multilingual Videos

The plan made several recommendations regarding the translation of forms and notices into the top 5 languages. The plan also recommended that the Judicial Council create multilingual standardized videos for high volume case types that lend themselves to generalized legal information, and provide them to courts in the state's top 8 languages. A General Fund augmentation would support the initial translation forms and the development and translation of videos sharing generalized legal information for court users.

Implementation Task Force

Finally, the plan recommended the creation of our Task Force to develop an implementation plan and make recommendations to the Judicial Council for implementation of the plan's 75 recommendations. A General Fund augmentation would support the efforts of the Task Force.

A suggestion was made to include funding to (1) help courts develop and provide information to LEP communities and (2) assist courts with tools for orders to be translated into the state's top non-English languages.

Action Taken: Motion and second to accept and approve the six funding priorities. Task Force members present were unanimously in favor; none opposed. *(Note: Following the meeting, the first four concepts were submitted to TCBCAC; the final two budget concept recommendations were deemed appropriate to submit to the Advisory Committee on Financial Accountability and Efficiency for the Judicial Branch.)*

Justice Cuéllar and Judge Covarrubias thanked everyone for a productive meeting.

For our June 17th in-person meeting, Task Force members will be working both in large and small groups to identify LAP priorities and allow each Subcommittee to develop its work plan for the coming year.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Approved by the advisory body on June 17, 2015.