



**Language Assistance Plan (LAP)  
for Superior / District / Juvenile Courts**



## **Language Access Plan of Cowlitz County Superior / District / Juvenile Courts**

### **I. PURPOSE**

This Language Access Plan (LAP) sets forth the Cowlitz County Superior / District / Juvenile Courts (Cowlitz County Courts) policy and procedures for the provision of timely language access services that ensure access for all limited English proficient (LEP), deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind (D/HH/DB) individuals who come in contact with Cowlitz County Courts services and programs. Language access services include both interpretation and translation services for LEP and D/HH/DB individuals.

### **II. COURT POLICY REGARDING LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES**

Under Washington state law (RCW 2.42 and 2.43), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (Safe Streets Act), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the regulations implementing these federal laws, Washington courts are required to provide language access services to all LEP and D/HH/DB individuals in civil and criminal court proceedings and in all court-managed services and programs and to develop a written language access plan pursuant to RCW 2.43.090.

It is the policy of Cowlitz County Courts to provide foreign language interpreter services at no cost to LEP parties, witnesses, victims, and others with an interest (e.g., parents, legal guardians, custodians) in all court proceedings and operations, both civil and criminal, other than when it is the responsibility of other government bodies pursuant to state law. It is also the policy of this court to provide sign language interpreting services at no cost to persons who are D/HH/DB as required under applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

Cowlitz County Courts will provide accessible information to LEP and D/HH/DB persons on how to request these language assistance services and vital documents as part of its notice to the public about its language access services.

Although D/HH/DB individuals are covered under the ADA and RCW 2.42 rather than Title VI and the Safe Streets Act, this plan covers language access services for both D/HH/DB and LEP individuals.

### **III. DATA COLLECTION AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

A designated staff member for Cowlitz County Courts will, on an annual basis, compile demographic data regarding the language needs of its community. The court will initially review data from sources such as the following

- Most recent and relevant U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS)
- Local legal aid service providers and community-based organizations which focus their service provision on immigrant and refugee populations to identify possible immigration and new language trends [*Cowlitz/Wahkiakum Legal Aid Program, Northwest Justice Project, Ethnic Support Counsel, Access to Justice Committee*]

This data will be analyzed annually to determine whether the court’s allocation of language access resources is appropriate.

The Cowlitz County Courts will make every effort to track requests for language access services by:

- Language preference (both spoken, written, and signed)
- Case type (e.g. family law, criminal, housing, etc.)
- Proceeding (e.g., trial, arraignment, initial appearance, etc.)
- Whether the language access service requested was granted or denied
- Reason for denial

In addition to mechanisms discussed under the identification of language needs section below, the Cowlitz County Courts will track this internal data in a case management system where available, and/or case files if case management is not automated. On a yearly basis, the court will analyze the data collected to identify whether services requested are in fact provided, assist in the allocation of language access resources, and identify gaps in the provision of services to address future needs.

The Cowlitz County Courts will send the final data compilation and analyses in the form of a biennial report to the Washington State Court Interpreter Commission to assist the Commission in monitoring of the court’s Language Access Plan, identification of interpreter training and certification strategies, and other tools to assist the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and local courts in the provision of language access services.

#### **A. Identified Current Needs**

The most current language need identification according to <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/research-and-data-analysis/maps> on March 17, 2023 shows the following non-English languages, whether spoken or signed, that are most frequently used in Washington State:

- Spanish
- Chinese
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Russian

The most current language need identification according to <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/wa/cowlitz-county-population> on

March 17, 2023, shows the following non-English languages, whether spoken or signed, that are most frequently used in Cowlitz County:

- Spanish
- Other Indo-European Languages
- Asian and Pacific Island Languages
- Other Languages

The most frequently used foreign or sign languages used in Cowlitz County Courts, as determined by email consultation with judges, court administrators, court interpreter coordinators, the County Clerk, and the Cowlitz County Access to Justice Committee, which includes members from the Ethnic Support Counsel, Emergency Support Shelter, and the Cowlitz Wahkiakum Legal Aid, are:

- |                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Spanish                       | • Tagalog              |
| • Chuukese/Truukese             | • Vietnamese           |
| • ASL                           | • Mon-Khmer, Cambodian |
| • Russian                       | • Swahili              |
| • Chinese                       | • Japanese             |
| • Other Indo-European languages | • Cantonese            |
|                                 | • Ukrainian            |

