

1 **Superior Court of XYZ County** (see instruction 1)

2
3 **Language Access Plan (LAP)**

4
5
6 **I. Legal Basis and Purpose** (see instruction 1)

7
8 This document serves as the plan for the Arizona Superior Court of XYZ County to provide to
9 persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) services that are in compliance with Title VI of
10 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. §
11 42.101–42.112). The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely
12 and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the Superior Court
13 of XYZ County.

14
15 This language access plan (LAP) was developed to ensure meaningful access to court services
16 for persons with limited English proficiency. Although court interpreters are provided for
17 persons with a hearing loss, access services for them are covered under the Americans with
18 Disabilities Act rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and therefore will not be addressed
19 in this plan.

20
21 **II. Needs Assessment**

22 **A. Statewide**

23 The State of Arizona provides court services to a wide range of people, including those who
24 speak limited or no English. From a statewide perspective, the following languages were listed
25 with the greatest number of speakers who spoke English less than “Very Well” in Arizona
26 (according to the American Community Survey estimate report from the U.S. Census Bureau
27 dated April 2013):

- 28
29 1. Spanish
30 2. Navajo
31 3. Chinese
32 4. Vietnamese

33
34 **B. Superior Court of XYZ County** (see instruction 2)

35
36 The Superior Court of XYZ County is responsible to provide services identified in this plan to all
37 LEP persons. However, the following list shows the foreign languages that are most frequently
38 used in this court or the COURT’S geographic area.

- 39
40 1. [Insert your five or fewer top languages]
41 2.
42 3.
43 4.
44 5.

45 This information is based on data collected from [cite either one or both references or the source
46 of other data, as correct for your court: (your court’s data and/or the United States Census
47 Bureau data for Arizona)].

48

49 **III. Language Assistance Resources**

50 **A. Interpreters Used in the Courtroom**

51 **1. Providing Interpreters in the Courtroom** ([see instruction 3](#))

52

53 In the Superior Court of XYZ County, court interpreters will be provided in all courtroom
54 proceedings at no cost to all LEP persons including witnesses, litigants, victims, parents,
55 guardians, and family members of minors as well as any other person whose presence or
56 participation is necessary or appropriate as determined by the judicial officer.

57

58 It is the responsibility of the private attorney, Public Defender or County Attorney to provide
59 qualified interpretation and translation services for witness interviews, pre-trial transcriptions
60 and translations and attorney/client communications during out of court proceedings.

61

62 **2. Determining the Need for an Interpreter in the Courtroom**

63

64 The Superior Court of XYZ County may determine whether a court customer has limited English
65 proficiency. Identification of language needs at the earliest point of contact is highly
66 recommended. The need for a court interpreter may be identified prior to a court proceeding by
67 the LEP person or on the LEP person’s behalf by counter staff, self-help center staff, family
68 court services, or outside justice partners such as [(list any that apply) probation/parole officers,
69 attorneys, social workers or correctional facilities] ([see instruction 3](#)). Courts should have a
70 documented process to identify LEP needs for parties with notation in the physical or electronic
71 case file.

72

73 Signage throughout the court building indicating interpreter services are available may also help
74 to identify LEP individuals. The Superior Court of XYZ County will display this sign at the
75 following locations: [insert location descriptions here] ([see instruction 4](#)).

76

77 The need for an interpreter also may be made known in the courtroom at the time of the
78 proceeding. In a case where the court is mandated to provide an interpreter, but one is not
79 available at the time of the proceeding, even after the court has made all reasonable efforts to
80 locate one, as previously outlined in this plan, the case will be postponed and continued on a date
81 when an interpreter can be provided.

82

83

84

85

3. AOC Interpretation Resources

Court Interpreter Registry and Listserv

The AOC maintains a statewide roster of individuals who indicate they have interpreting experience and have expressed interest in working in the courts. The court USING INTERPRETING SERVICES will determine the competence of the persons listed. This roster is available to court staff on the Internet at <http://www.interpreters.courts.az.gov>.

Additionally, AOC created a statewide listserv to allow courts to communicate via email on court interpreter-related matters. The listserv is an excellent resource to locate referrals for specific language needs. Access codes and instructions to join the listserv may be obtained from the AOC Language Access contact person.

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

The AOC has installed video conferencing equipment at the State Courts building that will allow courts with compatible technology to remotely conference an interpreter from the Phoenix metro area or from another court jurisdiction into their court to improve resource allocation and reduce time and costs associated with interpreter travel. Contact the AOC LAP contact for more information on VRI connectivity and checklist for court proceedings most appropriate for video.

B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom

The Superior Court of XYZ County is also responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP individuals have meaningful access to all court services and programs outside the courtroom. Court services and programs include but are not limited to self-help centers, clerk offices, intake officers, cashiers, and records room.

