Judicial Council *of* California

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REPORT TO THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Item No. 24-033
For business meeting on November 15, 2024

Title
Language Access Plan: Allocations for Signage and Technology Grant Program, Cycle 6, Fiscal Year 2024–25

Rules, Forms, Standards, or Statutes Affected
None

Recommended by
Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness
Hon. Kevin C. Brazile, Cochair
Hon. Victor A. Rodriguez, Cochair
Language Access Subcommittee
Hon. Victor A. Rodriguez, Chair
Information Technology Advisory Committee
Hon. Sheila F. Hanson, Chair
Hon. Samantha P. Jessner, Vice-Chair

Report Type
Action Required

Effective Date
November 15, 2024

Date of Report
October 22, 2024

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Executive Summary

The Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness and the Information Technology Advisory Committee recommend approving proposed grant awards for the Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program of $2.16 million to expand language access for court users. For Cycle 6 (fiscal year 2024–25), 18 courts applied for and will be awarded grants for signage and technology projects.

Recommendation

The Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness and the Information Technology Advisory Committee recommend that the Judicial Council, effective November 15, 2024:

1. Approve the proposed allocations of $555,808.52 for signage and $1,607,366.48 for technology, totaling $2.16 million for the Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program for fiscal year (FY) 2024–25, which includes a 7.95 percent reduction due to the current state budget reductions;

2. If the grants are subsequently deemed exempt from the 7.95 percent reduction, provide the awarded courts an additional allocation to reflect the full grant amount; and

3. Direct staff to work with Branch Accounting and Procurement to draft and execute intra-branch agreements with each awarded court.

The proposed allocations and summary of the requests for funding are included as Attachment A.

Relevant Previous Council Action

In January 2015, the Judicial Council adopted the *Strategic Plan for Language Access in the California Courts*. The plan provides recommendations, guidance, and a consistent statewide approach to ensure language access for all of California's approximately 6.4 million limited-English-proficient (LEP) residents and potential court users.

The Budget Act of 2018 (Stats. 2018, ch. 29) included $2.55 million in ongoing funding for language access signage and technology (S&T) infrastructure support and equipment needs for the trial courts and the Judicial Council. On September 24, 2019, the Judicial Council adopted a process to annually disburse these S&T grants to the trial courts and directed Language Access Services staff to solicit and review grant applications and develop recommendations for review and approval by the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness, the Information Technology Advisory Committee, the Technology Committee, and the Judicial Council.[1]

Under the Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program, courts may be eligible to receive up to $200,000 for signage projects and up to $270,000 for technology projects. If total requests are under the annual allocation for each category, then larger amounts may be requested and approved by the council for grants to expend funding.[2] This is the sixth year of the Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program (Cycle 6). In September 2023 the council approved grants to all 13 trial courts that applied for S&T grants and 4 additional courts that

[1] See Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Language Access Plan: Signage and Technology Grants* (Sept. 9, 2019), *https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=7675626&GUID=F2CCA714-356A-41B7-82B5-05C058CE0D6E*.

[2] See Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Language Access Plan: Signage and Technology Grant Program, Fiscal Year 2021–22: Requests and Proposed Allocations* (Sept. 30, 2021), *https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9942092&GUID=5220FB28-A269-47DA-BAAD-4D8A89638903*.

applied for grants under different but related grant opportunities.[3] All funding from Cycle 5 under the $2.35 million annual allocation was distributed to courts.

Analysis/Rationale

To support judicial branch language access expansion efforts, the Budget Act of 2018 included ongoing funding of $1 million per year for language access signage and $1.55 million per year for language access technology infrastructure support and equipment needs. Of the $1.55 million for technology, $200,000 is dedicated to the Judicial Council for upgrades to the online Language Access Toolkit and other council language access infrastructure support (such as translation costs for statewide forms, web content, and other multilingual resources for LEP court users). The amount available to trial courts for technology is, therefore, $1.35 million each year. With the signage funding, the total grant amount available to trial courts each year is $2.35 million.

Following are the goals of the Language Access Signage and Technology Grant Program:

- Support courts with the development of multilingual signage to help LEP court users navigate the courthouse.
- Assist courts that may need equipment or software that will facilitate communication with LEP court users and the courts.
- Allocate funds to as many trial courts as possible within the given budget to support language access signage and technology initiatives.
- Fund enhancements that provide LEP court users with greater access to the courts and to information in the languages needed to serve court users.
- Encourage courts to establish an ongoing plan that coordinates with other facilities planning and/or with planned or ongoing technology initiatives that support language access as a core service of the court.

