

WOOD COUNTY
CIRCUIT COURT
LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN
EFFECTIVE 10/1/2020

Contents

I. Purpose.....2

II. Policy Directive2

III. Definitions.....2

IV. Identification and Assessment of LEP Communities.....3

V. Language Access Policy.....3

 A. Responsibility to Provide Language Services or Reasonable Accommodations3

 B. Ensuring Quality Services4

 C. Translations5

 D. Staff Training and Resource Sharing5

 E. Public Notice and Other Signage5

 F. Complaint Procedure.....5

 G. Monitoring, Evaluating, and Updating.....5

VI. Language Access Policy Implementation6

 A. Public Notices and Signage.....6

 B. Responsible Staff.....6

 C. Procedures for Serving LEP Court Users.....7

 1. Requesting Language Assistance or Accommodation7

 2. Out-of-Court Situations.....7

 3. In-Court Situations9

 4. Remote Interpreting.....11

 5. Scheduling.....11

 D. Tracking and Recording LEP Data12

 E. Training12

 F. Resources12

 G. Translations12

 H. Complaints13

 I. Public Input13

Wood County Circuit Court Language Access Plan

I. Purpose

This Language Access Plan (LAP) outlines how the Wood County Circuit Court effectively allocates and regulates its resources, services, and administrative operations to maintain compliance with federal and state language access requirements.

II. Policy Directive

The Wood County Circuit Court is dedicated to providing limited English proficient (LEP) individuals with timely and meaningful access to all court activities and programs in accordance with federal and state mandates. Specific federal laws include Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ("Title VI"), Executive Order 13166, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Section 601 of Title VI, 42 U.S.C. Section 2000d *et. seq.* states:

"No person in the United States shall on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

III. Definitions

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

1. The inability, because of the use of a language other than English, to adequately understand or communicate effectively in English in a court proceeding.
2. The inability, due to a speech impairment, hearing loss, deafness, deaf-blindness, or other disability, to adequately hear, understand, or communicate effectively in English in a court proceeding. (Wis. Stat. §885.38(1)(b)1-2))

Interpreting/Interpretation

The oral conversion from one language to another language.

Qualified Interpreter

A person who is able to do all of the following:

1. Readily communicate with a person who has LEP.
2. Orally transfer the meaning of statements to and from English and the language spoken by a person who has limited English proficiency in the context of a court proceeding.
3. Readily and accurately interpret for a person who has LEP, without omissions or additions, in a manner that conserves the meaning, tone, and style of the original statement, including dialect, slang, and specialized vocabulary. (Wis. Stat. 885.38(1)(c))

Remote Interpreting (RI)

Providing interpreting services using technology where the interpreter is at a location physically separate from the consumers of the interpreting service. Remote interpreting can be provided using audio only or audio and video technologies.

Sight Translation/Sight Translate

The act of reading a document written in one language while converting it orally into another language.

Translating/Translation

The written conversion of a document from one language to another language.

IV. Identification and Assessment of LEP Communities

The LEP population in this county is identified by reviewing data from the US Census Bureau which is updated every ten years. Changes in the LEP population will be monitored using mid-census estimates and projections from the American Community Survey (ACS). Other data such as from the Department of Education, the Migration Policy Institute or other local or state agencies may be used to obtain accurate data.

A. County LEP Population Summary

- 1. Total County Population: 72,797.
- 2. Total LEP Population: 964.
- 3. LEP Population Percentage: 1.32%.
- 4. Top 5 languages spoken by individuals who identify as LEP (see table below):

Language	Number of People Speaking English Less than Very Well	Percentage of People Speaking English Less than Very Well	Percentage of County LEP Population
1. Spanish or Spanish Creole	379	.52%	39.32%
2. Hmong	242	.33%	25.10%
3. Vietnamese	60	.08%	6.22%
4. German	56	.08%	5.81%
5. French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	38	.05%	3.94%

B. County LEP Population Summary (Hearing Disability)

- 1. County Population with a Hearing Difficulty: 3207.
- 2. LEP County Percentage with a Hearing Difficulty: 4.4%.

V. Language Access Policy

A. Responsibility to Provide Language Services or Reasonable Accommodations

It is the responsibility of this court to provide and pay for language assistance services and other reasonable accommodations for LEP individuals during all court proceedings, clerks counter interactions, and other out-of-court approved activities in accordance with state and federal laws.

1. Clerks Counter Interactions

Since frontline counter staff are often the first points of contact with members of the public including LEP individuals, all clerks of court, deputy clerks, and other court staff will use culturally competent procedures to identify LEP persons who are trying to access the courts and assist them with qualified language assistance services. Clerks of circuit court are authorized to appoint for interpreter services used at the clerk’s office under Wis. Stat. §885.38(3)(d).

2. Court Proceedings and Out-of-Court Events

The ultimate determination whether to provide language assistance or other reasonable accommodation during a circuit court proceeding belongs to the judge. If the court determines that a qualified individual has limited English proficiency and assistance is necessary, the court shall advised the person that they have the right to a qualified