The court also is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that lep individuals have meaningful access to all court-ordered services and programs. Court-ordered services and programs include but are not limited to conciliation, mediation, arbitration, treatment or educational programs provided by a court employee or a private vendor under contract with the court. Contracts with vendors that provide direct services to court users must include the requirement that the vendor provide language services, including interpreters, for all lep individuals. (see instruction 5).

The court uses the following resources to facilitate communication with LEP individuals and court staff or providers of court-ordered services: [modify the list below to show those that apply]: (see instruction 6):

- Staff court interpreters or independent interpreter contractors;
- Bilingual employees;
- Bilingual volunteers;
- “I Speak” cards, to identify the individual’s primary language;
- Written information in [list languages] on how to access and navigate the court;

- 130 • Multilingual signage throughout courthouse locations in the following languages: [list
131 languages];
- 132 • Telephonic interpreter services, (from contract interpreters or an agency); and,
- 133 • A public court phone line with key instructions provided in [list language(s)] to request
134 court services.
- 135 • Video remote interpreting services (where available)
- 136 • The terms of the court’s contracts with providers of court-ordered services.

137

138 To provide linguistically accessible services for LEP individuals, the Superior Court of XYZ
139 County provides the following: [modify the examples below to show those that apply]:

140

- 141 • Self-help center services that include [list those that apply, including any not on this list,
142 such as: bilingual self-help center staff, telephonic language assistance, and volunteers
143 that provide self-help services to LEP persons in their primary language];
- 144 • Workshops in [list languages] regarding [list topics, e.g., dissolution, small claims, etc.];
- 145 • Bilingual family court services mediators for custody and visitation matters; and
- 146 • Written informational and educational materials and instructions in [list languages or
147 state: “multiple languages”].
- 148 • Website links from court’s website (if applicable) to the Supreme Court’s Spanish
149 translated webpage for court forms and instructions and other language access related
150 resources such as the court’s lap and complaint form and process should be made
151 available online.

152

153 **C. Court Appointed or Supervised Personnel**

154

155 The superior court of XYZ county also shall ensure that court appointed or supervised
156 personnel, including but not limited to child advocates, guardians ad litem, court
157 psychologists and doctors provide language services, including interpreters as part of their
158 service delivery system to LEP individuals.

159

160 **D. Translated Forms and Documents**

161

162 The Arizona courts understand the importance of translating forms and documents so that LEP
163 individuals have greater access to the courts’ services. The Superior Court of XYZ County
164 currently uses forms and instructional materials translated into [list languages].

165

- 166 • The court has translated various VITAL documents into other languages:
167 [List the names of documents and the languages in which it is available.] (see instruction 7)

168

169 These documents will be located [cite physical location and/or online address].

170

171

172

173 **E. Websites/Online Access**

174 If the court operates an Internet website, it should ensure the website is accessible to lep persons
175 and will include, at a minimum:

- 176
- 177 • A notice about the availability of language services written in Spanish and posted on the
178 home page.
 - 179 • A hyperlink to Arizona Supreme Court’s Spanish-translated webpage at
180 <http://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio/FormulariosdeAutoservicio.aspx>.
 - 181 • [list additional resource links here]
- 182

183 Interpreters at court hearings are expected to provide sight translations of court documents and
184 correspondence associated with the case.

185

186 **IV. Court Staff and Volunteer Recruitment (see instruction 8)**

187 **A. Recruitment of Bilingual Staff for Language Access**

188 The Superior Court of XYZ County is an equal opportunity employer and recruits and hires
189 bilingual staff to serve its LEP constituents. Primary examples include but are not limited to:

- 190
- 191 • Court interpreters to serve as regular full-time or part-time employees or regular
192 interpreter contractors of the court.
 - 193 • Bilingual staff to serve at public counters and or self-help centers; and
 - 194 • Bilingual staff available on call to assist with contacts from LEP individuals, as needed.
- 195

196 **B. Recruitment of Volunteers for Language Access**

197 The court also recruits and uses volunteers to assist with language access in the following areas:
198 [modify the list below to show those that apply, if any]:

- 199
- 200 • In self-help centers, to assist LEP users;
 - 201 • At public counters to provide interpretive services between staff and the LEP public
- 202

203 **V. Judicial and Staff Training (see instruction 9):**

204

205 The Superior Court of XYZ County is committed to providing language access training
206 opportunities for all judicial officers and staff members. Training and learning opportunities
207 currently offered will be expanded or continued as needed. Those opportunities include [List
208 additional trainings that apply to your court and delete any that don’t. You might also want to
209 list new trainings that will be coming up during the first year of the plan.]

