

Superior Court of California

County of Tulare



# Limited English Proficiency Plan

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EQUAL ACCESS PROJECT

April 2018



**Superior Court of California  
County of Tulare County**

**Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan**

The Superior Court of California, County of Tulare, provides language access services to LEP court users consistent with the Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts (California Access Plan or LAP).

This LEP Plan addresses language access services, policies, and procedures that affect LEP court users. This document serves as the plan for the Superior Court of California, County of Tulare to provide LEP persons with services that are in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.; 45 C.F.R. §80.1 et seq.; and 28 C.F.R. §42.101-42.112). The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with Superior Court of California, County of Tulare.

Although court interpreters are provided for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, access services for them are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and therefore will not be addressed in this plan

**I. Identification of LEP Persons**

The top five (5) non-English Languages spoken in Tulare County are:  
*(In descending order of frequency)*

1. Spanish
2. Illocano
3. Mandarin
4. Lao
5. Punjabi

This information is based on data collected from the Judicial Council of California Court Interpreters Data Collection System (CIDCS).

## II. Services Provided

### Court Interpreters

The court strives to provide free interpreters to all LEP court users for all court hearings and trials and court-ordered/court-operated events. Interpreters are provided at no cost for all criminal, traffic, juvenile law cases, mental competency hearings with appointed counsel, and other mandated civil. While we continue efforts toward providing interpreters in all civil matters, we are currently providing services as described below.

The court currently provides free interpreter services in civil matters, within the priorities established in Evidence Code §756, as follows:

- Priority 1: Domestic violence, civil harassment cases where there is no fee to file, elder abuse cases where there is physical abuse or neglect.
- Priority 2: Unlawful Detainers (evictions)\*
- Priority 3: Termination of parental rights\*
- Priority 4: Guardianship and Conservatorship\*
- Priority 5: Cases where one person is asking for sole custody or visitation\*
- Priority 6: Other civil harassment and elder abuse cases\*
- Priority 7: Other family law cases\*
- Priority 8: Other civil cases\*

*\*Parties with a fee waiver have preference. The preference for “[p]arties proceeding in forma pauperis, pursuant to Section 68631 of the Government Code” is outlined in Evidence Code section 756(c)(1).*

The court has a web portal through which court users can request an interpreter in advance of their hearing.

### Court Interpreter Qualifications

The court employees certified court interpreters in the Spanish language. They are tested in their language proficiency and must complete continuing education and ethics courses. They are subject to the court’s professional Code of Ethics. The court also contracts with independent contractor interpreters to supplement the workforce.

If a diligent effort fails to identify a certified or registered court interpreter, Government Code §68561(c) authorizes the court to use provisionally qualified interpreters. Before the court uses such an interpreter, Rule 2.893 of the California Rules of Court requires the court to inquire into the interpreter’s skills, professional experience and potential conflicts of interest and to make a finding of the individuals’ suitability to interpret. After doing so, the Presiding Judge or his/her designee provisionally qualifies an individual to interpret in a court proceeding.

### Bilingual Staff

The court has bilingual staff to help LEP users in person or by telephone. The court tests their foreign language proficiency and qualifies them as bilingual. Once designated as bilingual proficient, the court

compensates those employees for the language services they provide in carrying out their duties at points of contact with the public. The languages spoken by the court's staff, in addition to English, include:

- Spanish


### **Translated Written Information**

The court provides multilingual information in the following ways:

- Written educational and information handouts and brochures in Spanish.
- By providing links to the California Court's Online Self-Help Center (English and the Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (Spanish).
- Court's website at [www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov](http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov)
- Court's self-help center offices.
- Posting multi-lingual court closure signs.
- Telephone and kiosk menus in Spanish
- Maintain complaint form in multiple languages.

