

Guadalupe Municipal Court

Language Access Plan (LAP)

I. Legal Basis and Purpose

This document serves as the plan for the Guadalupe Municipal Court to provide to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) services that are in compliance with Title VI of 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. § 42.101–42.112). The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the provision of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who come in contact with the Guadalupe Municipal Court.

This language access plan (LAP) was developed to ensure meaningful access to court services for persons with limited English proficiency. Although court interpreters are provided for persons with a hearing loss, access services for them are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and therefore will not be addressed in this plan.

II. Needs Assessment

A. Statewide

The State of Arizona provides court services to a wide range of people, including those who speak limited or no English. From a statewide perspective, the following languages were listed with the greatest number of speakers who spoke English less than “Very Well” in Arizona (according to the American Community Survey estimate report from the U.S. Census Bureau dated April 2012):

1. Spanish
2. Navajo
3. Chinese
4. Vietnamese

B. Guadalupe Municipal Court

The Guadalupe Municipal Court is responsible to provide services identified in this plan to all LEP persons. However, the following list shows the foreign languages that are most frequently used in this court’s geographic area. This information is based on data collected from the court’s Language Line Services invoices and from the court’s experiences assisting court customers.

- Spanish

III. Language Assistance Resources

A. Interpreters Used in the Courtroom

1. Providing Interpreters in the Courtroom

In the Guadalupe Municipal Court, language interpretation through Language Line Services will be provided in all court proceedings by teleconference at no cost to all LEP court customers including witnesses, victims and parents, guardians, and family members of minors as well as any other person whose presence or participation is necessary or appropriate as determined by the judicial officer.

It is the responsibility of the Private Attorney, Public Defender or County Attorney to provide qualified interpretation and translation services for case preparation such as witness interviews, pre-trial transcriptions and translations and attorney/client communications during out of court proceedings.

2. Determining the Need for an Interpreter in the Courtroom

The Guadalupe Municipal Court may determine whether a court customer has limited English proficiency. Identification of language needs at the earliest point of contact is highly recommended. The need for a court interpreter may be identified prior to a court proceeding by the LEP person themselves or on the LEP person's behalf by judicial staff, a family member, or law enforcement officers as noted on a citation. The court has a process for documenting and identifying LEP needs for parties and to ensure a notation is made on the physical file.

Signage throughout the court building indicating interpreter services are available may also help to identify LEP individuals. The Guadalupe Municipal Court will display "Notice of Interpreter Services" at the following locations: point of entry.

The need for an interpreter also may be made known in the courtroom at the time of the proceeding. In a case where the court is mandated to provide an interpreter, but one is not available at the time of the proceeding, even after the court has made all reasonable efforts to locate one, as previously outlined in this plan, the case will be postponed and continued on a date when an interpreter can be provided.

3. AOC Interpretation Resources

Court Interpreter Registry and Listserv

The AOC maintains a statewide roster of individuals who indicate they have interpreting experience and have expressed interest in working in the courts. The court using interpreting

services will determine the competence of the persons listed. This roster is available to court staff on the Internet at <http://www.interpreters.courts.az.gov>.

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

Video Remote Interpreting

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

B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom

The Guadalupe Municipal Court is also responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that LEP individuals have meaningful access to all court services and programs outside the courtroom. Court services and programs include but are not limited to self-help centers, clerk offices, intake officers, cashiers, and records room.

1. Assistance to Understand Court Procedures and Policies

Services offered by the court generally to English-speaking customers pursuant to the Employee Code of Conduct (ACJA §1-303) must also be provided to LEP litigants in their language.

2. Assistance to Fill-out Court Forms and Pleadings

The Guadalupe Municipal Court will provide neutral assistance 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 program include but is 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:

- The Guadalupe Municipal Court has bilingual employees in the following languages: Spanish and Japanese. When LEP customers seek our assistance outside the courtroom, we first try to meet their needs by using the language skills of our employees;
- For face-to-face encounters, as well as telephone conversations, the Guadalupe Municipal Court uses the Language Line when on-site interpreters are not available.
- When court staff does not know what language a customer is speaking, they use “I Speak cards,” which are available in many languages.
- Staff who have some knowledge of another language but need help with court terminology may consult the following glossary sources.
 - a. Spanish/English glossary on the AOC self-help Web site,
http://ajinweb/ctserv/cmu/CMU_CourtInterpreter.htm
 - b. Spanish Language Style Guide and Glossaries for U.S. Government Web Sites,
<http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/multilingual/spanish-guide/index.shtml>

To provide linguistically accessible services for LEP individuals, the Guadalupe Municipal Court provides the following:

- Public service window that include bilingual staff and access to telephonic language assistance;
- Written informational and educational materials and instructions in Spanish;
- The Court’s website is bilingual and the website link from the court’s website to the Supreme Court’s Spanish translates webpage:
<http://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio/Home.aspx>

C. COURT APPOINTED OR SUPERVISED PERSONNEL

The Guadalupe Municipal Court ensures that court appointed or supervised personnel provide language services, including interpreters as part of their service delivery system to LEP individuals.

