



THE FORTIETH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF MICHIGAN

NICK O. HOLOWKA
Circuit Judge

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40th CIRCUIT COURT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2013 -06 J
71A DISTRICT COURT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2013-06 J
LAPEER COUNTY PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER No. 2013-06 J

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

In accordance with Supreme Court Administrative Order 2013-8, the court establishes this Language Access Plan (LAP) to provide for the language access needs of court users.

This Language Access Plan is the plan for the court to ensure meaningful access to court services for persons with limited English Proficiency (LEP). A limited English proficient person is a person who does not speak English as his or her primary language, and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English, and by reason of his or her limitations, is not able to understand and meaningfully participate in the court process.

The purpose of the plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and effective language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the court. The court has appointed a language access coordinator to be a contact person for the public, court staff, and SCAO concerning this plan and its implementation. The language access coordinators may be contacted through the court administrator's office.

IT IS ORDERED:

Section I: Needs Assessment

- A. **Census Data:** Based on the US Census Bureau, Lapeer County population is an estimated 88,173 with 4.3% being identified as Spanish. The Court will make every effort to provide service to all Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals including the Hispanic and Latino population.
- B. **Identification of LEP Persons:** Court staff will initially determine their ability to understand the LEP. Cards will be available to clerks identifying different languages for an individual to mark their language. Court clerks will have available to display to the

LEP their wish for interpreter assistance. Court employees will be identified and provide assistance if the need arises for brief encounters to assist the LEP.

Section 2: Language Assistance Resources

- A. **Interpreters Used In the Courtroom:** The court will offer assistance to LEP persons in the courtroom by providing foreign language interpreters as required by Michigan Court Rule 1.111.
- B. **Language Services Outside the Courtroom:** The court will take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to services outside of the courtroom. This is one of the most challenging situations facing court staff, because in most situations they will encounter LEP persons without an interpreter present. The courts will utilize remote telephonic companies to provide language assistance to LEP, whether this is through probationary appointments or other types of appointments that are required of the LEP.

Court staff will consult with the court's language access coordinator to determine what type of language service should be made available, based on the nature and importance of the court service to be provided and resources available.

- The court will make available to those LEP persons telephonic interpreter services or in-person interpreters.
 - Signage will be put in place to identify the different courts, services it provides.
- C. **Service Referrals:** The court will make reasonable efforts to ensure that a non-federally funded entity to which the court refers LEP persons for services has provisions for addressing their needs. The court will consider viable alternatives if language access is not provided by such a non-federally funded entity.
- D. **Forms & Documents:** The State court Administrative Office makes select translated forms available to the court at <http://courts.michigan.gov/Administration/SCAO/Forms/Pages/default.aspx>.

When in-person interpreters are hired for court proceedings, they will provide sight interpretation of documents for LEP persons.

C. Courthouse translation for LEP may utilize the Hispanic Service Center to provide support in translation on documents. Hispanic Service Center is centrally located to the primary population that is served. The Court will make every effort to provide service to all Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals.

Section III. Training

The court is committed to training its judges and court staff, and coordinating with county clerks on providing LEP persons with meaningful access to court services. When the court provides training sessions, it will include a component addressing LEP policy and procedure and the court's LAP. The court is aware that staff members having contact with the public are more likely to need in-depth training on LEP policy and procedures.

The court will work with SCAO and MJI to ensure that all employees are trained on LEP policy and procedures. Training will be offered to assist judges and staff to: identify and respond to LEP persons, increased awareness of the types of language services available, guide when and how to access those services, and effectively use language services.

- Courts will complete an annual update on the LEP policy and procedure
- Courts will make it part of new employee orientation

Section IV. Public Notification and Evaluation of Language Access Plan

A. **Language Access Plan Approval and Notification:** The court's LAP has been approved by the State Court Administration Office. The court will post its LAP on its public website, public notification area within the courthouse and will make copies of the LAP available upon request.

The court consulted with the Hispanic Service Center regarding the LAP.

B. **Evaluation and Review of the LAP:** At the direction of SCAO, or its own initiative, the court will assess whether the LAP needs updating. The LAP will remain in effect unless modified or updated. Review of the following areas may indicate a need to update the LAP:


- Number of LEP persons requesting court interpreters or language assistance
- Funding provided or available for language services
- Current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided.
- Feedback from LEP communities within the county
- Feedback from trainings provided by the court or SCAO/MJI
- Court staff (turnover, new hires, etc)

- Viability of identified language services and resources
- Problem areas and corrective action strategies
- Updated census data

The language access coordinator for this court ensures this plan is followed, advises the court on potential updates to this plan, and coordinates the language access needs for the court as they arise. The court has identified the name and contact information of the language access coordinator and advised the State Court Administrative Office. The court will notify the SCAO regional office of any changes to the language access coordinator's contact information, or if a new language access coordinator is named.

Date: _____

12/5/13



Nick O. Holowka – Chief Judge

**Language Access Coordinator
Contact Information**

This form identifies the court's language access coordinator. The court or language access coordinator will notify the SCAO regional office if there are any changes to the contact information, or if the court names a different language access coordinator.

Name (required): Lori E. Curtiss
Bar Number (if appropriate):
Court Number/Name (required): Lapeer County Court - C40, D71A P44
Court Address: 255 Clay Street
City, State, ZIP: Lapeer, Michigan 48446
Phone Number: 810-245-4843
E-mail Address: lcurtiss@lapeercounty.org
Date (required): 12/5/13

Provide the above information to the SCAO regional office.