Administrative Order C43 2013 – 07J

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN FOR THE CASS COUNTY CIRCUIT, PROBATE AND DISTRICT COURTS

In accordance with Supreme Court Administrative Order 2013-8, the Cass County Courts establish this Language Access Plan (LAP) to provide for the language access needs of users of the Circuit, Probate and District Courts.

This LAP is the plan for the Courts 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 Courts.

The Courts have appointed a language access coordinator to be a contact person for the public, court staff, and SCAO concerning this plan and its implementation.

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 non-English language most frequently spoken in the court's physical jurisdiction:

1. Spanish
2. German
3. Korean
4. Laotian

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. Dutch
2. Arabic

C. Identification of LEP Persons

Court staff use the following methods to identify LEP persons:

1. "I Speak" cards
2. Posting signage in multiple languages at points of entry to the Law & Courts Building
3. Assistance from bi-lingual employees

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:

- Telephone
- Clerk's windows
- Security desk
- Friend of the Court office reception
- Juvenile Court office reception
- Probation officers

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.

Language access services will be offered in the most reasonable available resource to meet the specific needs of each LEP person and such services will include the use of language line and other telephonic interpreter services; "I Speak" cards; bi-lingual employees to interpret; and in-person interpreters.

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:

   N/A

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
   - Bi-lingual employees
   - Language line

E. Other Provisions

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

N/A

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:

The language access coordinator will provide individualized training to each department as necessary to ensure that the Courts' staff knows what to do when LEP persons are encountered.

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 (if available) or 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:

- Director of Cass County's Community Mental Health Provider, Woodlands
- Prosecuting Attorney
- Sheriff
- Director of the Cass County Department of Human Services

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 identified the name and contact information of the language access coordinator and advised the State Court Administrative Office.

The court will notify the SCAO regional office of any changes to the language access coordinator's contact information, or if a new language access coordinator is named.

Effective Date: October 24, 2013

Michael E. Dodge 11-6-13

Honorable Michael E. Dodge — Date
Circuit Court

11-6-13

Honorable Susan L. Dobrich — Date
Probate Court

11-6-13

Honorable Stacey A. Rentfrow — Date
District Court

Language Access Coordinator
Contact Information

This form identifies the court's language access coordinator. The court or language access coordinator will notify the SCAO regional office if there are any changes to the contact information, or if the court names a different language access coordinator.

Name (required):	Carol Montavon Bealor
Bar Number (if appropriate):	P57068
Court Number/Name (required):	43rd Judicial Circuit/Probate/4th District Courts
Court Address:	60296 M-62
City, State, ZIP:	Cassopolis, MI 49031
Phone Number:	269-445-4482
E-mail Address:	carolb@cassco.org
Date (required):	November 6, 2013

Provide the above information to the SCAO regional office.

Zimbra **carolb@cassco.org**

Fwd: Cass Language Access Plan - Approved

From : Region5 Info <Region5-Info@courts.mi.gov> Tue, Nov 26, 2013 10:09 AM
Subject : Fwd: Cass Language Access Plan - Approved 1 attachment
To : Carol Bealor <carolb@cassco.org>

FYI.

Denise

From : Region5 Info <region5-info@courts.mi.gov> Fri, Nov 15, 2013 02:56 PM
Subject : Cass Language Access Plan - Approved
To : carolb@cassco.org, donnad@cassco.org, karenm@cassco.org, miked@cassco.org, nancyb@cassco.org, naomic@cassco.org, staceyr@cassco.org, sued@cassco.org
Cc : Region5 Info <Region5-Info@courts.mi.gov>

Cass Language Access Plan - Approved
C43 2013-07J
D04 2013-01J
P14 2013-01J

This is to advise that we have reviewed the above referenced administrative order and find that it conforms to the requirements of MCR 8.112(B). This order is being accepted and filed until advised by your court of any change.

Jill Booth
Region V Administrator
P.O. Box 30048
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-8679

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