

What key laws or policies govern language access to courts?

- Texas Government Code, Chapter 57, Court Interpreters.
- Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 38.30, Interpreters.
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – prohibits national origin discrimination by recipients of federal financial assistance.
- Executive Order 13166 (2000) – Directs federal agencies to publish guidance to ensure that recipients of their financial assistance provide meaningful access for their programs and activities to LEP persons.
- U.S. Department of Justice *Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons.* (2000).

OCA's Language Access Program is here to help you provide individuals with limited English proficiency meaningful access to justice.

Contact Information

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Section 72.024 of the Texas Government Code provides that OCA shall consult with and assist courts in the efficient administration of justice.

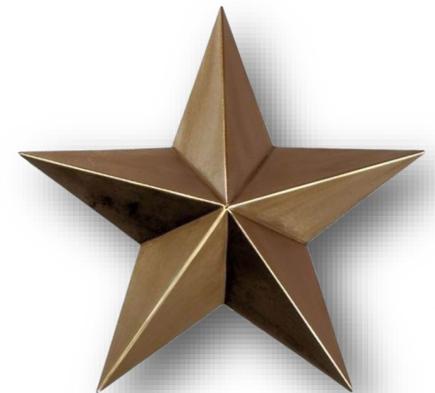
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Office of Court Administration

LANGUAGE ACCESS PROGRAM



Why does language access matter to your court?

- One in every seven Texas residents has limited English proficiency (LEP).
- Texas has about 500 licensed court interpreters, one for every 6,700 LEP residents.
- 191 of the state's 254 counties have no licensed court interpreter in residence.
- State and federal laws, as well as federal policies, require that interpreters and translated materials be provided to LEP court users.

What services can we offer your court?

The following services are FREE to courts:

- Review of your court's current language assistance policies and services.
- Guidance on developing a comprehensive language access plan.
- Training for your staff on best practices for serving LEP court users.
- Written translation of signage and forms or review of existing translations.
- Assistance to bilingual court staff interested in becoming licensed court interpreters.
- Information on remote interpretation technology.

What is a Language Access Plan?

- "The plan is a management document that outlines how the court defines tasks, sets deadlines and priorities, assigns responsibility, and allocates the resources necessary to come into or maintain compliance with language access requirements." [U.S. Department of Justice, *Language Access Planning and Technical Assistance Tool for Courts (February 2014)*.]
- A Language Access Plan addresses such matters as a needs assessment, how language assistance will be provided, training of judges and staff, public outreach and education about the Plan, and ongoing evaluation of the Plan.
- Courts in several Texas counties have adopted plans. Their plans can be found at: www.txcourts.gov/lap.

The mission of the OCA Language Access Program is to reduce linguistic barriers to justice in Texas courts through effective interpretation and translation.

Meet our Coordinator:



Marco Hanson, our statewide Language Access Coordinator, is a Texas licensed court interpreter (Spanish) and a translator with 18 years of experience. His responsibilities at OCA include supervising the Texas Court Remote Interpreter Service.

Marco began with OCA in 2010 as an interpreter with the Texas Remote Interpreter Project. Before OCA, he worked as a contract interpreter, freelance translator, Spanish professor at Austin Community College, and bilingual elementary teacher in Texas schools. He has a bachelor's degree from the U.S. Air Force Academy and a master's degree from U.T. Pan American.