On March 15, 2024, Judicial Council Information Technology released a memorandum to courts on how to request funding for various technology grant opportunities via a single application process. The deadline for courts to apply was April 2, 2024.

Judicial Council staff coordinated the review of Cycle 6 Language Access Signage and Technology Grant requests with the other technology funding requests (i.e., Information Technology Modernization Funding (ITMF) Program and Jury Management Systems Grant) to ensure that no court would receive duplicate funding for the same project.

For Cycle 6, 18 courts applied for signage and technology needs. Of the 18 courts that applied, 7 courts also applied for grants with the ITMF program. The projects from all 18 courts can be funded, with adjustment for one court to stay within allowable signage project limits. The total

[3] See Judicial Council of Cal., Advisory Com. Rep., *Language Access Plan: Proposed Allocations for Signage and Technology Grant Program, Cycle 5, Fiscal Year 2023–24* (Aug. 23, 2023), *https://jcc.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=12246027&GUID=DD2336E8-D1E6-4D2C-B3D8-D8CF7AA38921*.

recommended signage allocation is $603,811.54, leaving $396,188.46 unallocated in the signage category. The remaining funding from the signage category is allowed to go toward related technology category projects as long as the projects benefit LEP court users. The recommendation is to apply this $396,188.46 in unallocated signage funds to the technology category.

For the technology category, two courts requested more than the maximum and were capped at $270,000, but also applied for funds from the ITMF program, which could potentially provide additional funding. One court applied for a very large project and was allocated the maximum of $270,000. Please see Attachment A for details.

The proposed allocations were reviewed and approved by the Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness on September 30 via action by email, the Information Technology Advisory Committee on September 25, and the Technology Committee on October 4 via action by email.[4] The grant awards reflect an overall 7.95 percent reduction to the state-level judiciary with the recommendation to allocate additional funds if they are later made available.

Proposed Allocations: Signage and Technology Grant Program, Cycle 6 (FY 2024–25), in Dollars

County of Trial Court	Signage Award	Technology Award	Total Proposed Award	Award Reduced by 7.95%
Alameda	35,000.00	—	35,000.00	32,217.50
Contra Costa	—	22,500.00	22,500.00	20,711.25
Kings	6,953.54	19,870.00	26,823.54	24,691.07
Los Angeles	200,000.00	270,000.00	470,000.00	432,635.00
Monterey	—	15,000.00	15,000.00	13,807.50
Orange	—	55,000.00	55,000.00	50,627.50
Riverside	—	75,000.00	75,000.00	69,037.50
San Benito	24,358.00	12,418.00	36,776.00	33,852.31
San Diego	—	35,000.00	35,000.00	32,217.50
San Francisco	200,000.00	270,000.00	470,000.00	432,635.00
San Mateo	2,500.00	14,000.00	16,500.00	15,188.25
Santa Barbara	85,000.00	—	85,000.00	78,242.50
Solano	—	175,063.29	175,063.29	161,145.76
Sonoma	—	270,000.00	270,000.00	248,535.00
Tulare	50,000.00	—	50,000.00	46,025.00
Ventura	—	232,551.76	232,551.76	214,063.89

[4] The seven courts that also applied for grants under the ITMF program are Kings, Riverside, San Benito, Solano, Sonoma, Ventura, and Yolo. These courts can be fully funded by S&T grants, with the exception of Solano and Sonoma. For these two courts, the remainder of their grant request is subject to the ITMF approval process.

County of Trial Court	Signage Award	Technology Award	Total Proposed Award	Award Reduced by 7.95%
Yolo	—	270,300.00	270,300.00	248,811.15
Yuba	—	9,485.41	9,485.41	8,731.32
	$603,811.54	**$1,746,188.46**	**$2,350,000.00**	**$2,163,175.00**

The table below summarizes the number of project requests by signage grant priority.

Signage Grant Projects

Priority #	Signage Grant Project	Total # of Projects
1	Translation of Signage	0
2	Court Websites & Wayfinding Translations	4
3	Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies	5
4	Automated Queue-Management System	1
5	Multilingual Nonelectronic Signage	0
	Total Signage Grant Projects	**10**

The table below summarizes the number of project requests by technology grant priority.

