

Language Access Committee
Videoconference Webex

September 18, 2020

Members Present

Evangelina Burrows
Yadira Call
Amine El Fajri
Rory Jones
Judge Michael Leavitt
Russ Pearson
Judge Michael Westfall
Lynn Wiseman- Chair

Members Excused

Judge Kelly Schaeffer-Bullock

Staff

Kara Mann

(1) Welcome

Lynn Wiseman welcomed committee members to the meeting. Ms. Wiseman addressed the July 17, 2020 minutes. Russ Pearson moved to approve the minutes. Rory Jones seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

(2) Updates and News

Kara Mann provided information to the committee on:

- Simultaneous Interpreting.
 - Ms. Mann advised Brent Johnson, General Counsel will be issuing a legal opinion on if simultaneous interpreting should be captured on the record.
- Invoice Subcommittee.
 - Ms. Mann advised the invoice subcommittee met and is working on re-drafting the interpreter invoice.
- Interpreter Equipment.
 - Ms. Mann advised the Language Access Program purchased ten new sets of the interpreter equipment. Ms. Mann shared she recently was awarded a grant through the Utah Bar Foundation that will allow her to purchase a set of interpreter equipment for each district and juvenile court judge and commissioner in Salt Lake County. Ms. Mann clarified the grant was specific to Salt Lake County, which is why it can only be applied to the judges and commissioners in that county. Ms. Mann advised this will allow all ten of the recently purchased interpreter equipment sets to go to the other districts.
- Restructuring of the Program.
 - Ms. Mann advised the Language Access Program was being restructured into the newly developed Office of Fairness and Accountability. Ms. Mann shared she would report to the new director of that office, and that the new director might become involved with the committee.

(3) Proposed Reciprocity Rule

Ms. Mann informed the committee that as she was preparing the reciprocity rule for the Policy and Planning Committee, it occurred to her that the rule included language approving reciprocity for approved court interpreters. Ms. Mann shared she believed reciprocity was only recognized for certified court interpreters.

Amine El Fajri agreed that he had never heard of a state allowing reciprocity for approved interpreters. Judge Michael Leavitt asked Ms. Mann to research the origin of the informal reciprocity policy, which did allow reciprocity for approved court interpreters. Mr. Pearson asked Ms. Mann to research if other states offer reciprocity for court interpreters of below the certified credentialing level.

Ms. Mann shared she would report back to the committee at the next meeting.

4) Second Language Stipends for Court Employees

Ms. Mann reminded the committee that at the last meeting the committee approved an assessment to be sent out to all court employees who receive the second language stipend. Ms. Mann advised she had compiled the results of the assessment into a report that was included in the meeting materials. Ms. Mann asked if the report should be shared with the TCEs, and how the employees who receive the stipend could help by telephone in other districts.

Judge Leavitt agreed the report should be shared with the TCEs, and suggested asking the TCEs how sharing employees who receive the stipend could work. Judge Leavitt suggested perhaps a master calendar to show availability. Mr. Jones suggested a master list that could be shared on the intranet so that the court employees could be contacted by telephone to see if they're available to help interpret over the phone. Mr. Pearson suggested working with HR to rebrand the stipends not as a burden, but rather as a skill that helps the community and furthers the courts' work.

(5) Interpreter Training and Testing Requirements during the Pandemic

Ms. Mann shared the COVID-19 pandemic has caused the courts to pause all in-person interpreter training and testing requirements. Ms. Mann advised this is creating a backlog for interpreter candidates going through the process. Ms. Mann advised two testing requirements, the English Written Exam and the Oral Proficiency Exam, will have to continue being paused as the National Center for State Courts advised after the pandemic began that courts could not hold these exams online due to test security concerns. Ms. Mann shared there might not be a solution for the 10 hours of in-court observation. Judge Leavitt suggested perhaps we allow some in-court observation in WebEx.

Ms. Wiseman suggested asking the COVID Pandemic Response Team on if the interpreter requirements could be offered in person when a district is moved down to yellow.

Mr. Pearson motioned forming a subcommittee to address the issue. Judge Leavitt seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Pearson, Mr. Jones, and Ms. Wiseman volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

(6) 2021 Committee Meeting Dates

The committee discussed the following 2021 meeting dates.

- January 15, 2021
- March 19, 2021
- May 21, 2021
- July 9, 2021
- September 17, 2021
- November 19, 2021

Ms. Wiseman motioned to approve the meeting dates. Mr. Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

(6) Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.