#### **IV. LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE IDENTIFICATION AND RESOURCES**

A. The Cowlitz County Courts have designated Interpreter Coordinators responsible for coordinating language access services and to whom requests for interpreters and other language access services may be addressed. These designated persons are available to:

- Develop lists of interpreters and secure interpreter services
- Receive and track language assistance requests.
- Address gaps in interpreter services by conducting outreach as needed.
- Provide information to assist LEP and D/HH/DB individuals to secure language access services.
- Assist or provide referrals to attorneys, justice partners, and other relevant persons to secure language access services for their clients and constituents;
- Assist court staff with securing language access services; and
- Answer questions from LEP and D/HH/DB individuals, and the public at large, regarding the court's available language access services, including the court's language access resources such as translated materials, interpreter roster, language identification cards, and other resources identified in this Plan.

LEP and D/HH/DB individuals, attorneys, justice partners, government agencies, and any other entities in need of language access services for court programs or

activities or to acquire such services or information for themselves or their clients, may contact each Court directly.

## **B. Identification of Language Access Needs and Notice of Availability**

LEP and D/HH/DB, individuals may contact court personnel via the phone, TTY / TDD, in-person, email, or through other means. In addition, there are various points of contact within Cowlitz County Courts where LEP individuals or persons who are D/HH/DB will be in contact with court staff. Sometimes people who need language access services, including translated documents, will not request these services because they do not realize that such services are available at no charge, or because they do not recognize the level of English-language proficiency or communication ability needed to effectively participate in the court program, court proceeding, or court services. The first step in providing language access services is to enable LEP individuals or persons who are D/HH/DB to properly identify their language needs.

As a first step towards ensuring that LEP and D/HH/DB individuals are able to properly identify their language needs and to request language access and assistance services, Cowlitz County Courts have a legal obligation to provide accessible notice to the public of an individual's right to spoken and sign language interpreter services and to be provided vital documents in translated form whenever necessary to access court proceedings and court-managed programs.

### **1. Identifying Language Needs at Points of Access**

Cowlitz County Courts will identify language access needs at all points of contact with the court, such as the following:

- Telephone calls to court staff.
  - Superior Court (360) 577-3085
  - District Court (360) 577-3073
  - Juvenile Court (360) 577-3100
- Clerks' Offices at the following locations:
  - Cowlitz County Hall of Justice  
312 SW First Avenue, Kelso, WA 98626
  - Cowlitz County Juvenile Court and Detention Center  
1725 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Longview, WA 98632
- Courtroom(s) at the following court houses:
  - Cowlitz County Hall of Justice  
312 SW First Avenue, Kelso, WA 98626
  - Cowlitz County Jail Courthouse  
1935 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S, Longview, WA 98632
  - Cowlitz County Juvenile and Detention Center  
1725 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Longview, WA 98632

To ensure the earliest possible identification of the need for language access services, the Cowlitz County Courts have established internal protocols with the various justice partners which routinely interact with this court for these partners to communicate to the appropriate court staff the needs of LEP or D/HH/DB participants who will be coming into contact with the court. While justice partners themselves may be under a separate legal obligation to provide language access services to their clients, the court will be notified of any services that fall under the responsibility of the court as early as possible so services may be provided in a timely and efficient manner. Examples of justice partners include:

- Jail staff
- Domestic violence victim's advocate
- Attorney/public defender
- Law enforcement

## **2. Notice of the Availability of Language Access Services**

To facilitate the ability of LEP and D/HH/DB individuals to request their need for language access services, the Cowlitz County Courts shall provide notice of the availability of language access services translated into Washington State's most frequently used languages that states:

*"You may have the right to a court-appointed interpreter in a court case.  
Please ask someone at the Clerk's Office"*

The Cowlitz County Courts currently displays this notice on its website and at the following locations:

- Juvenile Court lobby
- Lobby between District and Superior Court
- The entrance to each building that houses courtrooms (Hall of Justice, Youth Service Center, Cowlitz County Jail)
- The elevator and stairwell at the Hall of Justice.

Additionally, Cowlitz County Courts have the following resources available at its points of contact, including those listed above when appropriate, to help LEP and D/HH/DB and court staff communicate with each other:

- Language identification (I-Speak) cards at all points of contact
- Language Access Line
  - 24-hour multi-language on demand interpreting
- Multilingual notices notifying members of the public of their right to request an interpreter or other language assistance at any point during their contact with the court.

- Google Translate and/or other equivalent translation apps.

