

LANGUAGE ACCESS METRICS REPORT



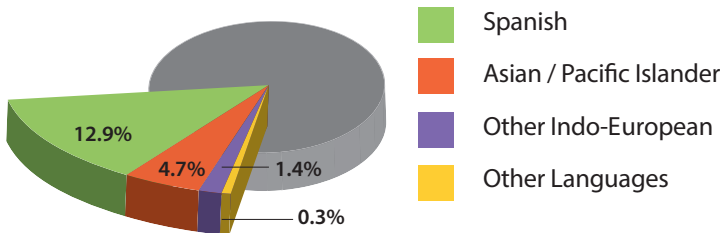
The Judicial Council Language Access Services (LAS) works with the Language Access Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness (PAF) and the Court Interpreters Advisory Panel (CIAP) to develop policy and support branch efforts to achieve and maintain access to justice for California’s limited-English-proficient (LEP) and deaf or hard-of-hearing court users.

Language Access in California

Language access allows limited-English-proficient (LEP) individuals access to a wide range of services. As defined by the U.S. Department of Justice, LEP individuals do not speak English as their primary language and may have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.

In California, the most diverse state in the country:

- Over 200 languages are spoken;
- Approximately 44 percent of households speak a language other than English; and
- Nearly 7 million Californians (19 percent) report speaking English “less than very well.”

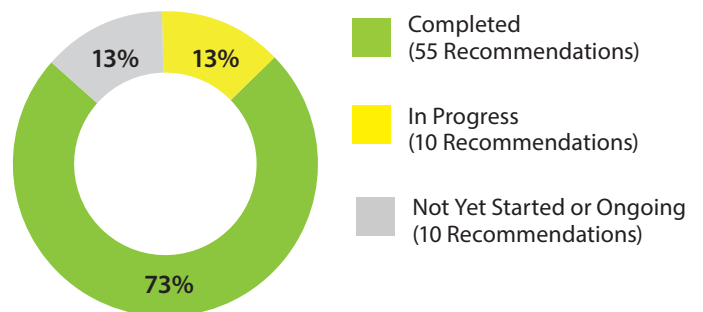


Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2015)

Language Access Plan

In January 2015, the Judicial Council adopted a statewide **Language Access Plan (LAP)** to provide recommendations, guidance, and a consistent statewide approach to ensure language access throughout the courts.

LAP Update: 55 of 75 LAP Recommendations Completed to Date



2015	2016	2018	2019	2020
<p>January 2015 LAP is adopted by the Judicial Council, and Evidence Code section 756 becomes law (clarifying that courts should provide interpreters in civil matters).</p> <p>March 2015 LAP Implementation Task Force is formed by Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye.</p> <p>December 2015 <i>Language Access Toolkit</i> launches on the California Courts website.</p>	<p>January 2016 All 58 courts designate a language access representative (now required under rule 2.850).</p>	<p>2018 Rule 2.851 requires each court to make available a language access services complaint form.</p> <p>Video Remote Interpreting Pilot Project launches in three courts (Merced, Sacramento, Ventura).</p>	<p>2019 FY 2019–20 budget appropriation for the Court Interpreters Grant Program is \$120.686 million.</p> <p>March 2019 Task force sunsets; Language Access Subcommittee is formed.</p> <p>September 1, 2019 Adopt Cal. Rules of Court, rule 1.300. Launch Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2019–20.</p>	<p>Spring 2020 Launch Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2020–21.</p> <p>New Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) web pages launch for public and courts.</p> <p>2020 Language Need and Interpreter Use Study will be presented to council and then submitted to Governor and Legislature.</p>

Civil Expansion

Effective January 1, 2015, Evidence Code section 756 expanded the case types (see table 1) in which the courts can and should provide interpreters to LEP parties to include civil cases. Section 756 prioritizes case types in the event that a court has insufficient resources to provide interpreters in all civil case types.

Table 1: Priority Levels of Civil Cases

Priority 1: Domestic violence, civil harassment where fees are waived (Code Civ. Proc., § 527.6(y)), elder abuse (physical abuse or neglect)

Priority 2: Unlawful detainer

Priority 3: Termination of parental rights

Priority 4: Conservatorship, guardianship

Priority 5: Sole legal or physical custody, visitation

Priority 6: Other elder abuse, other civil harassment

Priority 7: Other family law

Priority 8: Other civil

Over the past four years, the California courts have made significant progress (see table 2) to provide interpreters in civil case types following the priority order dictated by statute.