Technology Grant Projects

Priority #	Technology Grant Project	Total # of Projects
1	Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions to Support Language Access	5
2	Interpreter Equipment	5
3	Scheduling or Other Software	1
4	Multilingual Videos	0
5	Audiovisual Systems Upgrade	6
6	Multilingual Kiosks	2
	Total Technology Grant Projects	**19**

The above two tables summarize the total number of projects requested; some courts requested multiple projects. As a result, the total number of projects exceeds the total number of courts that applied this cycle. For a detailed explanation of all the grant projects, see Attachment A.

Policy implications

Under the grant program, courts can apply for funding for audio or video remote solutions to support language access, including video remote interpreting (VRI), if permitted by their memorandums of understanding and any other agreements between court administration and court employees or independent contractors. All courts, including courts that participate in the grant program and request funding for VRI equipment, will be asked to follow the council's VRI guidelines for spoken language-interpreted events.[5]

Comments

Public comments were not solicited for this proposal because the recommendations are within the Judicial Council's purview to approve without circulation.

Alternatives considered

No alternatives were considered because the recommended allocations were calculated using the funding methodology approved by the Judicial Council.

Fiscal and Operational Impacts

Funding assists courts with language access signage and technology initiatives. Because funding is ongoing for the trial courts, individual courts are encouraged to establish an ongoing grant funding plan that coordinates with other facilities or technology initiatives planned or underway in their court to support language access. Courts may use grant funding for facilities modification costs that directly relate to the purpose of the grant—for signage or technology—as long as the anticipated facility modification costs are built into the total grant amount.

Attachments and Links

1. Attachment A: Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2024–25: Proposed Allocations

[5] See Judicial Council of Cal., *Recommended Guidelines and Minimum Specifications for Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) for Spoken Language-Interpreted Events* (May 21, 2021), *https://languageaccess.courts.ca.gov/sites/default/files/partners/default/2023-07/vri-guidelines.pdf*.

Attachment A: Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2024-25: Proposed Allocations (Signage)

#	Trial Court Name	SIGNAGE Project Description(s):	TOTAL SIGNAGE Requested	PROPOSED SIGNAGE Awards	AWARD REDUCED BY 7.95%
1	Alameda	Document Translation - **Signage Priority 2**: Court Websites Wayfinding Translations	25,000.00	25,000.00	23,012.50
		How to File Video Modification - **Signage Priority 3:** Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies	10,000.00	10,000.00	9,205.00
2	Kings	Qmatic Upgrade for Self Help and Family Court Services - **Signage Priority 4:** Automated Queue Management System	6,953.54	6,953.54	6,400.73
3	Los Angeles	CourtWays Digital Signage and Wayfinding Implementation - **Signage Priority 2:** Court Websites Wayfinding Translations	200,000.00	200,000.00	184,100.00
4	San Benito	CourtBoard External Hearing Display - **Signage Priority 3**: Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies	24,358.00	24,358.00	22,421.54
5	San Francisco	ACCESS Center PARTWAYS Virtual Wayfinder Project - **Signage Priority 3:** Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies	200,000.00	200,000.00	184,100.00
		Court's Update Signage System & Display - **Signage Priority 3:** Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies	219,023.75	-	-
6	San Mateo	Multilingual Online Wayfinding - S**ignage Priority 2:** Court Websites Wayfinding Translations	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,301.25
7	Santa Barbara	Digital Content Refresh & Translation - **Signage Priority 2:** Court Websites Wayfinding Translations	85,000.00	85,000.00	78,242.50
8	Tulare	Signage Modernization - **Signage Priority 3:** Multilingual Wayfinding Strategies	50,000.00	50,000.00	46,025.00
			$822,835.29	**$603,811.54**	**$555,808.52**

Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2024-25: Proposed Allocations (Technology)

