

The Supreme Court of Ohio

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy

FROM: Judge Molly Johnson, Chairperson
Bruno Romero, Manager of the Language Services Section

CC: Robert W. Horner III, Administrative Director
Stephanie Nelson, Director of Court Services Division

DATE: December 30, 2024

RE: **Advisory Committee on Language Services – 2024 Annual Report**

Pursuant to Guideline 4.03 of the Operating Guidelines for the Advisory Committee on Language Services, Judge Molly Johnson, chairperson and Bruno Romero, staff liaison to the Advisory Committee on Language Services (Advisory Committee), hereby submit the 2024 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.

2024 Activities and Accomplishments

The Advisory Committee met via Zoom on March 21, August 22, and December 5. The Advisory Committee continued to build on past contributions and revisited court interpreting credentialing and ways to expand the roster to make court interpreters easily available to local courts.

The Advisory Committee identified and planned a series of training webinars for court personnel. Members of the training subcommittee assisted in delivering these one-hour presentations. The first session, *Machine Translation in Legal Settings* was delivered on

September 20, 2024. The second session is slated for February 21, 2025. The Language Services Section co-hosted with Kentucky's Office of Language Access the National Center for State Court's Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) annual conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. The conference was held May 19 through May 22, 2024. Three advisory committee workgroup members attended the conference. The section also presented to judges and magistrates at the Cleveland Municipal Court on April 30, 2024, and conducted an in-person presentation at the Ohio Judicial Conference on September 19, 2024. Additional judicial education included a presentation on language access at the New Magistrate Orientation on March 29, 2024, and New Judge Orientation on December 14, 2024.

The section created a recruitment brochure to distribute to local courts and to interpreters who would be interested in entering the field of legal interpretation. The section also assisted in drafting an American with Disabilities Act information letter that was sent to every judge in the state.

Furthermore, Judge Molly Johnson, chair of the Advisory Committee, presented to the Commission on the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio on December 10, 2024 new amendments to Sup.R. 80-89, Appendix H to increase the number of interpreters available for court assignments. The amendments included changes to create a new interpreter category, remove the three-year time limit to the provisionally qualified to make it a permanent credential, include language to allow for reciprocity of registered interpreters in other states and reorganize Sup.R. 88(D) to distinct subcategories for easier reading. Finally, the proposed amendments include minor changes to the Code of Professional Conduct for Court Interpreters and Translators.

The Advisory Committee on Language Services and the Language Services Section will continue to work together to strengthen access to justice for every limited English and deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the State of Ohio.