

RHODE ISLAND OFFICE OF COURT INTERPRETERS (OCI)
Monitoring and Reporting of Language Access Services
June 17, 2022

The following report is submitted in compliance with Supreme Court Executive Order 2012-05 (EO) on Language Access activities for the period beginning on January 1, 2021 and ending on December 31, 2021.

The following information addresses subsections described on Page 6, Paragraph H of the aforementioned EO.

- a. This year, the OCI’s efforts to increase and maintain a pool of qualified interpreters were successful and the Judiciary was able to provide language services in rare languages, such Bengali, Kisi, Tigrinya, Urdu, Wolof, and Yoruba, amongst others. The OCI translated several court documents and/or forms as requested by several offices within the Judiciary. At the closing of the calendar year, no further policies or procedures were identified as needed to implement the EO.
- b. The OCI provided services in cases where interpreters had been requested by court staff, attorneys, or parties to a case. These services were provided in all four counties in criminal and civil matters. They included: interpretation, translation, sight translation, and court information provided in languages spoken by court users.
 - i. During this calendar year, there were thirty (30) cases that were delayed due to the unavailability of an interpreter. These delays were due to requests made on the day of the hearing and no qualified/certified interpreter was available for the time requested, there was no interpreter available for the particular hearing date and/or time or the wrong language was requested. Whenever possible and if the procedure qualified, an over-the-phone (OPI) was offered. The languages where delays were reported were Bengali, Cape Verdean, Haitian, Kinyarwanda, Korean, Laotian, Portuguese, Quiche, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Turkish, Vietnamese and Wolof.
 - ii. During the period reported, the OCI recorded eleven (11) cases where a qualified/certified interpreter could not be provided for the following languages: Bengali, Kinyarwanda, Korean, Quiche, Swahili, and Wolof. Some of these languages are considered rare languages and the pool of qualified interpreters in and out of state is very small. The OCI works closely with vendors in nearby states to recruit, train, and contract more interpreters for those languages.

Cancellations

| | Civil | Criminal | |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Interpreter not available | 4 | 8 | 12 |
| Interpreter cancelled | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Interpreter delayed | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Interpreter not scheduled | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Late request | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| Wrong language requested | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | 12 | 18 | 30 |

- c. During the year, the Rhode Island Judiciary provided interpreting services as follows:
- i. Language services were provided in thirty-one (31) languages in more than 7,790 events. The six most requested languages were Spanish (6,915*), followed by Cape Verdean (357), Portuguese (188), Mandarin (74), Arabic (39) and Cambodian (38). This year the OCI also provided services in some rare languages such as Amharic, Kisi, Wolof and Yoruba.

The chart below shows the number of services provided per language per event:

| Language | Events |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Albanian | 4 |
| Amharic | 4 |
| Arabic | 39 |
| Armenian | 3 |
| Bengali | 5 |
| Cambodian | 38 |
| Cantonese | 6 |
| Cape Verdean | 357 |
| Chinese | 12 |
| French | 22 |
| Greek | 1 |
| Haitian | 26 |
| Hindi | 4 |
| Kinyarwanda | 4 |
| Kisi | 1 |
| Korean | 13 |
| Laotian | 9 |
| Lebanese | 4 |
| Mandarin | 74 |
| Polish | 1 |
| Portuguese | 188 |
| Quiche | 14 |
| Russian | 7 |
| Spanish | 6,915* |
| Swahili | 14 |
| Tigrinya | 6 |
| Turkish | 2 |
| Urdu | 1 |
| Vietnamese | 19 |
| Wolof | 1 |
| Yoruba | 1 |
| | 7,795* |

* (Numbers do not reflect additional Spanish events that were performed by court staff at clerk's offices, assistance over the phone, and assistance at the various counters.)

- ii. All language providers are classified as certified or qualified interpreters or bilingual staff, the latter authorized to provide services in court operations only.
- iii. All services shown on the previous chart were provided by three (3) certified staff interpreters, four (4) qualified staff interpreters, thirteen (13) bilingual staff, one (1) certified individual contractor, twenty (20) certified or qualified individual contractors, and thirty-three (33) interpreters employed by five (5) corporate contractors approved by the state to be on the State’s Master Price Agreement List.
- iv. All interpreters and contractors reside in Rhode Island or nearby states.
- v. Language services were provided to over 7,790 court users in all counties and courts in Superior, Family, District, Workers’ Compensation, and Traffic Tribunal. In addition to services in courtrooms, the OCI also provided language services in ancillary offices such as Juvenile Services, Pre-Trial Services, Mediation, Court Visitations, and Probation.
- vi. The OCI reports providing 5,474 new direct language services in 3,669 civil matters, and 1,805 in criminal matters.

Case Types (INT’s)

| | |
|----------|-------|
| Civil | 3,669 |
| Criminal | 1,805 |
| | 5,474 |

Type of Proceeding

| | Interpreting | Language Services | Sight | Information Desk | Transcriptions | Presentations | Translations | |
|----------|--------------|-------------------|----------|------------------|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Civil | 3,370 | 248 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 47 | 3,669 |
| Criminal | 1,646 | 155 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1,805 |
| | 5,016 | 403 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 48 | 5,474 |

- d. During the 2021 calendar year, the OCI did not receive reports of any issue regarding the implementation of the EO or the LAP.
 - i. The Rhode Island Judiciary continues having the Language Assistance Complaint form available in its website. This form describes the process of filing an administrative complaint, where to send it, what steps the Judiciary takes to resolve the issue, and the time allowed for the Administrative Office of State Courts to respond.
 - ii. During the period between January 1, and December 31, 2021, the OCI did not receive any Language Assistance Complaint.

- e. The LAP and EO, and their respective translations into Spanish, Cambodian, and Portuguese continue being available on the Judiciary’s website.
- f. During the 2021 calendar year, the OCI was not able to provide any of the scheduled trainings to court staff, including judges, front-line clerks, bilingual staff, and interpreters who provide services to the Judiciary.
- g. The OCI continues partnering with community agencies and other related agencies to identify individuals with abilities to become qualified/certified interpreters, especially in those languages considered as rare. The OCI also continued its partnership with neighboring states to recognize reciprocity for the use of qualified and certified interpreters. Due to COVID-19, the OCI did not proctor the National Center for State Courts’ certification examination this year.
- h. An updated list of authorized interpreters, translators, and bilingual staff is available at the OCI. This list includes the names, languages, and type of designation held by these professionals.
- i. In addition to a list of downloadable court forms, translated into Spanish and Portuguese and available on the court’s website, the OCI translated twenty-three (23) court related materials, and transcribed and translated forty-eight (48) documents related to court cases.
- j. The following chart indicates a breakdown of the Judiciary expenses in the provision of language services during the period covering January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

| Item | Full-time staff | Bilingual Court Staff (BICTs) | Vendors |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Wages and Benefits | \$672,725.15 | | |
| Stipends | | \$9,750.00 | |
| Fee for Services | | | \$174,929.57 |