When it appears that an individual has difficulty communicating due to a language barrier, Cowlitz County Courts staff must proactively inform the LEP or D/HH/DB person of his or her right to have language access services provided by the courts at no cost to them, even if the LEP or D/HH/DB person has not made a request for the language access services.

## **V. LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES**

Once the Cowlitz County Courts staff have determined interpreter services are required for an LEP or D/HH/DB individual, court staff have access to the following procedures for securing an interpreter.

### **A. Language Access Services Inside the Court Room**

#### **1. Appointment of a Certified, Registered, or Qualified Interpreter for In Court Proceedings**

The person responsible for appointing or securing the assistance of an interpreter at the Cowlitz County Court<sup>1</sup> will comply with the following order of preference in appointing an interpreter under RCW 2.43.030:

##### **RCW 2.43.030(1) (b)**

An in-person Certified or Registered interpreter who has been credentialed by the Administrative Office of the Courts shall be appointed, whenever possible, unless good cause is found and noted by the appointing authority. "Good cause" includes, but is not limited to, a determination that:

- (i) Given the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the proceeding and the potential penalty or consequences involved, the services of an in-person credentialed interpreter are not reasonably available to the appointing authority; or
- (ii) The current list of credentialed interpreters maintained by the Administrative Office of the Courts does not include an interpreter in the language spoken by the LEP.

##### **RCW 2.43.030(2)**

If good cause is found for using an interpreter who is not credentialed by the Administrative Office of the Court, the appointing authority shall make a preliminary determination that the proposed interpreter is able to interpret accurately all communications to and from such person in that particular proceeding. The appointing authority shall satisfy itself on the

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<sup>1</sup> Each court has its own interpreter coordinator. Their contact information is found in section VII. (1)(A) - COMPLAINT PROCESS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE of this LAP.

record that the proposed interpreter:

- (a) Is capable of communicating effectively with the court or agency and the person for who the interpreter would interpret; and
- (b) Has read, understands, and will abide by the code of ethics for language interpreters established by court rules.

In the event no in-person interpreter is available locally, the court or designated authority will weigh the need for moving forward with the proceeding against any possible negative consequences to the LEP or D/HH/DB person's ability to effectively participate in the proceedings through the use of a remote interpreter, as may be allowed by Washington court rule or law. When evidentiary matters are before the court, the court may reschedule the hearing until an in-person interpreter is available, whether located in-state or out-of-state, and be made present at the hearing if it is determined that there will be no negative consequences to the LEP or D/HH/DB person.

Cowlitz County Courts will NOT appoint as interpreters anyone with a potential conflict of interest in the case, including the following: minors; friends and family of the LEP or D/HH/DB person; advocates and attorneys; justice partner bilingual staff; or anyone deemed unqualified after voir dire by the court.

## **2. Practices in the Appointment and Use of Interpreters**

In appointing interpreters, Court staff will ensure that the interpreter and the LEP or D/HH/DB participant can effectively communicate. It is also the practice of Cowlitz County to:

- Make a determination of the appropriate number of interpreters that may be required for the proceeding. When the proper administration of justice so requires the court will appoint multiple or separate interpreters.
- For long hearing sessions or trials, appoint a team of two interpreters or if no second interpreter is available, allow the interpreter to have frequent breaks to avoid interpreting fatigue, ensure accuracy, and avoid subsequent errors.
- Only allow an LEP or D/HH/DB person to waive his or her right to the assistance of an interpreter if the waiver is knowing, voluntary, and on the record. The waiver of an interpreter may be rejected by the court or later revoked by the person.
- Require interpreters to provide sight translations for documents related to the court proceedings.
- Prohibit interpreters from assisting LEP or D/HH/DB with entering information on court forms without the involvement of court staff in the completion of such



forms.

- Provide sign language interpreters for jurors who are D/HH/DB when such persons are called and selected for jury service.

### **3. Calendaring and Scheduling of Interpreters for In-court and Out-of-court Contacts**

Cowlitz County Courts will provide interpreter services in a timely manner. To provide high quality language access services in an efficient manner, Cowlitz County Courts employs the following practices:

- Coordinating calendars so an interpreter may be available for several matters in the same court location on the same day.
- Coordinating the use of interpreters so that when an interpreter is not busy in a courtroom proceeding he or she may be available in person or telephonically to assist in other court-managed services, such as clerk's offices, pro se clinics, etc.
- Creating a pool of interpreters who may be available by telephone or video to assist in non-evidentiary proceedings or other court programs.