Table 2: Number of Courts Providing Interpreters in Civil Cases

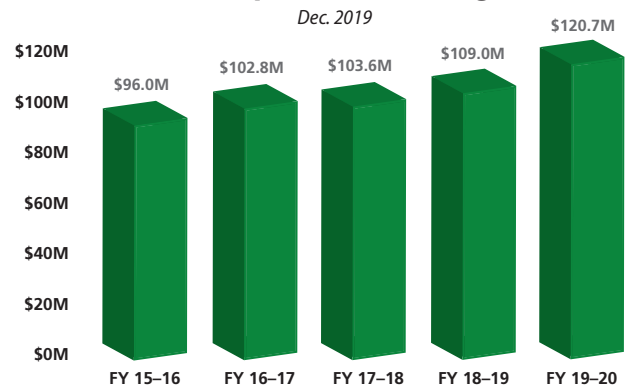
Civil Expansion Status	Sept. 2015	Dec. 2016	Dec. 2017	June 2019
Expansion into all 8 priority levels (Priority Levels 1–8)	9	47	51	58*
Expansion into 5 or more priority levels (subset of Priorities 1–8)	28	6	6	0
Expansion into 1 to 4 levels (subset of Priorities 1–8)	9	3	1	0
No response	12	2	0	0

* As of June 2019, all courts indicated that they were able to provide interpreters under all eight priorities. The languages provided and the estimated interpreter coverage for each priority vary by court. Recent information gathered regarding each court’s estimated coverage will help the Judicial Council with funding and other targeted efforts designed to help all 58 courts reach full expansion.

Growth of the Court Interpreter Fund

- In recent years, the annual appropriation for court interpreter services has grown by over 25 percent, from \$96 million in FY 2015–16 to \$120.7 million in FY 2019–20 (see graph below).
- For the past few years, the state appropriation has fallen short in providing the courts with enough funding for full reimbursement of their reported allowable court interpreter expenditures.
- The expansion of interpreter services for civil matters and increased costs in mandated cases have led to shortfalls that require ongoing resources.

Interpreter Funding



Court Interpreter Pool

- As of December 2019, 1,968 certified and registered court interpreters—by far the largest court interpreter workforce in the nation—are on the Judicial Council’s Master List.
- The Master List (www.courts.ca.gov/35273.htm) allows courts and members of the public to search for court-certified, registered, and enrolled interpreters who are in good standing with the Judicial Council.
- Interpreters included on the Master List have passed the required exams and officially applied with the Judicial Council. (Application requirements include submitting an application to the Judicial Council, paying an annual fee of \$100, and taking the online “Interpreter Orientation: Working in the California Courts” course.)

- There are currently 1,794 certified and 174 registered court interpreters (as of December 2019).

Table 3: Number of Certified and Registered Court Interpreters (2014–2019)

Year	Certified Interpreters	Registered Interpreters	Total
2014	1,621	198	1,819
2015	1,611	207	1,818
2016	1,646	203	1,849
2017	1,691	229	1,920
2018	1,697	186	1,883
2019	1,794	174	1,968

Table 4: Number of Certified Court Interpreters for California’s Top 10 Most Frequently Interpreted Spoken Languages (as of December 2019)*

Language†	2017	2018	+/-	2019	+/-
Spanish	1,373	1,367	-6	1,398	+31
Vietnamese	53	55	+2	59	+4
Korean	60	60	0	61	+1
Mandarin	66	72	+6	79	+7
Farsi	1	10	+9	10	0
Cantonese	29	28	-1	30	+2
Russian	39	35	-4	42	+7
Tagalog	4	4	0	5	+1
Arabic	8	8	0	7	-1
Punjabi	3	3	0	3	0

* The top 10 spoken languages, ranked in this table, are from the 2015 *Language Need and Interpreter Use Study* (prepared for the Judicial Council by the National Center for State Courts).

† There are currently 55 American Sign Language interpreters in California.

- Table 5 shows the number of recent passers of the bilingual interpreting exam to qualify as certified or registered interpreters.

Table 5: Number of Recent Passers of Bilingual Interpreting Exam Required for Qualification as a Certified Interpreter

Language	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Spanish	45	47	56	23	34
Vietnamese	3	4	2	4	2
Mandarin	2	4	8	6	0
Farsi	0	1	9	0	0
Cantonese	2	0	1	3	0
Russian	2	1	0	2	4
Punjabi	1	0	0	0	0
Eastern Armenian	1	2	0	0	0
Total	56	59	76	38	40

Interpreter Usage

The Judicial Council’s Language Access Implementation (LAI) unit prepares interpreter usage reports for the courts.

