



*Chief Judge*  
*David J. Reader*

*Circuit Court Judge*  
*Michael P. Hatty*

*Probate Court Judge*  
*Miriam A. Cavanaugh*

**Livingston County Trial Courts**

204 S. HIGHLANDER WAY, HOWELL, MI 48843

**District Court Judges**

*Theresa M. Brennan*

*L. Suzanne Geddis*

*Carol Sue Reader*

44<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court, Local Administrative Order 2014 - \_\_\_\_\_J  
Livingston County Probate Court, Local Administrative Order 2014 - \_\_\_\_\_J  
53<sup>rd</sup> District Court, Local Administrative Order 2014 - \_\_\_\_\_J

**LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**

In accordance with Supreme Court Administrative Order 2013-8, the court establishes this Language Access Plan (LAP) to provide for the language access needs of court users.

This LAP is the plan for the court to ensure meaningful access to court services for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). A limited English proficient person is a person who does not speak English as his or her primary language, and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English, and by reason of his or her limitations, is not able to understand and meaningfully participate in the court process.

The purpose of the plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and effective language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the court.

The court has appointed a language access coordinator to be a contact person for the public, court staff, and SCAO concerning this plan and its implementation. The language access coordinator may be contacted through the court administrator's office.

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**IT IS ORDERED:**

**Section I. Needs Assessment**

**A. Census Data**

The court will make every effort to provide service to all LEP persons in the court's service area. The following list shows the non-English languages most frequently spoken in the court's physical jurisdiction.

- |                           |
|---------------------------|
| 1. Spanish (804 or 0.47%) |
| 2. Chinese (231 or 0.13%) |

3. German (148 or 0.09%)
4. Japanese (137 or 0.08%)
5. French (129 or 0.08%)

#### B. Court Experience

Based on court usage, the following list shows other non-English languages spoken in the court and not reflected in the US Census data.

1. Italian
2. Russian
3. Greek

#### C. Identification of LEP Persons

Court staff use the following methods to identify LEP persons:

LEP persons are brought to the attention of Court staff through the following interactions:

1. In-person and telephone requests from family members/friends of LEP persons seeking assistance for upcoming court matters
2. Police reports
3. Arraignments
4. Interaction with court security
5. Interaction with staff at filing windows

If the LEP individual or family members/friends cannot communicate to court staff what language he or she speaks, or if the language is not easily identifiable by court staff, staff can provide the LEP individual with the "I speak" Language Identification Flashcards used in the 2010 U.S. Census.

### Section II. Language Assistance Resources

#### A. Interpreters Used in the Courtroom

The court will offer assistance to LEP persons in the courtroom by providing foreign language interpreters as required by Michigan Court Rule 1.111.

#### B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom

The court will take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to services outside the courtroom. This is one of the most challenging situations facing court staff, because in most situations they will encounter LEP persons without an interpreter present. LEP persons may come in contact with court personnel via:

- Security screening at courthouse entrance
- Circuit, Probate, and District Court filing counters/payment windows

- District Court Probation: intake, PSI's, reporting days with probationers, drug/alcohol screens, community service referrals
- Juvenile Court Probation: intake, consent calendar meetings, violations, truancy enforcement, court-ordered in-house family counseling
- Friend of the Court: intake, orientations, custody-parenting time interviews, support enforcement conferences, mediation

Court staff will consult with the court's language access coordinator to determine what type of language service should be made available, based on the nature and importance of the court service to be provided and resources available. The following language services are available:

- "I speak" cards at clerks' counters
- Language Line Solutions – This is a telephone interpreter service that will be the most commonly used language service resource for interactions between LEP persons and court staff outside of the court room setting.
- CyraCom, LLC – Telephone interpreter service that could be used as an alternative or back-up to Language Line Solutions
- Speak Easy Languages Services – provides in-person certified interpreters for court hearings of all the most commonly spoken non-English languages in the Livingston County
- Language Connections (Reina Bazzi) – provides in-person certified Spanish interpreter available for court hearings or other court interactions upon request.
- University of Michigan Language Resource Center – may provide in-person volunteer interpreters on an ad hoc basis.
- The local Language Access Coordinator shall also maintain a list of in-person interpreters and remote telephonic interpreters, those in this LAO notwithstanding, who may be used at the discretion of court administration.
- The office of the SCAO Language Access Coordinator has list of available interpreters for less commonly spoken languages.