### **4. Remote Interpreting**

For short non-evidentiary hearings, the Cowlitz County Courts uses the following remote interpreting technologies:

- Video remote interpretation (VRI)
- Telephonic interpreting provided by credentialed interpreters.
- Telephonic interpreting agencies

The policy or practice of the court regarding the use of remote interpreting services is as follows:

- Video remote and telephonic interpreting use will be consistent with GR 11.3. Generally, in-person interpreters are preferred.
- Telephonic interpreting will be a last resort for courtroom proceedings and reserved for brief non-evidentiary proceedings such as continuances, given that non-verbal cues – not visible when on the telephone – are critical for communication. Telephonic interpreting can be particularly problematic in some circumstances such as for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, the elderly, those struggling with mental illness, quiet or nonverbally communicative individuals, and others.
- Video remote interpreting (VRI) will be used appropriately and will meet the requirements for providing effective communication, including,

- Real-time, full-motion video and audio.
- A clear, large image.
- A clear transmission of voices.
- Adequate training of staff in utilizing the equipment; and
- Use of Certified interpreters with legal training

in order to be an efficient and effective mechanism for providing language access services when an in-person interpreter is not available, or when only a non-credentialed interpreter is available in person (but a credentialed one is available via video).

The court requires training for staff and appointing authorities on VRI and telephonic interpreting, use the technologies, utilization of remote interpreters, and what are appropriate events for such types of remote interpreting service. VRI shall not be the only option available to the court and may be used when in-person interpretation services are not available.

**B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom for D/HH/DB individuals**

The Cowlitz County Courts are responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that D/HH/DB have meaningful access to services outside the courtroom. It is the practice of the court to provide interpreters for court-managed services, programs, and operations consistent with state and federal language access mandates. In compliance with such mandates, the court shall provide language access services at or involving:

- Anger management class
- Court-ordered visitation
- Court facilitator services
- Criminal diversion programs
- Guardians Ad Litem
- Information counters
- Intake or filing offices
- Juvenile detention
- Juvenile diversion programs
- Mandatory mediation
- Parenting classes
- Probation offices
- Pre-trial release services

The court, in compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations, shall provide the most appropriate language access service for these programs and services, including qualified interpreters, bilingual staff, and translated materials and information. When the most appropriate language access service is the appointment of a qualified interpreter, the court shall follow the guidelines described for the appointment of interpreters.

As noted in the policy interpretation section earlier, [RCW 2.42](#) requires that courts provide interpreters for persons who are D/HH/DB and are required to attend court ordered-programs or services.

### **C. Translated Forms and Documents**

The Cowlitz County Courts understand the importance of translating forms, documents, and electronic materials into non-English languages, so that LEP individuals have greater access to the courts' services. Judicial and court staff shall not use web-based applications or software to process or provide translations for LEP individuals.

State forms which have been translated are available at [Washington State Courts - Court Forms \(www.courts.wa.gov/forms\)](#). Additional informational resources translated into Spanish include:

- [A Guide to Washington State Courts / Guía de los Tribunal del Estado de Washington](#)
- [Self-Represented Persons in District Court / Personas que se representan a sí mismas en el Tribunal de Distrito](#)
- [Self-Represented Persons in Municipal Court / Personas que se auto representan en los Tribunales Municipales](#)
- [Self-Represented Persons in Superior Court Civil Proceedings / Personas que se auto representan en procedimientos civiles en el Tribunal Superior](#)
- [An Introduction to Small Claims Court / Una Introducción Al Juzgado De Demandas De Cuantía Menor](#)

Cowlitz County Courts have not translated any local forms and rely solely on translated general pattern forms provided by the AOC. When translated forms are not available, this court may:

- Have an interpreter sight translate the form.
- Refer LEP party to the Ethnic Support Counsel.

### **D. Providing Emergency Information to LEP Court Customers**

The Cowlitz County Courts are responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP and D/HH/DB individuals have meaningful access to emergency information should an emergency arise. The court provides such information in the following ways:

- There are universally understood emergency signs located in the strategic places throughout the courthouse building;
- Emergency exits are clearly marked with universal picture non-language signage.
- Evacuation map(s) are located in visible public area points.

