

State of Connecticut Judicial Branch  
Public Service and Trust Strategic Plan

**Committee on Limited English Proficiency**

March 30, 2012  
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Room 4B  
225 Spring Street, Wethersfield, CT

**AGENDA and MINUTES (Revised May 16, 2012), Approved June 6, 2012**

Present: Hon. Maria Kahn (Chair), Faith Arkin (Chair), Toni Smith-Rosario (Chair), Alejandra Donath, Karen Franchi, Scott Hartley, Diane Hatfield, Cynthia Hernandez, Lorin Himmelstein, Dan Horwitch, Jim Maher, Deborah Tvaronaitis, Karen Chorney, Rich Agosta (Internal Guest), Susan Nofi-Bendici (External Guest)

Absent: Virginia Apple, Troy Brown, Michaelangelo Palmieri, Rhonda Stearley-Hebert, Shirley Turnbull

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting commenced at 9:10 a.m. and the meeting attendees introduced themselves. Faith Arkin introduced Rich Agosta who is working on some of the technology components of the Advisement of Rights project.

II. Approval of January 19, 2012 Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes dated January 19, 2012 were unanimously approved.

III. Status Update: Family Support Magistrates Advisement of Rights – Pilot Project

The Spanish interpretation of the Model Advisement of Rights was previewed by the committee. It was recorded by a Judicial Branch Interpreter in multiple segments so that the Family Support Magistrates may select only those sections relevant to their specific dockets.

The committee discussed piloting the model in Waterbury, New Haven and Hartford but ultimately decided to test it in Hartford first, to ensure that the equipment and process operated as anticipated before launching the initiative elsewhere.

IV. Status Update: Foreign Language Instruction Workgroup

The workgroup reported that it

- met twice since the last LEP Committee meeting,
- was still working on the poster previewed in January,
- selected 3 potential online language instruction sites for IT to review,
- identified 2 online flashcard sites for IT to review,

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- developed a list of language instruction options, and
- will have recommendations ready for the next meeting for the committee to approve or decline.

V. Break

VI. LEP Committee Recommendations - Phase Four Implementation Report of the Strategic Plan (October 2011)

The Committee discussed the expansion of the use of telephonic interpreter services to certain courtroom proceedings. It was noted that this is becoming an ongoing practice when two criteria are met. The use of telephonic interpreter services for a particular hearing must be deemed appropriate and authorized by the Interpreter and Translation Services Unit and the Judge hearing the matter must approve its use for that particular hearing. This recommendation requires no further action by the LEP Committee.

The Committee then discussed the three new activities identified for the current year:

- To reexamine the role of the Committee on Limited English Proficiency

The committee members discussed the achievements of the committee to date including new processes, training programs, systems, personnel, literature, and equipment; and that the accomplishments were largely the result of multiple workgroups and subcommittees established to address specific projects over the past three years.

The committee members agreed that its current direction is more of an advisory body regarding issues and concerns than design or development with respect to services and processes.

The committee members agreed that the current size of the group is larger than an advisory group would require and that subject matter experts would be consulted as needed going forward.

- To develop a plan for using video-interpreting

This initiative is well underway with detailed research conducted and tentative plans for a pilot involving four remote locations with one interpreter at a central location. Technical issues regarding equipment and connectivity are being addressed at this time.

This initiative is considered established and ongoing.

- To explore the expansion of the LEP contracted Court Support Services Division (CSSD) vendor training to other vendors who provide contracted services to other units which have programs, services, and activities that involve individuals who are limited English proficient.

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This initiative was launched in January 2011 with all CSSD vendors being offered LEP training. Initially, four training sessions were conducted for responding vendors. A fifth class was offered to CSSD vendors in June 2011. In January 2012 two additional sessions were offered for Office of Victim Services (OVS) vendors.

This initiative is considered established and ongoing.

VII. Dept. of Justice Civil Rights Division Video

*Overcoming Language Barriers: Creating Language Access Policies, Plans and Procedures*

The committee viewed the new training materials and determined that (1) they were very specific to federal agencies and (2) other DOJ materials were available for use by the states and state subrecipients.

VIII. Next Steps

New Information Disseminated:

1. The committee discussed the correspondence recently posted on the DOJ website regarding the findings issued against the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts. Committee members were informed that a small workgroup recently convened to develop a list of abbreviated FAQ's in plain language regarding access to interpreter services in Connecticut courts. This literature will be translated into Spanish, Portuguese and Polish for distribution in the Clerk's Offices, Court Service Centers, and Law Libraries.
2. The committee was informed that as part of a follow up to an Equal Treatment Regulations Compliance Review by the Department of Justice, the Judicial Branch will be implementing new monitoring and contracting processes for subrecipients.

The committee will reconvene in mid-May. No specific date has been determined at this time. ***In preparation for the next meeting, the committee members agreed to identify quantitative measures pertaining to the work of the committee for use in the annual report.***