

The Supreme Court of Ohio

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Justice Sharon L. Kennedy

CC: Robert W. Horner III, Administrative Director
Gina White Palmer, Deputy Administrative Director, Legal Services
Stephanie Graubner Nelson, Director, Office of Court Services

FROM: Judge Molly Johnson, Mahoning County Area Court, Chairperson
Bruno Romero, Manager of the Language Services Section

DATE: December 30, 2025

RE: 2025 Annual Report on the Advisory Committee on Language Services

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 2025 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 Supreme Court of Ohio and its staff regarding the provision of language services in Ohio courts.

2025 Activities and Accomplishments

In 2025, the Advisory Committee met on March 6 via Zoom, in person August 21, and via Zoom on December 4. The Advisory Committee completed proposed amendments to the Rules of Superintendence, and the proposed amendments to Sup.R. 80 through 89 increased the number of court interpreters that may be eligible to fill the roster and the new Sup.R. 87 use of artificial intelligence in translating non-substantive, non-legal writings in court interpretation and translation, including general court information such as websites, chatbots, court signage, court

hours, department or office locations, and other writings were open for public comment on April 15. At the August 21 Advisory Committee meeting, the committee reviewed every public comment and made modifications as necessary. The proposed changes after public comment cleared the Commission on the Rules of Superintendence on September 23 and were ultimately adopted by the Supreme Court on October 30, 2025, and effective November 13, 2025.

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. *Machine Translation in Legal Settings* was delivered on February 24, 2025. The Language Services Section also presented to new magistrates on March 28, hosted an *Introduction to Court Interpretation* on April 12, and delivered a presentation at the Ohio Court Technology Conference. With the assistance of the Advisory Committee, the Section hosted a webinar on *Telephonic Interpretation in Ohio Courts* on May 30 and June 4. The Section hosted an *Orientation Training* for court interpreters on June 28 and December 13. In collaboration with the Domestic Violence Program and the Columbus Bar Association, the Section participated in *Beyond Words: Securing ASL Interpreters for Courts and Client Meetings* on July 24. On August 23 and September 14, the Section hosted a *Modes of Interpretation* training. Finally, the Section hosted *Court Interpreter Ethics*, September 30, presented at New Magistrate Orientation, September 19. On October 27, the section provided an in-person presentation to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel. Finally, the section co-presented with Judge David Hejmanowski, Delaware County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile and Probate Division, at the New Judge Orientation, December 11.

The Section provided technical assistance to local courts throughout the year. In 2025, the Section assisted courts in over 400 cases. The Section also handled nine court complaints and two interpreter complaints. The Section is also working with the Special Projects Subcommittee on a white paper on court interpreter compensation and the Rules and Policies Subcommittee is working on an interpreter disciplinary process. The American Sign Language Subcommittee has been tasked with developing a legal training program for American Sign Language Interpreters.