

1 **Superior Court of La Paz County**
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3 **Language Access Plan (LAP)**
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5 **I. Legal Basis and Purpose**
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7 This document serves as the plan for the Arizona Superior Court of La Paz County to provide
8 persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) services that are in compliance with Title VI of
9 the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.; 45 C.F.R. § 80.1 et seq.; and 28 C.F.R. §
10 42.101–42.112). The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely
11 and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the Superior Court
12 of La Paz County.
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14 This language access plan (LAP) was developed to ensure meaningful access to court services
15 for persons with limited English proficiency. Although court interpreters are provided for
16 persons with a hearing loss, access services for them are covered under the Americans with
17 Disabilities Act rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and therefore will not be addressed
18 in this plan.
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20 **II. Needs Assessment**
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22 **A. Statewide**
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24 The State of Arizona provides court services to a wide range of people, including those who
25 speak limited or no English. From a statewide perspective, the following languages were listed
26 with the greatest number of speakers who spoke English less than “Very Well” in Arizona
27 (according to the American Community Survey estimate report from the U.S. Census Bureau
28 dated March 2022):
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- 30 1. Spanish
- 31 2. Navajo
- 32 3. Vietnamese
- 33 4. Chinese
- 34 5. Arabic
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36 **B. Superior Court of La Paz County**
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38 The Superior Court of La Paz County is responsible to provide services identified in this plan to
39 all LEP persons. However, the following list shows the foreign languages that are most
40 frequently used in this court or the COURT’S geographic area.
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- 42 1. Spanish
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45 This information is based on data collected from Staff court interpreters, Bilingual employees, or
46 invoices received from independent interpreter contractors and the Language used by the
47 Arizona Superior Court, Superior Court Clerk's Office., Probation Department, Justice Courts
48 and Magistrates Courts located in La Paz County.
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50 **III. Language Assistance Resources**

51 **A. Interpreters Used in the Courtroom**

52 **1. Providing Interpreters in the Courtroom**

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56 In the Superior Court of La Paz County, court interpreters will be provided in all courtroom
57 proceedings at no cost to all LEP witnesses; litigants; victims; parents, guardians, and family
58 members of minor witnesses, victims, and/or litigants; as well as any other person whose presence
59 or participation is necessary or appropriate as determined by the judicial officer.
60

61 The Superior Court of La Paz County employs credentialed interpreters in the courtroom pursuant
62 to the provisions of Arizona supreme court administrative order 2016-02 on the credentialing of
63 court interpreters, and Arizona code of judicial administration § 7-301 on continuing education
64 requirements for credentialed interpreters. To comply with these authorities, the court will
65 implement written policies regarding the use of interpreters.
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67 It is the responsibility of the private attorney, Public Defender, or County Attorney to provide.
68 qualified interpretation and translation services for witness interviews, pre-trial transcriptions
69 and translations and attorney/client communications during out of court proceedings.
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71 **2. Determining the Need for an Interpreter in the Courtroom**

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73 The Superior Court of La Paz County may determine whether a court customer has limited
74 English proficiency. Identification of language needs at the earliest point of contact is highly
75 recommended. The need for a court interpreter may be identified prior to a court proceeding by
76 the LEP person or on the LEP person's behalf by counter staff, self-help center staff, family
77 court services, or outside justice partners such as Department of Child Safety. Courts should
78 have a documented process to identify LEP needs for parties with notation in the physical and
79 electronic case file.
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83 The need for an interpreter also may be made known in the courtroom at the time of the
84 proceeding. In a case where the court is mandated to provide an interpreter, but one is not
85 available at the time of the proceeding, even after the court has made all reasonable efforts to
86 locate one, as previously outlined in this plan, the case will be postponed and continued a date
87 when an interpreter can be provided.
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89 **3. AOC Interpretation Resources**

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91 Court Interpreter Registry, Roster of Credentialed Court Interpreters, and Listserv:

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93 The AOC maintains a statewide registry of individuals who indicate they have interpreting
94 experience and have expressed interest in working in the courts. The registry includes
95 information on the individuals' credentialing status with the Arizona court interpreter
96 credentialing program (ACICP). The court using interpreting services will determine the
97 competence of the persons listed and their suitability for a given assignment. This registry is
98 available to court staff on the Internet at <https://apps.azcourts.gov/registry>.

99
100 The AOC also maintains a public Arizona roster of credentialed court interpreters. The public
101 roster lists the name, language, credential level, and contact information for those interpreters
102 who have successfully earned an ACICP credential and who have consented to having their
103 information appear in the public roster. The public roster is available on the Arizona Judicial
104 Branch website at <https://www.azcourts.gov/interpreter/>.

