

**Minutes of
The Committee on Limited English Proficiency
May 24, 2021**

Members in Attendance: Hon. Maria A. Kahn, Co-Chair, Ms. Alejandra Donath, Co-Chair Mr. Troy Brown, Atty. Brittany Kaplan, Atty. Viviana Livesay, Atty. Richard Loffredo, and Atty. Brandon Pelegano. Support staff: Ms. Heather Collins.

- I. **Welcome:** Justice Kahn welcomed the members and noted that the meeting is being livestreamed for the public and interested parties via the Judicial Branch’s YouTube Committee channel.
- II. **Approval of minutes** from the February, 2021 meeting: Atty. Livesay made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes and Atty. Pelegano seconded. The motion was approved 7-0.
- III. **February 11, 2021 meeting follow-up:** Justice Kahn asked Atty. Loffredo to provide updates on these initiatives:
 - a.) **Justice Index:** The Connecticut Judicial Branch finished with the second highest rating among all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, in providing language access in its courts, according to an assessment conducted in 2020 by the National Center for Access to Justice (NCAJ) at Fordham Law School. The newlyreleased Justice Index results ranked Connecticut fourth in the nation overall in its access policies. In the language access assessment, “NCAJ identified 35 policies that all states should adopt to ensure language access in the justice system. We then examined the degree to which each US state actually has these policies in place. Based on those results, we assign every state a score. Performance is measured on a scale of 0 to 100.” Connecticut earned an 80.5 in language access. Atty. Loffredo thanked all of the Committee members and cited Justice Kahn and Ms. Donath’s commitment and efforts in particular. He also noted that Connecticut ranked No. 1 in the New England states. Justice Kahn thanked all of the members for their continued commitment to ensuring people with Limited English Proficiency have real and meaningful access to justice in Connecticut.
 - b.) **LEP Committee Report:** Atty. Loffredo said the Committee’s 2020 annual report was presented to Chief Court Administrator Judge Patrick L. Carroll III and was accepted and approved. It has been published on the Committee’s webpage. It is being translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish for publishing on the website.
 - c.) **Language Access Plan:** The 2021 Language Access Plan submitted by the Committee to Judge Carroll was accepted and has been posted to the Branch’s current LEP website. It is also being translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish for publishing online.

- IV. **Website:** In addition to the Committee’s website, the Judicial Branch maintains an internet Limited English Proficiency website where reports, plans, policies and other such information is available. Attorneys Livesay, Kaplan, Loffredo and Ms. Donath reviewed in 2020 the pages of other state judiciaries to compare how our information was being published, and to see what improvements can be made. Atty. Loffredo noted that the Branch’s Advisory Board on the ADA conducted a similar assessment and recently updated its pages. After coming up with recommendations, the members worked with Judicial Branch Information Technology Analyst Kaitlyn Marshall of the IT Division, to develop a new page. The members reviewed the page, which features a cleaner design with more user-friendly language and a more intuitive and consumer-friendly design. Committee members discussed the draft and offered minor revisions. Atty. Livesay told the members that she is also a member of the Branch’s Web Board, which oversees changes, edits, revisions and other information published on the Judicial Branch’s extensive website. The LEP members approved the design and Atty. Livesay said that she will facilitate its presentation to the Web Board for their consideration as soon as possible.
- V. **Interpreter Card:** The Judicial Branch provides thousands of interpretations to people every year in dozens of languages. These interpretations are done in-person, by phone, and increasingly by video. In order to help members of the Bar and the public understand the critical role of the interpreter to access to justice, the Committee created a “quick card” that highlights how to request the services of an interpreter at no cost; what the role of an interpreter is; what an interpreter can and cannot do; and tips on how to work with an interpreter. The quick card information is presented in plain language to help ensure that people who are not familiar with interpretation services understand how it works. The members made a couple of revisions to the existing draft. Justice Kahn, who chairs the Branch’s Access to Justice Commission, told the members that the Commission’s Workgroup on Libraries and Access to Justice had recently created a quick card on the Americans with Disabilities Act and how to access Branch services. The card was developed by members of the Workgroup with assistance from another public librarian, and was approved for distribution to all public libraries, Court Service Centers, Law Libraries, and is posted online on the Branch’s ADA homepage. The Committee’s support staff Heather Collins is a member of the Workgroup and was requested to forward the LEP Card to the Librarians on the ATJ workgroup for review.
- VI. **Training:** Ms. Donath and Atty. Loffredo reported that they recently provided LEP training to 15 newly-appointed Superior Court Judges. Using materials that Justice Kahn has used to assist in Judge training, the new members of the Bench learned how to access interpreters and how to request assistance if necessary, and the role of the interpreters in keeping dockets moving. Atty. Loffredo and Ms. Donath also told the Committee that they are committed to developing an online “refresher” training for all Branch staff, based on the 90-minute mandatory online training for all Branch staff, “LEP: Why It’s Important to You.” The refresher course will be about a third of that training, to remind

staff how to secure an interpreter, or request a translation; how to work with LEP individuals, etc. They asked members interested in assisting with developing the training to reach out by email.

- VII. **Forms:** Atty. Livesay, Ms. Donath, and Atty. Loffredo told the group that they met with the Branch's Legal Services Unit director and the Forms Manager to discuss placing an indicator on forms that are in English and have also been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish, and are available online. A notification was created and is ready to go live. A person looking at a form online will see, by hovering over certain earmarks, that the form is available in those other languages. Atty. Livesay, Ms. Donath, and Atty. Loffredo will continue to work with the Branch's Legal Services Unit director and Forms Manager to add language to the Branch's forms regarding the provision of free interpreter services.
- VIII. **Other Business:** Justice Kahn invited the members to attend a virtual meeting of the American Bar Association's National Access to Justice Commission's racial justice workgroup. Justice Kahn co-chairs the Workgroup with Judge Mark Juhas from the California Commission on Access to Justice, and the members were set to hear from Lillian Moy of the NY Permanent Commission on ATJ about proposed race equityrelated revisions to ABA standards for the provision of Civil Legal Aid. Atty. Loffredo told the members that an improved process to file a complaint about an interpreter or translation will be developed in the coming months.
- IX. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be in September and a date will be circulated.
- X. **Adjourn:** Justice Kahn thanked everyone for their hard work and attending the meeting, and the meeting was adjourned about 11:45 a.m. and it is posted on the YouTube channel.