

# **YAKIMA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN (LAP)**

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## **I.      LEGAL BASIS AND PURPOSE**

This LAP sets forth the Yakima County Superior Court's policy and procedures for the provision of timely language access services that ensure access for all limited English proficient (LEP), deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind (D/HH/DB) individuals who encounter Yakima County Superior Court services and programs. Language access services include both interpretation and translation services for LEP and (D/HH/DB) individuals.

## **II.     COURT POLICY REGARDING LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES**

Pursuant to the federal law regulations and under Washington State Law (chapters 2.42 and 2.43 RCW) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Safe Streets Act), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the implementation of these federal laws, Washington courts are required to provide language access services to all LEP and D/HH/DB individuals in civil and criminal court proceedings and in all court-managed services and programs and to develop a written language access plan pursuant to RCW 2.43.090

It is the policy of Yakima County Superior Court to provide non-English language interpreter services at no cost to LEP parties, witnesses, victims, with an interest (e.g., parents, legal guardians, custodians) in all court proceedings and operations, both civil and criminal other than when it is the responsibility of other government bodies pursuant to state law. It is also the policy of this court to provide sign language interpreting services at no cost to persons who are D/HH/DB as required under applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

Yakima County Superior Court will provide accessible information to LEP and D/HH/DB persons on how to request these language assistance services and vital documents as part of its notice to the public about its language access services.

Although D/HH/DB individuals are covered under the ADA and chapter 2.42 RCW rather than title VI and the Safe Streets Act, this plan covers language access services for both D/HH/DB and LEP individuals.

### **III. DATA COLLECTION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The Superior Court Administrator's office for Yakima County will, on an annual basis, compile demographic data regarding the language needs of its community. The court will initially review data from sources such as the following:

- Most recent and relevant U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS)
- Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Public Defender's Office/Office of Assigned Counsel
- Local legal aid service providers and community-based organizations which focus their service provision on immigrant and refugee populations to identify possible immigration and new language trends

This data will be analyzed annually to determine whether the court's allocation of language access resources is appropriate

The Yakima County Superior Court will make every effort to track requests for language access services by:

- Language preference (Spoken, Written & signed)
- Case Type (e.g., family law, criminal, civil, etc.)
- Proceeding (e.g., trial, arraignment, initial appearance, etc.)
- Location of services request (e.g., Court hearing, Clerk's office, etc.)
- Whether the language access service requested was granted/denied.
- Reason for denial

In addition to mechanisms discussed under the identification of language needs section below, the Yakima County Superior Court will track this internal data in case management systems where available, and/or case files if case management is not automated. On a yearly basis, the court will analyze the data collected to identify whether services requested are in fact provided, assist in allocation of language access resources, and identify gaps in provision of services to address future needs.

The Yakima County Superior Court will send the final data compilation and analysis in the form of a biennial report to the Washington State Court Interpreter Commission to assist the Commission in monitoring the courts' Language Access Plan, identification of interpreter training and certification strategies, and other tools to assist the AOC and local courts in the provision of language access services.

## **A. Identified Current Needs**

The most current language need identification efforts undertaken by Yakima County Superior Court shows the following non-English languages, whether spoken or signed, that are most frequently used in our geographic area:

- Spanish
- ASL
- Punjabi
- Arabic
- Vietnamese
- Mixe
- Tzeltal

The most current language need identification efforts undertaken by Yakima County Superior Court shows the following foreign or sign languages that are most frequently used in our court community:

- Spanish
- ASL
- Punjabi
- Arabic
- Vietnamese
- Mixe

Yakima County Superior Court has identified the following emerging and or additional languages among court users in the area for which resources will be needed in the future:

- Russian
- Korean
- Ukrainian
- Mixteco
- Tagalog
- Zapoteco

- Mixe
- Tzeltal

## **B. Future needs Identified**

Yakima County Superior Court has Identified the following emerging and additional needs among court users in the area for which resources will be needed.

- One of the most challenging issues in scheduling is the lack of Court Certified Spanish Interpreters in our area. Urgent action on behalf of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is necessary to identify the reason or cause of the shortage issue. AOC should take steps to identify candidates and provide language specific training for taking the Certification Exam.
- We would suggest the Interpreter Commission give specific guidelines and best practices for remote Interpreting.
- American Sign Language (ASL) is also a very difficult language to schedule for in court proceedings, as there are very few ASL interpreters qualified for legal proceedings. AOC should research the cause behind the shortage and take action to provide education, training, testing, and recruitment for ASL.