D. Translated Forms and Documents

The Arizona courts understand the importance of translating forms and documents so that LEP individuals have greater access to the courts’ services. The Guadalupe Municipal Court currently uses forms and instructional materials translated into Spanish.

- Bond card (provided by the MCSO during traffic stops)

- All court forms available online
- Financial statements
- Waiver of Counsel
- Notice of Post-Conviction Relief
- Guilty Plea Proceeding (Modified courtroom handout)

Interpreters at court hearings provide direct translation of court documents and correspondence associated with the case on the record.

1. Sight Translation

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

E. WEBSITE/ONLINE ACCESS

Guadalupe Municipal Court operates an internet website: <http://guadalupecourt.org/> and ensures the website is accessible to LEP persons and includes, at a minimum:

- A notice about the availability of language services written in Spanish and posted on the home page.
- A hyperlink to: Arizona Supreme Court's Spanish-translated webpage at <http://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio>

Guadalupe Municipal Court is currently updating the website to improve accessibility for LEP customers. Some improvements include:

- Ability to toggle between English and Spanish for the entire website content.
- Hyperlinks to: AZcourthelp.org and Maricopa County Superior Court's resource page
- The Language Access Plan will be posted to the updated website.
- LEP complaint forms and general complaint forms will be available on the updated website.

IV. Court Staff and Volunteer Recruitment

A. Recruitment of Bilingual Staff for Language Access

The Guadalupe Municipal Court is an equal opportunity employer and recruits and hires bilingual staff to serve its LEP constituents. Primary examples include but are not limited to:

- Bilingual staff to serve at public counters

B. Recruitment of Volunteers for Language Access

At this time, the Guadalupe Municipal Court does not recruit or use volunteers to assist with

language access.

V. Judicial and Staff Training

The Guadalupe Municipal Court is committed to providing language access training opportunities for all judicial officers and staff members. Training and learning opportunities will be offered and continued as needed. New trainings that will be coming up in the next year will be:

- Interpreter coordinator training;
- Diversity Training;
- Cultural competency training;
- LAP training;
- 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
- The current Presiding Judge for Guadalupe Municipal Court is fluent in Spanish.

VI. Public Outreach and Education

At this time, the Guadalupe Municipal Court does not provide community outreach and education.

B. Videos, Webinars, On-line Classes, In-person Classes and Other Similar Instructional Methods

At this time, the Guadalupe Municipal Court does not have public-facing videos designed to assist litigants or the public. However, the Guadalupe Municipal Court's updated website will provide a link to AZcourthelp.org website which contains several of these options. Furthermore, customer service staff provide AZcourthelp.org information to customers at the customer service window.

VII. Formal Complaint Process

The Guadalupe Municipal Court has a formal complaint process for LEP court customers to access. Complaint forms are available in English and Spanish and are available in hard copy form at the Court's customer service window. The Guadalupe Municipal Court's updated website will provide access to these complaint forms as well. The court's formal Complaint Policy will be provided upon request. A summarized approach for submitting complaints is as follows:

1. Submit a complaint **in writing** to the Guadalupe Municipal Court in-person at the customer service window, by fax, by USPS mail, or email.
2. Complaints can be submitted on the available complaint forms or on plain

paper or email format. The following information is required for submitting a complaint:

- a. Complainant's name, mailing address, phone number, and email
 - b. Complainant's description of the incident, including names of Court staff/individuals involved
 - c. Date of the incident
3. The court will respond to written complaints within 30 days.

VIII. Public Notification and Evaluation of LAP

A. LAP Approval and Notification

The Guadalupe Municipal Court's LAP is approved by the presiding judge and court executive officer/court administrator. Upon approval, please forward a copy to the AOC Court Services Division. Copies of Guadalupe Municipal Court's LAP will be provided to the public on request. In addition, the court will post this plan on its public Web site.

B. Evaluation of the LAP

The Guadalupe Municipal Court will routinely assess whether changes to the LAP are needed. The plan may be changed or updated at any time but reviewed not less than once per year.

Every year the court's executive officer/court administrator 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.

Elements of the evaluation will include:

- Number of LEP persons requesting court interpreters and/or language assistance;
- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated materials should be provided;
- Solicitation and review of feedback from LEP communities within the county;
- Assessment of whether court staff adequately understand LEP policies and procedures and how to carry them out;
- Review of feedback from court employee training sessions; and,
- Customer satisfaction feedback as indicated on the access and fairness survey, if administered by the court during this time period.
- Review any language access complaints received during this time period.

C. Trial Court Language Access Plan Coordinator:

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D. AOC Language Access Contact:

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E. LAP Effective date: January 8, 2019

F. Approved by:

Presiding Judge:


Hon. Fidelis V. Garcia

Date: January 16, 2019