## **II. Notification of Language Access Services**

The court notifies court users of available language access services and how to access them in the following ways:

- Multilingual notice posted at clerk's office, self-help center and courtrooms.
- Through constant use, in relevant points of contact and written notices, of the language access icon. 
- Court's website at [www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov](http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov)
- Court written informational and educational materials aimed at the public.
- Display and availability of I-Speak Cards at all points of contact with the court.

## **III. Education of Court Staff and Judicial Officers**

As recommended in the LAP, the Superior Court of California, County of Tulare provides education for court staff and judicial officers on (1) language access laws, policies and procedures at the state and local level, (2) working with language access service providers, (3) working with LEP court users, (4) tools and technologies for providing language access, and (5) cultural competence.

In addition to court-wide training, court staff has access to tools for serving LEP court users, such as the (1) Language Access Toolkit, (2) I-Speak Cards, (3) multilingual employee listings, (4) remote telephonic interpreter assistance using the services of an outside language provider.

#### **IV. Monitoring and Updating Local Language Access Service Policies**

The Superior Court of California, County of Tulare regularly monitors its language access services, policies and procedures, and all items included in the LEP Plan to assess whether any changes are needed. In addition, the court performs an annual evaluation of its policies and updates this document as appropriate. Updates to the webpage at [www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov](http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov) are similarly performed yearly or more often if necessary to provide current up-to-date information to all court users.

The Superior Court of California, County of Tulare has developed a language access complaint form and process, available at [www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov](http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov) or by contacting the Language Access office at the location specified below, to address the failure to provide language access services, or issues with the provision of services, including interpreter services, qualified multilingual assistance at all points of contact with the court, and translation of local court forms or other materials.

All complaints regarding the local provision or failure to provide language access services are handled by the court. All complaints are also reported to the Judicial Council to assist in the ongoing monitoring of the overall implementation and success of the California Language Access Plan, consistent with Recommendation No. 63 of the California LAP.

A copy of the Language Access Services Complaint Form is attached as Attachment "A".

#### **V. Public Outreach and Education**

Court leaders engage in community outreach and education to communicate about the various services available to all language speakers. Outreach and education efforts include:

- Collaborations with governmental agencies, public and private educational institutions, and private legal services organizations that serve immigrant communities; and
- Outreach meetings with community partners.

#### **VI. Language Access Office**

Any concerns and requests for information regarding LEP Plan, its content, implementation, or the language access services provided by the Superior Court of California, County of Tulare, should be directed to:

**Language Access Representative:**

Deanna A. Jasso  
Court Administrative Manager  
221 S. Mooney Blvd., Room 202  
Visalia, CA 93291  
(559) 730-5000 ext. 1117  
[djasso@tulare.courts.ca.gov](mailto:djasso@tulare.courts.ca.gov)

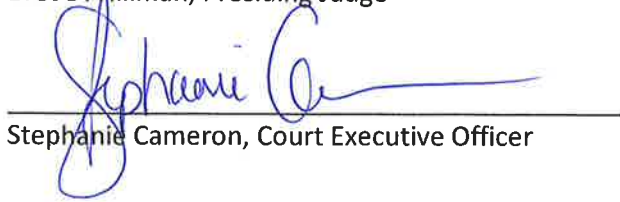
LEP Plan Effective: October 24, 2008

Revised: April 23, 2018

Approved by:



Bret D. Hillman, Presiding Judge




Stephanie Cameron, Court Executive Officer




## Language Access Services Complaint Form



Superior Court of California, County of Tulare  
221 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93291

 [www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov](http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov)

 (559) 730-5000

 [LAS@tulare.courts.ca.gov](mailto:LAS@tulare.courts.ca.gov)

### Instructions

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The California courts want all Californians, including those who do not speak English well, to have access to the courts. If you have a complaint about language access services at a local court, or if you would like to provide feedback about language access services, fill out and turn in the complaint form.