## **IV. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE IDENTIFICATION AND RESOURCES**

### **A. Designated Language Access Office**

Yakima County Superior Court has designated an Interpreter Coordinator named on page 16 of this document as the person responsible for coordinating language access services and to whom requests for interpreters and other language access services may be addressed. This designated person is available to:

- Develop lists of interpreters and secure interpreter services.
- Receive and track language assistance requests.
- Each time an individual requests the need for interpreter services, the Superior Court Interpreter:
  - Indicates on the daily court calendar the need for interpretive services.
  - Denotes on a spreadsheet the interpreter hired/used, the length of time they were used, the case number, the person that needed the interpreter. The Interpreter Coordinator will also work with the Court Financial Manager to ensure contract interpreters are paid for their services.

- A spreadsheet is also uploaded quarterly to AOC that provides all the information above.
- Request web hits on our translated web pages and any other internet based posted materials.
- The Interpreter Coordinator also collects and records the number of instances video and telephonic interpretive services are used.
- Address gaps in interpreter services by conducting outreach as needed.
- Provide information to assist LEP and D/HH/DB individuals to secure language access services.
- Assist to provide referrals to attorneys, justice partners and other relevant persons to secure language access services for their clients and constituents.
- Assist court staff with securing language access services, including the court's language access resources. For example, translated materials, interpreter roster, language identification cards, and other resources identified in this plan.
- LEP and D/HH/DB individuals, attorneys, justice partners, government agencies, and any other entities in need of language access services for court programs or activities or to acquire such services or information for themselves or their clients, may contact the Interpreter Coordinator named on page 16.

## **B. Identification of Language Access Needs and Notices of Availability**

LEP and D/HH/DB, Individuals may encounter court personnel via the phone, TTY/TDD, in person or through other means. In addition, there are various points of contact with Yakima County Superior Court where LEP individuals or persons who are D/HH/DB may contact court staff. Sometimes people who need language access services, including translated documents, will not request these services because they do not realize that such services are available at no charge, or because they do not recognize the level of English-language proficiency, or the ability needed to communicate effectively to participate in the court program, court proceeding, or court services. The first step in providing language access services is to enable LEP individuals or persons who are D/HH/DB to properly identify their language needs.

As a first step towards ensuring that LEP and D/HH/DB individuals can properly identify their language needs and to request language access and assistance services, Yakima County Superior Court recognizes the obligation to provide accessible notice to the public of an individual's right to spoken and sign language interpreter services.

### **C. Identifying Language Needs at Points of Access**

Yakima County Superior Court will identify language access needs at all points of contact with the court, such as the following:

Yakima County Superior Court Clerk's Office

128 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Room 323

Yakima, WA 98901

509-574-1430

Yakima County Superior Court

Family Court Facilitator

128 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Room 213

Yakima, WA 98901

509-574-1894

Yakima County Superior Court Administrators Office

128 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Room 314

Yakima, WA 98901

Yakima County Juvenile Court

1728 Jerome Ave.

Yakima, WA 98902

To ensure the earliest possible identification of the need for language access services, the Yakima County Superior Court has established internal protocols with the various justice partners which routinely interact with this court for these partners to communicate to the appropriate court staff the needs of LEP or D/HH/DB participants who will interact with the court. While justice partners themselves may be under separate legal obligation to provide language access services to their clients, the court will be notified of any services that fall under the responsibility of the court as early as possible so services may be provided in a timely and efficient manner.

**Examples of justice partners to be notified include:**

- Attorney/Public Defender/Prosecutor
- Court Facilitator
- Clerk's Office
- LEP or D/HH/DB person notifies the court of their needs.
- Correctional Facilities Personnel
- Judges/Court Personnel
- Attorney/Public Defender for LEP of D/HH/DB person

**D. Notice of Availability of Language Access Services**

To facilitate the ability of LEP and D/HH/DB individuals to request their need for language access services, the Yakima County Superior Court shall provide notice of the availability of language access services translated into Washington State's most frequently used languages that states:

“You have the right to language access services at no cost to you. To request these services, please contact the Yakima County Clerk's Office, or Superior Court”.