105
106 Additionally, AOC created a statewide listserv to allow courts to communicate via email on
107 court interpreter-related matters. The listserv is an excellent resource to locate referrals for
108 specific language needs. Access codes and instructions to join the listserv may be obtained from
109 the AOC Language Access contact person.

110
111 Video Remote Interpreting (VRI):

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113 The AOC has installed video conferencing equipment at the State Courts building that will allow
114 courts with compatible technology to remotely conference an interpreter from the Phoenix metro
115 area or from another court jurisdiction into their court to improve resource allocation and reduce
116 time and costs associated with interpreter travel. Contact the AOC Language Access Contact for
117 more information on VRI connectivity and a checklist for court proceedings most appropriate for
118 video.

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120 **B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom**

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122 The Superior Court of La Paz County is also responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure
123 that LEP individuals have meaningful access to all court services and programs outside the
124 courtroom. Court services and programs include but are not limited to self-help centers, clerk
125 offices, intake officers, cashiers, and records room.

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127 **1. Assistance to Understand Court Procedures and Policies**

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129 Services offered by the court generally to English-speaking customers pursuant to the
130 employee code of conduct (ACJA §1-303) must also be provided to LEP litigants in their
131 language.

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2. Assistance to Fill-Out Court Forms and Pleadings

The Superior Court of La Paz County will assist in the filling-out of court forms for those LEP court customers who are unable to do so either by themselves or with the assistance of another competent adult proficient in English and able to render assistance in a timely manner.

3. Court-Ordered Services and Programs

The court also is responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP individuals have meaningful access to all court-ordered services and programs. Court-ordered services and programs include but are not limited to conciliation, mediation, arbitration, treatment or educational programs provided by a court employee or a private vendor under contract with the court. Contracts with vendors that provide direct services to court users must include the requirement that the vendor provide language services, including interpreters, for all LEP individuals.

The court uses the following resources to facilitate communication with LEP individuals and court staff or providers of court-ordered services:

- Staff court interpreters or independent interpreter contractors;
- Bilingual employees;
- Bilingual volunteers;
- Telephonic interpreter services, (from contract interpreters or an agency); and,
- Video remote interpreting services (where available)
- The terms of the court’s contracts with providers of court-ordered services.

To provide linguistically accessible services for LEP individuals, the Superior Court of La Paz Arizona Superior Court Clerk’s Office., Probation Department, Justice Courts and Magistrates Courts located in La Paz County. County provides the following:

- Self-help center services that include written informational and educational materials and forms with instructions in Spanish.
- Protective Orders translated in Spanish.
- Protective Orders available online translated in Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese.
- Website link from Court’s website to the Supreme Court’s Spanish translated webpage for court forms and instructions and other language access relates resources such as the court’s LAP and complaint form and process should be made available online.

4. Bilingual Staff and Volunteers

The Superior Court of La Paz County uses bilingual staff and volunteers, if applicable, in the provision of linguistically accessible services for LEP individuals. These staff assist LEP

176 individuals in the same manner as that for English-speaking court users.

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178 Bilingual staff and volunteers who have not completed the credentialing program are not used in
179 lieu of interpreters, either in court or for court-ordered programs and services.

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181 **C. Court Appointed or Supervised Personnel**

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183 The Superior Court of La Paz County also shall ensure that court appointed or supervised
184 personnel, including but not limited to child advocates, guardian's ad litem, court psychologists
185 and doctors provide language services, including interpreters as part of their service delivery
186 system to LEP individuals.

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189 **1. Sight Translation**

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191 The court will provide assistance so LEP persons may understand court-issued documents
192 provided in English through sight translation or other reasonable means.

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194 **E. Websites/Online Access**

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196 If the court operates an Internet website, it will ensure the website is accessible to LEP persons
197 and will include, at a minimum:

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199 • A notice about the availability of language services written in Spanish and posted on the
200 home page.

201 • A hyperlink to Arizona Supreme Court's Spanish-translated webpage at
202 <https://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio>

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205 **IV. Court Staff and Volunteer Recruitment**

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207 **A. Recruitment of Bilingual Staff for Language Access**

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209 The Superior Court of La Paz County is an equal opportunity employer and recruits and hires
210 bilingual staff to serve its LEP constituents. Primary examples include but are not limited to:

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212 • Court interpreters to serve as regular full-time or part-time employees or regular
213 interpreter contractors of the court.