#	Trial Court Name	TECHNOLOGY Project Description(s):	TOTAL TECHNOLOGY Requested	PROPOSED TECHNOLOGY Awards	AWARD REDUCED BY 7.95%
1	Contra Costa	Courtroom Interpreter Equipment Devices - **Technology Priority 2**: Interpreter Equipment	22,500.00	22,500.00	20,711.25
2	Kings	Multilingual Kiosks - Lobby - **Technology Priority 6:** Multilingual kiosks	14,500.00	14,500.00	13,347.25
		Video Remote Interpreting - **Technology Priority 1:** Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions	5,370.00	5,370.00	4,943.09
3	Los Angeles	CourtWays Digital Signage and Wayfinding Implementation - **Technology Priority 6:** Multilingual Kiosks	13,150,508.95	270,000.00	248,535.00
4	Monterey	Self-Help Bookings - **Technology Priority 3:** Scheduling or Other Software	15,000.00	15,000.00	13,807.50
5	Orange	Video Remote Interpreting Equipment - **Technology Priority 1:** Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions	55,000.00	55,000.00	50,627.50
6	Riverside	Interpreter Equipment - T**echnology Priority 2:** Interpreter Equipment	75,000.00	75,000.00	69,037.50
7	San Benito	Wireless Microphones for Courtrooms - **Technology Priority 2:** Interpreter Equipment	12,418.00	12,418.00	11,430.77
8	San Diego	Interpreter Equipment Upgrades - **Technology Priority 5:** Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade	15,000.00	15,000.00	13,807.50
		Interpreter Video Equipment Upgrades - **Technology Priority 5:** Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade	20,000.00	20,000.00	18,410
9	San Francisco	ACCESS Center PARTWAYS Virtual Wayfinder Project - **Technology Priority 1:** Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions	270,000.00	270,000.00	248,535.00
10	San Mateo	Interpreter Equipment and Coordination Enhancement - **Technology Priority 2:** Interpreter Equipment	14,000.00	14,000.00	12,887.00
11	Solano	Wireless Interpreting Equipment - **Technology Priority 2:** Interpreter Equipment	13,000.00	13,000.00	11,966.50
		Criminal Courtroom A/V Upgrades - **Technology Priority 5:** Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade	226,000.00	162,063.29	149,179.26
12	Sonoma	Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade - **Technology Priority 5:** Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade	267,750.14	260,514.11	$239,803.24
		Interpreter Equipment Upgrade - **Technology Priority 5:** Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade	9,485.89	9,485.89	8,731.76
13	Ventura	Courtroom Video Upgrades Remote Proceedings - **Technology Priority 1:** Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions	232,551.76	232,551.76	214,063.89

Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2024-25: Proposed Allocations (Technology)

14	Yolo	Workshops/Training Rooms AV Upgrade - **Technology Priority 5:** Audio-Visual Systems Upgrade	270,300.00	270,300.00	248,811.15
15	Yuba	Speakerphones for Telephonic Interpretation - **Technology Priority 1:** Telephonic/Video Remote Solutions	9,485.41	9,485.41	8,731.32
			$14,697,870.15	**$1,746,188.46**	**$1,607,366.48**

Signage and Technology Grant Program, FY 2024–25: Proposed Allocations (Summary)

#	Trial Court Name	Funded in FY 2019-2020	Funded in FY 2021-2022	Funded in FY 2022-2023	Funded in FY 2023-2024	Funded in FY 2024-2025	SIGNAGE AWARD	TECHNOLOGY AWARD	TOTAL PROPOSED AWARDS	AWARD REDUCED BY 7.95%
1	**Alameda**	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	35,000.00	-	35,000.00	32,217.50
2	**Contra Costa**	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	-	22,500.00	22,500.00	20,711.25
3	**Kings**	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	6,953.54	19,870.00	26,823.54	24,691.07
4	**Los Angeles**	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	200,000.00	270,000.00	470,000.00	432,635.00
5	**Monterey**	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	-	15,000.00	15,000.00	13,807.50
6	**Orange**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	55,000.00	55,000.00	50,627.50
7	**Riverside**	No	No	No	No	Yes	-	75,000.00	75,000.00	69,037.50
8	**San Benito**	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	24,358.00	12,418.00	36,776.00	33,852.31
9	**San Diego**	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	35,000.00	35,000.00	32,217.50
10	**San Francisco**	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	200,000.00	270,000.00	470,000.00	432,635.00
11	**San Mateo**	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2,500.00	14,000.00	16,500.00	15,188.25
12	**Santa Barbara**	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	85,000.00	-	85,000.00	78,242.50
13	**Solano**	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	-	175,063.29	175,063.29	161,145.76
14	**Sonoma**	No	No	No	No	Yes	-	270,000.00	270,000.00	248,535.00
15	**Tulare**	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	50,000.00	-	50,000.00	46,025.00
16	**Ventura**	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	232,551.76	232,551.76	214,063.89
17	**Yolo**	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	270,300.00	270,300.00	248,811.15
18	**Yuba**	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	-	9,485.41	9,485.41	8,731.32
							$603,811.54	**$1,746,188.46**	**$2,350,000.00**	**$2,163,175.00**