Please keep the following in mind:

- If you need language access services for an active court case, send us your complaint as soon as possible.
- Fill in as much information as you can. *You do not have to give your name*, but it is helpful to know how to contact you so we can get more information if needed.
- You can use the form to provide comments or suggestions about language access services.
- Language access complaints may be submitted orally or in other written formats. However, use of the court's local form is encouraged to ensure tracking and that the court received full information of the complaint.
- Filing a complaint will not negatively affect your court cases or the services you get at the court.
- Your complaint will NOT become a part of your case file or part of your case.
- If you are making this complaint on behalf of someone else, fill out the information of the person we should contact about the complaint.
- You can fill out the form and turn it in at your local courthouse by hand, postal mail or e-mail it at the addresses below. You can also fill it out and turn it in online.

**For complaints about services at your local court** related to staff, court interpreters, or local translations, fill out and mail or e-mail your complaint form to:

Superior Court of California,  
County of Tulare  
Attn: Language Access Representative  
221 S. Mooney Blvd., Room 202  
Visalia, CA 93291  
E-mail: [LAS@tulare.courts.ca.gov](mailto:LAS@tulare.courts.ca.gov)

The form is available for free both in hard copy at the courthouse and online on the court's website.

**For complaints about the Judicial Council's services**—Judicial Council meetings, forms, or other translated material hosted on [www.courts.ca.gov](http://www.courts.ca.gov) — **do not use this form**. Please go to [www.courts.ca.gov/languageaccess.htm](http://www.courts.ca.gov/languageaccess.htm) to submit your complaint.

*Thank you for taking the time to let us know how we are doing, and for helping us to improve our language access services for all Californians.*



# Language Access Services Complaint Form

Fill out this form to complain about language access services in the California courts. Provide as much detail as possible. You do not *have to* give your name or contact information if you do not want to, but it will help us investigate your complaint.

Your complaint will NOT become a part of your case file. Do not use this form if you have a complaint about the outcome of your case.

If you want to provide other comments and suggestions (not a complaint), fill out Part 2 of this form, under "Give Us Feedback."

### Information about Person with Complaint:

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language you speak: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language you write: \_\_\_\_\_

Best contact method:  mail  e-mail  phone

### If you are filling out this form for another person, please provide your contact information below:

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language you speak: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary language you write: \_\_\_\_\_

Best contact method:  mail  e-mail  phone

## PART 1. Describe the Complaint

Check and fill out all that apply.

I asked for an **interpreter** but did not get one.

Tell us when (date) and where (location) this happened: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Case number (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

I am not satisfied with the services of the **interpreter**.

Name of the interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_

Interpreter badge #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of interpreter service: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Case number (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Why were you not satisfied with the interpreter services? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Other problem with **court staff** related to language access.

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of staff person: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The **form** I need is not in my language.

Give form number, name, or description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The **information** I need is not in my language.

Specify what information you need translated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The translation of the form or information I received has **mistakes**.

Describe document or information: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe mistakes: \_\_\_\_\_

Other complaint related to language access.

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you complained to another agency about this problem?  Yes  No

If Yes, provide the name of the agency: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Add any other information that may help us review your complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## PART 2. Give Us Feedback

Other comments or suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


Thank you. We will contact you within **60 days** of receiving this form.

You can fill out the form and turn it in at your local courthouse by hand, postal mail or e-mail it at the addresses below.

**Superior Court of California, County of Tulare**

221 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93291

[www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov](http://www.tularesuperiorcourt.ca.gov)

 (559) 730-5000

 [LAS@tulare.courts.ca.gov](mailto:LAS@tulare.courts.ca.gov)

**Note: The following language could be provided by the court to the individual submitting the complaint via e-mail or as an automatic online response if submitting it online.**

**Your complaint or comments have been submitted.**

We will contact you within **60 days** of receiving your complaint or comments.

We may need to contact you using the contact information you provided.

If your complaint, comments, or suggestions are about an issue not related to language access services, we will send it to the appropriate court, agency, or department.