#### C. Service Referrals

The court will make reasonable efforts to ensure that a non-federally funded entity to which the court refers LEP persons for services has provisions for addressing their needs. The court will consider viable alternatives if language access is not provided by such a non-federally funded entity.

#### D. Forms & Documents

The State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) makes select translated forms available to the courts at <http://courts.michigan.gov/Administration/SCAO/Forms/Pages/default.aspx>.

1) Additional translated forms available to court users include:

- o Advice of Rights and Plea Information (DC 213) – available in Spanish

When in-person interpreters are hired for court proceedings, they are expected to provide sight interpretation of documents for LEP persons.

2) Courthouse translation for LEP

- o The Livingston County courts have no frequently encountered languages. "I Speak" cards are available. Requests for language assistance are rare.
- o When persons present themselves needing assistance with forms, court staff will first check the SCAO websites to determine if the form is printed in the requested language, and print it for the LEP person.
- o If forms are not available in the needed language, court staff will offer assistance through Language Line for immediate translation. Conference rooms with telephone lines will be offered for this purpose.

E. Other Provisions

In an effort to provide LEP persons language access to court information, the court also provides the following:

- Bi-lingual Spanish translators may be available on short notice for translations by telephone and in person at the clerks' counters, if needed.

**Section III. Training**

The court is committed to training its judges and court staff, and coordinating with county clerks on providing LEP persons with meaningful access to court services. When the court provides training sessions, it will include a component addressing LEP policy and procedure and the court's LAP. The court is aware that staff members having contact with the public are more likely to need in-depth training on LEP policy and procedure.

The court will work with SCAO and MJI to ensure that all employees are trained on LEP policy and procedure. Training will be offered to assist judges and staff to: identify and respond to LEP persons, increase awareness of the types of language services available, guide when and how to access those services, and effectively use language services.

The court provides to judges and court staff and offers to county clerks the following training regarding language access:

- Staff is trained to recognize the most commonly spoken languages and to provide LEP persons with "I Speak" Language Identification Flashcards. Court staff will then direct requests for language accommodations to the Language Access Coordinator.

- The Local Administrative Order for Language Access will be available to all staff members.
- The Language Access Coordinator is trained to identify the language being spoken through the use of "I speak" cards and to obtain appropriate translation services from one of the court's translation providers.

#### **Section IV. Public Notification and Evaluation of Language Access Plan**

##### **A. Language Access Plan Approval and Notification**

The court's LAP has been approved by the State Court Administrative Office. The court will post its LAP on its public website and public notification area within the courthouse and will make copies of the LAP available upon request.

The court consulted with the following members of the community in creating its LAP:

- Livingston County Bar Association

##### **B. Evaluation and Review of the LAP**

At the direction of SCAO, or on its own initiative, the court will assess whether the LAP needs updating. The LAP will remain in effect unless modified or updated. Review of the following areas may indicate a need to update the LAP:

- Number of LEP persons requesting court interpreters or language assistance
- Funding provided or available for languages services
- Current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided
- Feedback from LEP communities within the county
- Court staff (turnover, new hires, etc.)
- Feedback from trainings provided by the court or SCAO/MJI
- Viability of identified language services and resources
- Problem areas and corrective action strategies
- Updated census data

The language access coordinator for this court ensures this plan is followed, advises the court on potential updates to this plan, and coordinates the language access needs for the court as they arise. The court has issued an addendum to this order identifying the name and contact information of the language access coordinator. The court will update that addendum any time the language access coordinator changes.

Date: 1-7-14

Chief Judge: \_\_\_\_\_



SCAO Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_