## **VI. TRAINING**

The Cowlitz County Courts are committed to providing training for all judicial and court staff members who come in contact with LEP and D/HH/DB individuals in order to ensure the successful delivery of language access services. The court will provide staff training on all requirements in this Language Access Plan. Additional training opportunities will include:

- Proper appointment and scheduling of interpreters for all court proceedings and court-managed programs and services including how to work with an interpreter
- How to voir dire a non-credentialed court interpreter
- Role of an interpreter, modes of interpreting, and interpreter ethics and professional standards
- Courtroom management when interpreters are used
- Use of remote technologies for interpreting
- The volunteer Cowlitz County Access to Justice Committee represents various user groups, including judges, court staff, clerks, law enforcement, school officials, NW Justice, Cowlitz Wahkiakum Legal Aid, jail staff, interpreters, private attorneys, mental health representatives, Ethnic Support Council, Emergency Support Shelter, Family Health Services, advocates for the disabled, and the Community House Homeless Shelter. This Committee meets on a quarterly basis to provide access feedback to the courts. This information is relayed to Court staff as part of ongoing training at quarterly staff meetings.

Training efforts will include an initial training for new staff on the requirements of the current Language Access Plan and an annual training for existing court personnel that addresses any revisions made to the Plan.

Resources and information regarding language access services, policies and procedures and tools for providing language assistance (such as bench cards, language identification guides, brochures, etc.) are available to all court staff and decision makers at:

- The court's interpreter coordinator

## **VII. COMPLAINT PROCESS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE**

### **1. Complaints Against Local Court**

This specific complaint process is designed to bring to the attention of the local court, and if necessary, the Interpreter Commission, allegations filed by LEP or D/HH/DB parties that the local court is out of compliance with its own Language Access Plan, any applicable federal statutes or regulations, state statutory provisions, such as RCW 2.42 or 2.43, and/or any applicable state or local court rules. This is an informal process whereby the Interpreter Commission may be involved in providing consultation and

guidance to LEP parties and local courts in resolving and removing barriers to language access services and resources.

LEP and D/HH/DB individuals are encouraged to first file a complaint with the local court using local court customer complaint filing procedures. The local court complaint rules are as follows:

### **A. Local Court Complaint Process**

#### **Contact the Interpreter Coordinator at:**

- Superior Court:  
[superiorcourtadministration@cowlitzwa.gov](mailto:superiorcourtadministration@cowlitzwa.gov)
- District Court:  
[HampIB@cowlitzwa.gov](mailto:HampIB@cowlitzwa.gov)
- Juvenile Court:  
[juvadmin@cowlitzwa.gov](mailto:juvadmin@cowlitzwa.gov)

#### ***and also***

- The Court Administrator and/or
- Presiding Judge for the Court in question.

### **B. Complaint Filed with the Court Interpreter Commission**

1. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the complaint must be filed with the Interpreter Commission by an aggrieved party within 60 days from the date of the events on which the complaint is based.

Within 3 business days of the receipt of the complaint against a local court, Interpreter Commission staff will inform complainant, using the contact information provided by complainant, of their option to file their complaint with the Department of Justice and of the need to file such complaint within 180 days from the date of any alleged discrimination.

2. Complaints filed with the Court or the AOC must be in writing and must be signed. If submitted via email please note (signed electronically) at the bottom along with the name of the party filing the complaint. The complaint must include the following information:

- a. A clear and brief description of the complaint, including the date and time of the alleged failure, any evidence upon which the allegation is based, with relevant supporting documentation. The description and supporting evidence should include relevant facts that support the complaint that the court did not provide language access services;

- b. If possible, the complaint should identify the section(s) of the court's plan, statutes or regulations alleged to have been violated and the time frame in which the lack of compliance is alleged to have occurred;
- c. Disclosure of any other channels the complainant is pursuing, including legal action (optional); and
- d. A statement authorizing the Interpreter Commission to send a copy of the complaint to the court that is the subject of the complaint.

**Complaints filed with the Interpreter Commission should be sent to:**

Washington State Interpreter Commission  
c/o Interpreter Commission Staff  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
PO Box 41170  
Olympia, WA 98504-1170.

Or

Robert W. Lichtenberg (360-350-5373;  
[Robert.Lichtenberg@courts.wa.gov](mailto:Robert.Lichtenberg@courts.wa.gov)).

