

Language Access Committee
Videoconference Webex

July 17, 2020

Members Present

Evangelina Burrows
Rory Jones
Judge Michael Leavitt
Russ Pearson
Judge Michael Westfall
Lynn Wiseman

Members Excused

Yadira Call
Amine El Fajri
Judge Kelly Schaeffer-Bullock

Staff

Kara Mann

(1) Welcome

Lynn Wiseman welcomed the new committee members to the meeting. Ms. Wiseman addressed the May 15, 2020 minutes. With one minor correction, Judge Michael Leavitt moved to approve the May 15, 2020 minutes. Russ Pearson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(2) Re-Opening Protocols for Court Interpreters

Ms. Mann advised that the reopening guide for court interpreters had been expanded to include information from the recently released State of Utah Judiciary Risk Phase Response Plan. The committee reviewed the guide and made the following edits:

- In section I, changing “Interpreters are advised to purchase personal simultaneous interpreting equipment during the pandemic to avoid personal risk.” to “Interpreters are encouraged to purchase personal interpreting equipment during the pandemic to avoid personal risk.”
- Changing “simultaneous interpreting equipment” and “wireless interpreting equipment” to “interpreting equipment” in the document.
- Changing “face masks” to “face coverings” in the document.
- In section II, changing “Screening may include asking standard questions, asking if you’ve read the notice of restrictions, and/or using a touchless thermometer to check your temperature.” to “Screening may include asking standard questions, asking if the patron has read the notice of restrictions, and/or using a touchless thermometer to check their temperature.”
- In section III, using the first graphic to explain how simultaneous interpreting can be completed in Webex.
- In section IV, using the proposed alternative language option.

The committee discussed the possibility of having face shields available for interpreters to use during proceedings. Ms. Mann said she would explore if that is a viable option for court interpreters.

(3) Proposed Reciprocity Rule

Judge Leavitt reminded the committee at the last meeting he volunteered to draft a reciprocity court rule. The committee reviewed the rule and made the following edits:

- In section (2), changing “Utah courts will grant reciprocity to an individual from another state upon completion of the following...” to “Utah courts will grant reciprocity to an individual certified through the state in which they reside upon the following conditions...”.
- In section (2)(D)(ii), adding “and subpart”, so that it reads, “An individual who has completed (2)(A) through (2)(D)(i), has taken all three parts of the Certification Examination administered by another state and received a passing score of 70% or better on each part and subpart will be authorized to interpret in Utah courts as a Certified Interpreter.”
- Removing section (3), with the requirement that interpreters must reside in Utah in order to be listed on the court’s official interpreter roster.

Judge Michael Westfall motioned to submit the revised draft court rule to the Policy and Planning Committee for consideration. Mr. Pearson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4) Simultaneous vs. Consecutive Interpreting

Judge Leavitt advised one unintended benefit to holding proceedings on Webex is that the interpretation is captured on the record since interpreters must consecutively interpret. Judge Leavitt asked if there was a court policy regarding capturing in-court simultaneous interpretation on the record.

Ms. Mann shared she didn’t think there was an official policy, but she would need to check if General Counsel Brent Johnson had issued a legal opinion about it. Judge Leavitt suggested if there wasn’t a legal option, to ask Mr. Johnson to issue an opinion on if in-court simultaneous interpretation should be captured on the record.

(5) Second Language Stipend Assessment

Ms. Mann informed the committee there was a reduction in second language stipends for court employees due to budget cuts because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Mann shared the number was reduced from 67 to 50, which led to a discussion with TCEs on how the remaining stipends could best be utilized for the courts. Ms. Mann introduced a proposed assessment for court employees to complete in order to ensure the courts are fully utilizing the stipends available.

Judge Leavitt asked if the committee is tasked with deciding which stipends should be moved from one district to another. Ms. Mann clarified that the committee is to complete a review and report back to the TCEs with any recommendations. Ms. Mann shared she didn’t expect to move any of the stipends, but that perhaps there were employees who receive the stipend but do not use their skill enough on a regular basis to justify receiving the stipend. That stipend could then be given to another employee in the district who use their second language skill on a more regular basis.

Rory Jones suggested having second language stipend employees help other districts when they're available. Ms. Mann agreed and suggested question 7 might help establish days that the employees have more availability to help out by telephone in other districts.

The committee determined questions 1, 3, and 5 should include a numbered scale for participants to use to answer. The committee discussed if the survey should be completed anonymously, and determined the employee should include the district where they work but not their name.

(6) Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:54 p.m.