Yakima County Superior Court displays this notice on its website and at the following locations:

- Elevators
- Hallways
- Clerk's Office
- Bulletin Boards

**E. Language identification forms at all points of contact**

Bi-lingual notices at all appropriate points of contact notifying members of the public of their right to request an interpreter or other language assistance at any point during their contact with the court.

Language assistance on the Clerk's web page Link to “Language Assistance” opens a page that provides instruction in English/Spanish how to change the web page to a preferred language.

Language assistance information on the Court Administrator's website, "Link to Language Assistance", opens a page that provides instruction in English/Spanish how to change the web page to a preferred language.

When it appears that an individual has difficulty communicating due to a language barrier, Yakima County Superior Court staff must inform the LEP or D/HH/DB person of his or her right to have language access services provided by the courts at no cost to them, even if the LEP D/HH/DB person has not made a request for the language access services.

## **V. Language Access Services**

Once the Yakima County Superior Court staff has determined interpreter services are required for an LEP or D/HH/DB individual, court staff have access to the following procedures for securing an interpreter.

### **A. Language Access Services Inside the Court Room**

#### **1. Appointment of a Certified, Registered, or Qualified Interpreter for In Court Proceedings in person or remotely.**

The person responsible for appointing or securing the assistance of an interpreter at the Yakima County Superior Court will comply with the following order of preference in appointing an interpreter as set forth in **RCW 2.43.030(1)(b) and (2)** **RCW 2.43030(1)(b) states:**

(1) An in-person Certified or Registered interpreter who has been credentialed by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) shall be appointed, whenever possible, unless good cause is found and noted by the appointed authority. "Good cause" includes, but is not limited to a determination that:

(b) Given the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the proceeding and the potential penalty or consequences involved, the services of an in-person credentialed interpreter are not reasonably available to the appointing authority; or

The current list of credentialed interpreters maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts does not include an interpreter in the language spoken by the LEP.

#### **RCW 2.43030(2) states:**

If good cause is found for using an interpreter who is not credentialed by the Administrative Office of the Court, the appointing authority shall make a preliminary determination that the proposed interpreter is able to interpret accurately all communications to and from such person in that proceeding. The appointing authority shall satisfy itself on the record that the proposed interpreter:

- (a) Can communicate effectively with the court or agency and the person for who the interpreter would interpret; and
- (b) Has read, understands, and will abide by the code of ethics for language interpreters established by court rules.

In the event no interpreter is available locally, in person or by remote means, the court or designated authority will weigh the need for moving forward with the proceeding against any possible negative consequences to the LEP or D/HH/DB person's ability to effectively participate in the proceedings, as may be allowed by Washington Court rule or law. When evidentiary matters are before the court, the court shall reschedule the hearing until a court-certified interpreter is available either in person or remote, whether located in-state or out-of-state, can be present for the hearing.

Yakima County Superior Court will NOT appoint an interpreter who has a potential conflict of interest in the case, including the following: minors; friends and family of the LEP or D/HH/DB person; advocates and attorneys; justice partner bilingual staff; or anyone deemed unqualified after voir dire by the court.(See CODE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR JUDICIARY INTERPRETERS)

## **2. Practices in the Appointment and Use of Interpreters**

In appointing interpreters, staff at Yakima County Superior Court, will ensure that the interpreter and the LEP or D/HH/DB participant can effectively communicate. It is also the practice of Yakima County Superior Court to:

- Determine the appropriate number of interpreters that may be required for the proceeding. When the proper administration of justice so requires, the court will appoint multiple or separate interpreters.
- For long hearing sessions or trials, appoint a team of two interpreters or, if no second interpreter is available, allow the interpreter to have frequent breaks to avoid interpreting fatigue, ensure accuracy, and avoid subsequent errors.
- Only allow an LEP or D/HH/DB person to waive his or her right to the assistance of an interpreter if the waiver is knowing, voluntary, and on the record. The waiver of an interpreter may be rejected by the court or later revoked by the person.
- Require interpreters to provide sight translations for documents related to court proceedings.
- Prohibit interpreters from assisting LEP or D/HH/DB with entering information on court forms.

- Provide sign language interpreters for jurors who are LEP & DD/HH/DB when such persons are called and selected for jury service.