- 210 • Interpreter coordinator training;
- 211 • Diversity Training;
- 212 • Cultural competency training;

- 213 • LAP training;
- 214 • Staff attendance in Spanish and [insert language(s), if applicable] training, provided by
- 215 the court in partnership with local colleges and institutions to offer these classes on site
- 216 and free to employees on court time, or through tuition reimbursement;
- 217 • New employee orientation training; and,
- 218 • Judicial officer orientation on the use of court interpreters and language competency.
- 219 • AOC's Language Access in the Courtroom Training DVD
- 220 • AOC's language access online training videos

221

222 **VI. Public Outreach and Education** (see instruction 10)

223 To communicate with the court's LEP constituents on various legal issues of importance to
224 the community and to make them aware of services available to all language speakers, the
225 Superior Court of XYZ County provides community outreach and education and seeks input
226 from its LEP constituency to further improve services. Outreach and education efforts
227 include: [modify the list below to show those that apply]:

- 228 • Public service announcements in [insert language(s)], provided [daily/periodically/
229 monthly] through local [television/radio/newspapers]. Examples of the type of
230 announcements include radio spot announcement on court access issues or legal tip of the
231 day, provided in Spanish; [list all that apply: radio/print/flyers/mailers)] on the
232 availability of self-help center services and public workshops; and,
- 233 • Partnerships and collaborations with [pick all that apply: (community service centers/bar
234 associations/governmental social service providers/volunteer organizations/public
235 libraries)] to provide a court presence in the LEP community.

236

237

238 The court will solicit input from the LEP community and its representatives through
239 [focus groups/meetings] and will seek to inform community service organizations on how
240 LEP individuals can access court services.

241

242 **VII. Formal Complaint Process** (see instruction 11)

243

244 If an LEP court customer believes meaningful access to the courts was not provided to them,
245 they may choose to file a complaint with the trial court's Language Access Plan Coordinator [or
246 to whomever the courts wants this information to go]. The court will develop a complaint
247 process that includes at a minimum, the following information:

- 248 • Indicate the court will respond to any complaint within 30 days and the records will be
249 maintained as public records.
- 250 • Indicate how to file a complaint and to whom the complaint should be directed.
- 251 • The court must attach the complaint form to the LAP
- 252 • Ensure the translated versions of the complaint form are available in multiple locations,
253 including, but not limited to:

254

- 255 ○ Forms posted on the court’s website and
256 ○ Hard copy forms available at public counters.

257

258 **VIII. Public Notification and Evaluation of LAP**

259

260 **A. LAP Approval and Notification**

261 The Superior Court of XYZ County’s LAP is approved by the presiding judge and court
262 executive officer. Upon approval, please forward a copy to the AOC Court Services Division.
263 Any revisions to the plan will be submitted to the presiding judge and court executive officer for
264 approval, and then forwarded to the AOC. Copies of Superior Court of XYZ County’s LAP will
265 be provided to the public on request. [In addition, the court may choose to post this plan on its
266 public Web site.] (dependent upon your court’s policy).

267

268 **B. Evaluation of the LAP**

269 The Superior Court of XYZ County will routinely assess whether changes to the LAP are
270 needed. The plan may be changed or updated at any time but reviewed not less frequently than
271 [once a year or biennially] (dependent upon your court’s policy).

272

273 [Every 1 or 2 year(s)] the court’s [insert responsible position or program] will review the
274 effectiveness of the court’s LAP and update it as necessary. The evaluation will include
275 identification of any problem areas and development of corrective action strategies. From time to
276 time, the court may consider using a survey sampling of data collection for a limited time period
277 which involves assessing language access requests to assist in the evaluation of the LAP.

278

279 Elements of the evaluation will include [modify the list below to show those that apply]:

- 280 • Number of LEP persons requesting [court interpreters] [language assistance];
281 • Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated
282 materials should be provided;
283 • Solicitation and review of feedback from LEP communities within the county;
284 • Assessment of whether court staff adequately understand LEP policies and procedures
285 and how to carry them out;
286 • Review of feedback from court employee training sessions; and,
287 • Customer satisfaction feedback as indicated on the access and fairness survey, if
288 administered by the court during this time period.
289 • Review any language access complaints received during this time period.

290

291 **C. Trial Court Language Access Plan Coordinator:**

292 [Insert local contact information]

293

294

295

296 **D. AOC Language Access Contact:**
297 Amy Wood
298 Court Services Division
299 Administrative Office of the Courts
300 1501 W. Washington Street, Suite 410
301 Phoenix, AZ 85007
302 (602) 452-3337, Awood@courts.az.gov

303
304

305 **E. LAP Effective date:** [fill in date]

306

307 **F. Approved by:**

308

309 Presiding Judge: [_____] Date: [_____]

310

311 Court Executive Officer: [_____] Date: [_____]

312

313

314

315

316

317