**3. Interpreter Commission Complaint Review**

- a. The Interpreter Commission shall determine whether the complaint alleges facts that raise issues relating to the court's compliance with its LAP, federal civil rights laws, [RCW 2.42](#) and/or 2.43 or [court rules](#). This determination shall be made within 10 business days of receiving the complaint. The Interpreter Commission may request additional information from the complainant if appropriate. If the Interpreter Commission concludes that the complaint does not raise issues relating to compliance with the LAP, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, RCW 2.42 and/or 2.43, the matter will be closed and the complainant will be notified of the decision.
- b. If the Interpreter Commission determines that the complaint may raise possible compliance issues, the complaint shall be sent to the court and a response requested. The Interpreter Commission ordinarily will request the presiding judge of the court or their designee to respond within 30 days.
- c. If the response from the court establishes that the court is not out of compliance with respect to the matters raised in the complaint, the Interpreter Commission will close the matter.

If the court's response does not clearly establish that it is operating in

compliance with the matters raised by the complaint, the Interpreter Commission may appoint a fact-finder to investigate the issues raised by the complaint and to report on the court's response, if necessary. The complaint, the court's response, and fact-finder's report, if any, shall be referred to the WA Supreme Court Interpreter Commission for any further action deemed necessary by the Commission.

- d. The person making the complaint will be notified promptly regarding the conclusion of the Commission's review.

### **III. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND EVALUATION OF LAP**

#### **A. LAP Approval & Notification**

This LAP has been approved by the Presiding Judges, Court Administrators, County Clerk, and Access to Justice Committee, and a copy has been forwarded to Washington State's Administrative Office of the Courts Interpreter Program Coordinator. Any revisions to the Plan are to be submitted to the Presiding Judges, Court Administrators, County Clerk, and Access to Justice Committee for approval, and then forwarded to the Interpreter Coordinator. Copies of Cowlitz County Courts LAP shall be provided upon request. In addition, the court shall post its LAP on its own website at: <https://cowlitzsuperiorcourt.us/interpreters>

#### **B. Outreach and Communication of Plan**

The Cowlitz County Courts shall inform the public of the existence of the LAP and to this end, the court will:

- Collaborate with local bar associations, justice partners and other relevant organizations to ensure distribution of information.
- Establish mechanisms for obtaining feedback from the public, attorneys and justice partners regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the administrative protocol and take this feedback into account at the yearly evaluation of the protocol.

#### **C. Annual Evaluation of the LAP**

Cowlitz County Courts will conduct an annual needs assessment to determine whether changes to the LAP are needed. To this end, the court will continue to communicate on an ongoing basis with stakeholders, including LEP and D/HH/DB persons, attorneys, and the public in the following manner(s):

- *Annually at the Access to Justice Committee meeting whose members are comprised of stakeholders, including LEP and D/HH/DB persons, attorneys, and the public.*

This assessment will be done by reviewing various areas in which the court provides language access services, taking into consideration, at a minimum, the number of interpreters requested by language in the courts and the identification of emerging changes in the languages spoken or signed within the court's local population as identified by any informational means or by other methods. Elements of the assessment evaluation shall include:

- Number of LEP or D/HH/DB persons requesting court interpreters
- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided
- Assessing whether staff members adequately understand LAP policies and procedures and how to carry them out
- Gathering feedback from LEP, deaf and hearing-impaired communities around the state
- Identification of challenges or trends your court is experiencing with providing language access services.

Any revisions made to the Plan will be communicated to all court personnel, and an updated version of the plan will be posted on the court's web site. In addition, the Cowlitz County Courts will submit to the AOC a copy of any updated information contained in this LAP within 60 days of its approval by the Cowlitz County Court staff member responsible for keeping the LAP updated.

#### LAP Contact Person

**State Contact:**

Robert Lichtenberg  
AOC Interpreter Program  
1206 Quince Street SE  
PO Box 41170  
Olympia, WA 98504-1170  
[Robert.Lichtenberg@courts.wa.gov](mailto:Robert.Lichtenberg@courts.wa.gov)  
(360) 350-5373

**Local Contact:**

Michelle Honey  
Cowlitz County Juvenile Court  
Administrative Assistant III  
1725 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue  
Longview, WA 98632  
[HoneyM@cowlitzwa.gov](mailto:HoneyM@cowlitzwa.gov)  
360.577.8203

The effective date of this LAP plan is April 6, 2023.



Approved by:

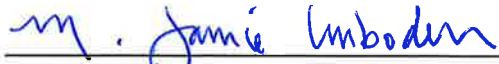
  
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Judge Gary Bashor

  
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Judge Patricia Fassett

  
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Judge Michael Evans

  
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Judge Marilyn Haan

  
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Judge Thad Scudder

  
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Judge M. Jamie Imboden

  
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