### **3. Calendaring and Scheduling of Interpreters for In-court and Out-of-court Contacts**

Yakima County Superior Court will provide interpreter services in a timely manner. To provide high quality language access services in an efficient manner, Yakima County Superior Court employs the following practices:

Scheduling matters for which an interpreter for a specific language is needed so long as this does not cause unnecessary delays in access and loss of remedies available to litigants, such as:

- Contested hearings
- Pre-Trials
- Triage
- Omnibus
- Plea & Sentences
- Coordinating calendars so an interpreter may be available for several matters in the same court location on the same day.
- Establishing systems so that an interpreter coordinator can easily dispatch an interpreter from one court location to another, or one courtroom to another efficiently such as:
  - Provide interpreters with electronic devices so they can receive email and text messages
  - Creating a pool of interpreters who may be available by telephone or video to assist in non-evidentiary proceedings or other court programs.
  - Coordinating the use of interpreters so that when an interpreter is not busy in a courtroom proceeding, he or she may be available in person or via remote interpreting technology if needed.

### **4. Remote Interpreting**

For hearings the Yakima County Superior Court uses the following remote interpreting technologies:

- Video -remote interpreting (VRI)

- Telephonic interpreting provided by credentialed interpreters
- Telephonic interpreting agencies

The use of telephonic interpreting agencies only for out of court matters, e.g., for customer service. Court assignments are a priority for credentialed interpreters for all in-court proceedings when using any form of remote interpreting. See *Attachments: Telephone Interpreting Best Practice and Remote Interpreting Best Practices*.

The policy or practice of the Court regarding the use of remote interpreting services is as follows:

- Video remote and telephonic interpreting use will be consistent with GR 11.3 and will be used with caution. Generally, in-person interpreters are preferred.
- Telephonic interpreting will be a last resort for courtroom proceedings and reserved for brief non-evidentiary proceedings such as continuances, given that non-verbal cues (not visible when on the telephone) are critical for communication. Telephonic interpreting can be particularly problematic in some circumstances such as for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, the elderly, those struggling with mental illness, quiet or nonverbally communicative individuals, and others.
- Video remote interpreting (VRI) will be used appropriately and will meet the requirements for providing effective communication, including,
  - Real-time, full-motion video and audio.
  - A clear, large image.
  - A clear transmission of voices
  - Adequate training of staff in utilizing the equipment.
  - Use of properly trained interpreters.

The court requires training for staff appointing authorities on VRI and telephonic interpreting, how to use the technologies, how to best utilize the remote interpreter, and what are appropriate events for such types of remote interpreting service. VRI shall not be the only option available to the court and should be used when in-person interpretation services are not available.

## **B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom**

The Yakima County Superior Court is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP deaf and hearing-impaired individuals have meaningful access to services outside the courtroom. It is the practice of the court to provide

interpreters for court-managed services, programs, and operations consistent with state and federal language access mandates. In compliance with such mandates, the court shall provide language access services at:

- Court Facilitator services
- Criminal Diversion programs
- Intake or filing offices
- Juvenile Detention
- Juvenile Diversion programs
- Court ordered programs
- Attorney Client interviews
- Investigator Witness interviews
- Intake or filing offices
- Probation Offices
- Records rooms
- Interviews for public defender eligibility
- Interviews for orders for protection
- TTY
- Translation of letters/requests in other than English languages
- Probation interviews(housed within and a part of the court- Juvenile)
- Community Resource Services
- Mental Health Assessments

The court, in compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations, shall provide the most appropriate language access service for these programs and services, including qualified interpreters, bilingual staff, and translated materials and information. When the most appropriate language access service is the appointment of qualified interpreter, the court shall follow the guidelines described for the appointment of interpreters.

As noted in the policy interpretation section earlier, RCW 2.42 requires that courts provide interpreters for persons who are D/HH/DB when they are required to attend court ordered programs or services. In addition to the provision of qualified interpreters in all proceedings where required, court's bilingual staff may assist with language needs outside of court proceedings. Bilingual staff shall be trained to understand their role,

how it differs from the role of an interpreter, and that of staff are only used for basic communications.

Yakima County is challenged in this respect, due to the lack of bilingual staff available on each floor of the courthouse and at the Juvenile facility. Most individuals that need interpretive services in Yakima County require interpretation in the Spanish language. To provide accessibility to interpretive services, the County Clerk's Office provides laminated signs at their counter for individuals to indicate they need interpreter assistance.

### **C. Translated Forms and Documents**

Yakima County Superior Court understands the importance of translating forms, documents, and electronic materials into non-English languages, so that LEP individuals have greater access to the court's services. Judicial and court staff shall not use web-based applications or software to process or provide translations for LEP individuals.