214 • Bilingual staff to serve at public counters and or self-help centers; and

215 • Bilingual staff available on call to assist with contacts from LEP individuals, as needed.

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217 **B. Recruitment of Volunteers for Language Access**

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219 The court also recruits and uses volunteers to assist with language access in the following areas:

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- In self-help centers, to assist LEP users;
- At public counters to provide interpretive services between staff and the LEP public

V. Judicial and Staff Training

The Superior Court of La Paz County is committed to providing language access training opportunities for all judicial officers and staff members. Training and learning opportunities currently offered will be expanded or continued as needed. Those opportunities include Interpreter coordinator training;

- Diversity Training;
- Cultural competency training;
- LAP training;
- Staff attendance in Spanish and training, provided by the court in partnership with local colleges and institutions to offer these classes on site and free to employees on court time, or through tuition reimbursement;
- New employee orientation training; and,
- Judicial officer orientation on the use of court interpreters and language competency.
- AOC’s Language Access in the Courtroom Training DVD
- AOC’s language access online training videos located at <http://www.azcourts.gov/educationservices/cojet-classroom/video-center>

VI. Public Outreach and Education

A. General

To communicate with the court’s LEP constituents on various legal issues of importance to the community and to make them aware of services available to all language speakers, the Superior Court of La Paz County provides community outreach and education and seeks input from its LEP constituency to further improve services.

B. Videos, Webinars, On-Line Classes, In-Person Classes and Other Similar Instructional Methods

New public-facing videos designed to assist litigants, or the public more broadly shall be in English and Spanish.

Those videos, webinars, and instructional materials currently in existence which are deemed to be “vital” shall be made available in Spanish.

The court will determine whether any existing videos, webinars, and instructional materials should be made available in languages other than English and Spanish by considering the Department of Justice’s four-factor analysis.

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VII. Formal Complaint Process

If an LEP court customer believes meaningful access to the courts was not provided to them, they may choose to file a complaint with the trial court’s Language Access Plan Coordinator. The court will develop a complaint process that includes at a minimum, the following information:

- The court will respond to any complaint within 30 days and the records will be maintained as public records.
- The complaint may be filed as follows:
 - Filed at The Superior Court Clerk’s Office 1316 Kofa Avenue, Parker AZ 85344
- The court has attached the complaint form (English/Spanish) to the LAP. In the alternative, the complaint forms may be located at: The Superior Court Clerk’s Office 1316 Kofa Avenue, Parker AZ 85344
- The court will ensure the translated versions of the complaint form are available in multiple locations, including, but not limited to:
 - Forms posted on the court’s website and
 - Hard copy forms available at public counters.

VIII. Public Notification and Evaluation of LAP

A. LAP Approval and Notification

The Superior Court of La Paz County’s LAP is approved by the presiding judge and court executive officer. Upon approval, please forward a copy to the AOC Court Services Division. Any revisions to the plan will be submitted to the presiding judge and court executive officer for approval, and then forwarded to the AOC. Copies of Superior Court of La Paz County’s LAP will be provided to the public on request.

B. Evaluation of the LAP

The Superior Court of La Paz County will routinely assess whether changes to the LAP are needed. The plan may be changed or updated at any time but reviewed not less frequently than once a year.

Every 1 year the court will review the effectiveness of the court’s LAP and update it as necessary. The evaluation will include identification of any problem areas and development of corrective action strategies. From time to time, the court may consider using a survey sampling of data collection for a limited time period which involves assessing language access requests to assist in the evaluation of the LAP.

307 Elements of the evaluation will include:
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- 309 • Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated
310 materials should be provided.
- 311 • Solicitation and review of feedback from LEP communities within the county.
- 312 • Assessment of whether court staff adequately understand LEP policies and procedures
313 and how to carry them out;
- 314 • Review of feedback from court employee training sessions; and,
- 315 • Customer satisfaction feedback as indicated on the access and fairness survey, if
316 administered by the court during this time period.
- 317 • Review any language access complaints received during this time period.
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320 **C. AOC Language Access Contact:**

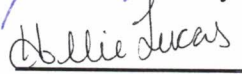
321 David Svoboda
322 Court Services Division
323 Administrative Office of the Courts
324 1501 W. Washington Street, Suite 410
325 Phoenix, AZ 85007
326 (602) 452-3965, dsvoboda@courts.az.gov
327

328 **E. LAP effective date:** 01/09/25
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330 **F. Date of last revision:** 01/09/25
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332 **G. Approved by:**
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334 Presiding Judge:  Date: 01/09/25
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336 Court Executive Officer:  Date: 01/09/25
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338 Hollie Lucas