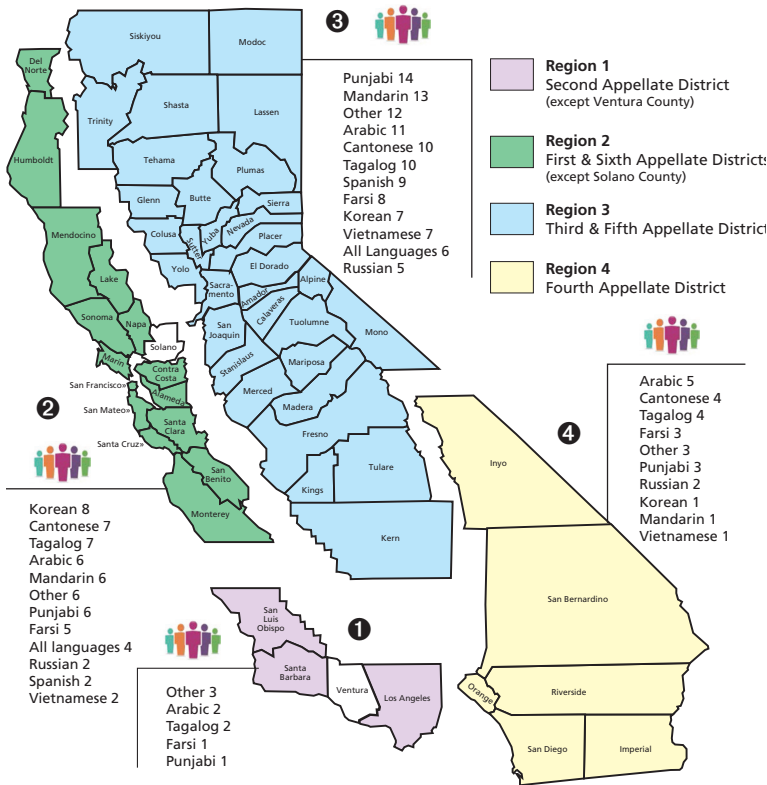
Consistent with the direction of the Judicial Council, LAI works directly with the courts to collect interpreter usage data in previously mandated case types, domestic violence case types, and the newly expanded civil case types. The reports are based on data entered in the Court Interpreter Data Collection System or provided by courts from their own internal systems.

- There were 1,055,247 statewide interpretations in FY 2017–18.
- Total interpretations in Spanish were approximately 955,381 million.
- Total other-than-Spanish interpretations were 99,866.
- Some 28.36 percent of the total interpretations took place in Los Angeles County; San Bernardino County had the second most, with 7.9 percent of the total interpretations.

Identified Current Interpreter Needs

In summer 2019, the Judicial Council LAS conducted a statewide language access survey of the courts to gather information on current language services provided, trends in local court language needs, and any innovative programs, practices, or strategies used to meet local language access needs. The survey identified the top languages for which recruitment of new certified or registered interpreters is needed from the four court interpreter bargaining regions (see figure below). A survey report will be published by summer 2020.

Efforts are underway for the Judicial Council to develop a more robust statewide recruitment initiative to increase the pool of qualified interpreters and bilingual staff and to assist near-passers of the bilingual interpreting exam.



Note: The graphic shows the number of courts, by region, that indicated they need more interpreters in the languages shown.

Web Analytics

Table 6 shows the number of page views to the Court Interpreters Program and Language Access webpages for January 1 to December 31, 2019.

Table 6: Number of Page Views (as of December 2019)

Webpage	2018	2019
Court Interpreters Program	76,257	64,376
Judicial Council Language Access	8,711	7,024
Judicial Council Language Access Toolkit	2,431	2,358

Resource Links

Judicial Council of California

www.courts.ca.gov

Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts

www.courts.ca.gov/documents/CLASP_report_060514.pdf

Language Access

www.courts.ca.gov/languageaccess.htm

Language Access Toolkit

www.courts.ca.gov/lap-toolkit-courts.htm

Multilingual Materials and Resources for LEPs

www.courts.ca.gov/42863.htm

Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness

www.courts.ca.gov/accessfairnesscomm.htm

Court Interpreters Program

www.courts.ca.gov/programs-interpreters.htm

Contact Information

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