

The Supreme Court of Ohio

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor

CC: Jeff Hagler, Administrative Director
Stephanie Hess, Deputy Administrative Director
Stephanie Nelson, Director, Court Services Division

FROM: Judge David Hejmanowski, Chairperson
Bruno Romero, Manager of the Language Services Program

DATE: January 24, 2020

RE: Advisory Committee on Language Services – 2019 Annual Report

Pursuant to Guideline 4.03 of the Operating Guidelines for the Advisory Committee on Language Services, Judge David Hejmanowski, chairperson and Bruno Romero, staff liaison to the advisory committee, hereby submit the 2019 Annual Report.

Purpose of Advisory Committee

The purpose of the advisory committee is to provide ongoing advice to the Court and its staff regarding the promotion of statewide rules and uniform standards on the operation of language access programs in Ohio courts; the development and delivery of interpreter services to Ohio courts, including training programs for judges and court personnel; and the consideration of any other issues the advisory committee deems necessary to assist the Court and its staff regarding the provision of language services in Ohio courts.

2019 Activities and Accomplishments

The advisory committee met telephonically on March 22, and in person, August 30, and December 20. A number of important items were discussed to assist local courts address language access issues and provide guidance to interpreters about compliance with the code of professional conduct and continuing education requirements. The committee proposed to create a resource paper to address issues regarding the use of foreign language audio and video files to be introduced as evidence in Ohio courts. The committee also worked on a compliance procedure for continuing education requirements and a proposed disciplinary procedure to address violations of the Code of Professional Conduct for Court Interpreters and Translators.

The committee voted to present the program and the Court for consideration and dissemination: *Transcription and Translation Guide on Foreign Language Audio and Video Files*. The purpose of this guide is to assist courts in managing foreign language audio and video files to be submitted as evidence in legal proceedings. The guide describes the process of transcribing the audio and video files and producing them in a translated form for the English speaker to read.

Additionally, the committee presented the program and the Court a compliance procedure for Continuing Interpreter Education (CIE). The procedure proposed that if a roster interpreter does not meet the requirements of Sup.R. 85, CIEs, the interpreter or the Court may take steps to place the interpreter in voluntary inactive status, probation or in the case of non-compliance, credential revocation.

The committee also presented the program with a disciplinary procedure for court interpreters who breach the Code of Professional Conduct for Court Interpreters and Translators. The procedure outlines how to file a complaint, the reasons for discipline, the investigation, dismissal protocol, types of violations, appeals, initial review panel and full review panel, decisions, penalties and revocations.

A number of additional topics were discussed by the advisory committee in 2019:

- (1) The advisory committee is considering presenting an analysis of court interpreter compensation in Ohio, as well as guidance on other interpreter practices that impact the cost of interpreters. The practices include mileage charges, cancellation fees, and case preparation costs.
- (2) At the December meeting, the training subcommittee discussed expanding the online training modules to include more resources and to coincide with live onsite educational sessions.
- (3) The advisory committee will also propose that the program collect data regarding the number of cases and the amount of languages used in Ohio courts.

The Advisory Committee on Language Services and the Language Services Program will continue to work together to strengthen access to justice for every limited-English, and deaf and hard of hearing person in Ohio.