Yakima County Superior Court will provide translation services in the Spanish language for the following:

State forms which have been translated are available at [www.courts.wa.gov/forms](http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms). Additional information resources translated into Spanish include:

[A Guide to Washington State Courts/Guia de los tribunales de Estado de Washington](#)

[Self-Represented Persons in Superior Court Civil Proceedings/Personas que se auto representan en procedimientos civiles en el Tribunal Superiores](#)

Yakima County Superior Court currently has multiple forms translated into Spanish at the following sites:

[http://www.yakimacounty.us/1159/Forms/State Forms which have been translated.](http://www.yakimacounty.us/1159/Forms/State%20Forms%20which%20have%20been%20translated)

Yakima County Superior Court process for translation requests in the Spanish language:

For other language translation services, Yakima County Superior Court will provide contact and referral information to the requester via brochures located in Superior Court and website printout information, as needed.

In the future, Yakima County Superior Court has a goal to add a virtual kiosk/touch screen that will provide courthouse department location and contact information

as well as additional resources across the state for interpretation and translation services, in both English and Spanish. The barrier for achieving this goal is funding.

#### **D. Providing Emergency Information to LEP Court Customers**

Yakima County Superior Court is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP and D/HH/DB individuals have meaningful access to emergency information should an emergency arise. The court provides such information in the following ways:

- There are universally understood emergency signs located in the strategic places throughout the courthouse building.
- Bilingual staff is informed and trained to provide emergency information

### **VI. Training**

Yakima County Superior Court is committed to providing training for all judicial court staff members who encounter LEP D/HH DB individuals to ensure the successful delivery of language access services. The court will provide staff training on all requirements in this Language Access Plan. Additional training opportunities will include:

- Proper appointment and scheduling of interpreters for all court proceedings and court-managed programs and services.
- How to voir dire a non-credentialed court interpreter.
- How to communicate to non-English speaking patrons in a way that successfully conveys how they can receive language assistance.
- Bench Card on Interpreting for Judges.
- Role of an interpreter, modes of interpreting, and interpreter ethics and professional standards.
- Courtroom management when interpreters work in the courtroom.
- Best practices of remote interpreting.
- Court staff meetings and training opportunities regarding interpreter issues and customer service.
- Staff instruction regarding LAP policies and procedures during orientation and on an annual basis, as described in this LAP plan.
- Training for attorneys, administrators, and judges regarding best practices of working with court interpreters.

Training efforts will include an initial training for new staff on the review of the current Language Access Plan and an annual training for existing court personnel that addresses any revisions made to the plan.

Resources and information regarding language access services, policies and procedures and tools for providing language assistance (such as bench cards, language identification guides, brochures, etc.) are available to all court staff and decision makers at:

- The Yakima County Superior Court website
- The Court's Language Access Coordinator/Interpreter Coordinator (see *Attachment A*)

## **VII. COMPLAINT PROCESS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

### **A. Complaints Against Local Court**

The specific complaint process is designed to bring to the attention of the local court and if necessary, the Commission, allegations filed by LEP or D/HH/DB parties that the local court is out of compliance with its own Language Access Plan, any applicable federal statutes or regulations, state statutory provisions, such as chapter 2.42 or 2.43 RCW and/or any applicable state or local court rules. This is an informal process whereby the Commission may be involved in providing consultation and guidance to LEP parties and local courts in resolving and removing barriers to language access services and resources.

LEP and D/HH/DB individuals are encouraged to first file a complaint with the local court using local court customer complaint filing procedures. The local court complaint rules are as follows:

#### **1. Local Court Complaint Process**

If you have a complaint about access to language services, you may submit a complaint using a complaint form. The Court provides versions of the form in English/Spanish. They should be submitted to the following address:

Yakima County Superior Court  
Court Director, Jessica Humphreys  
128 N 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Room 314  
Yakima, WA 98901

The Court Director will review and respond to all interpreter and language access complaints within 10 days. The Court takes all complaints about language access very seriously and will address the concerns in an appropriate manner. Please be aware that the

Yakima County Superior Court Administration in charge of the Language Access Plan does not have the authority to change or modify any decision made by a judicial officer and that its review of the complaint does not, in any way, affect or extend any applicable deadlines or procedural requirements such as filing motions, appeals, modifications, etc.

**2. Complaint Appeals may be filed with the Court Interpreter Commission at:**

Washington State Interpreter Commission  
c/o Interpreter Commission Staff  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
PO Box 41170  
Olympia, WA 98504-1170

Or by contacting Robert W. Lichtenberg at 360-350-5373 by telephone or via email at [Robert.Lichtenberg@courts.wa.gov](mailto:Robert.Lichtenberg@courts.wa.gov)

**VIII. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND EVALATION OF LAP**

**A. LAP Approval & Notification**

Yakima County Superior Court LAP has been approved by the Presiding Judge and a copy has been forwarded to the Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts' Interpreter Program Coordinator. Any revisions to the plan are to be submitted to the Court Administrator for approval, and then forwarded to the Interpreter Program Coordinator. Copies of Yakima County Superior Court LAP shall be provided upon request. In addition, the court shall post its LAP on its own website.

**B. Outreach and communication of Plan**

The Yakima County Superior Court shall inform the public of the existence of the LAP and to this end, the court will:

- Collaborate with local bar associations, justice partners and other relevant organizations to ensure distribution of information.
- Translate vital outreach materials into the following languages:  
Spanish

### **C. Annual Evaluation of the LAP**

Yakima County Superior Court will conduct an annual needs assessment to determine whether changes to the LAP are needed. To this end, the court will continue to communicate on an ongoing basis with stakeholders, including LEP and D/HH/DB persons, attorneys, and the public in the following manner:

Spot Check/Observation of Certified Interpreters at work during court sessions, as well as reviewing the procurement process for scheduling and payment for contract interpreters.

In addition, a quarterly review of Certified Interpreter usage over that period, to include type of language scheduled, duration of time used, total quarterly cost for each scheduled event, and assessment of the same for all last-minute, ex parte matters. The report data will be useful to assess existing needs and emerging issues.

#### **Yearly surveys submitted to each stakeholder group.**

The collected survey information and quarterly data collected will then be assessed by the Court Administrator, Administrative Supervisor, and the Court Interpreter Coordinator. The information will be compiled into a user-friendly report to enlighten the court to any gap areas that need attention.

This assessment will be done by reviewing various areas in which the court provides language access services, taking into consideration, at a minimum, the number of interpreters requested by language in the courts and the identification of emerging changes in the languages spoken or signed within the court's local population as identified by any informational means or by other methods. Elements of the assessment evaluation shall include:

- Number of LEP or D/HH/DB persons requesting court interpreters.
- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided.
- Assessing whether staff members adequately understand LAP policies and procedure and how to carry them out; and
- Identification of challenges or trends the courts are experiencing with providing language access services.

Any revisions made to the plan will be communicated to all court personnel, and an updated version of the plan will be posted on the Yakima County Superior Court web site. In addition, the Yakima County Superior Court will submit to AOC a copy of any updated information

contained in this LAP within 60 days of its approval by Presiding Judge/Court Administrator.

#### **D. Ideas for Future Improvements in Language Access**

Yakima County Superior Court will review the results of its annual needs assessment and conduct the following activities:

- Identify any challenges or trends our court is experiencing with providing language access services, sourcing of interpreters, documented translation tasks, and website information that is accessible to LEP and D/HH/DB individuals. Which would include accessing court via zoom, as needed.
- Engage in collaborative efforts with the courts to improve and coordinate interpreter scheduling where interpreter resources are shared.
- Identify and implement changes or improvements identified by your court to improve language access services that are within the scope of this LAP.
- Determine the available technology that could be used to address some of the future improvements, for example, a virtual customer service desk that can provide information about departments and resources throughout the courthouse, in the preferred language of the individual using the technology.

#### **LAP Contacts**

##### **State Contact:**

Robert Lichtenberg  
ASC Interpreter Program  
1206 Quince Street SE  
PO Box 41170  
Olympia, WA 98504-1170  
[Robert.Lichenberg@courts.wa.gov](mailto:Robert.Lichenberg@courts.wa.gov)  
(360) 350-5373

##### **Local Contact:**

Hilary Johnson  
128 N 2<sup>nd</sup> St #314  
Yakima, WA 98901  
509-574-2715

[hilary.johnson@co.yakima.wa.us](mailto:hilary.johnson@co.yakima.wa.us)

**The Effective date of this LAP plan is December 7, 2023**

