

Tempe Municipal Court

Language Access Plan (LAP)

I. Legal Basis and Purpose

This document serves as the plan for the Tempe 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 Tempe 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 March 2022):

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

B. Tempe Municipal Court

The Tempe 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.

1. Spanish
2. Arabic
3. Vietnamese
4. Mandarin
5. Chuukese

Interpreters were provided for 19 different languages in 2025. This information is based on data collected from Tempe Municipal Court 2025 case statistics.

III. Language Assistance Resources

A. Interpreters Used in the Courtroom

1. Providing Interpreters in the Courtroom

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

The Tempe Municipal Court employs credentialed interpreters in the courtroom pursuant to the provisions of Arizona supreme court administrative order 2016-02 on the credentialing of court interpreters, and Arizona Code of Judicial Administration § 7-301 on continuing education requirements for credentialed interpreters. To comply with these authorities, the court will implement written policies regarding the use of interpreters.

It is the responsibility of the private attorney, Court Appointed Attorney or County Attorney to provide qualified interpretation and translation services for 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 Tempe 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 or on the LEP person's behalf by counter staff, self-help center staff, family, court services, or outside justice partners such as police, victim advocates, resource navigators, and attorneys. The need for an interpreter will be noted in the Court's Case Management System (CMS) by updating the language field.

Tempe Municipal Court has signs in the lobby and at service counters to help direct Spanish speakers.

The need for an interpreter may also be identified during the courtroom 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. In certain circumstances, when securing an on-site interpreter is not possible, telephone/virtual interpretation services may be utilized.

3. AOC Interpretation Resources

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

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

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

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.

B. Language Services Outside the Courtroom

The Tempe 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 cashiers, court services specialists, and obtaining records.

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 Tempe Municipal Court 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.

Should a LEP court customer be unable to complete a form, either alone or with the assistance of

another competent adult proficient in English and able to render assistance in a timely manner, the court will make arrangements to assist the customer complete forms in English to the same extent that the court offers such assistance to anyone who is unable to complete a form on their own (e.g., illiterate or disabled customers), in keeping with ACJA §1-303. This assistance for LEP court customers may take various forms:

- Engaging an interpreter who speaks a language other than Spanish (in person or remotely) to interpret between a court staff person and the court customer, thus allowing the court staff person to transcribe verbatim the customer's answers to form questions. In this instance, a notation should be added to the form indicating to the court how the information on the form was obtained, thereby allowing the creation of an oral record in open court confirming the form's content matches the LEP person's intended meaning. Whenever possible, the court staff person transcribing onto the form should not be the same staff person accepting the filing.
- Engaging a Spanish speaking court staff interpreter to assist the LEP person to complete the form by writing a complete and accurate English translation of the LEP person's answers to form questions. In this instance, a notation should be added to the form indicating to the court how the information on the form was obtained thereby allowing the creation of an oral record in open court confirming the form's content matches the LEP person's intended meaning. Whenever possible, the staff interpreter translating information onto the form should not be the same interpreter assisting the LEP person in court during a hearing.
- Waiving the requirement that a form be filed, where appropriate. In this instance the LEP person should be taken into the courtroom, sworn, and examined by the use of an onsite or telephone/virtual interpreter to create an oral record of what would otherwise have been filed in writing via the form. If necessary, that record can then be transcribed verbatim into the corresponding form fields. A notation should be added to the form indicating how the information on it was obtained.

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 diversion, treatment or educational programs provided by a Tempe 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;
- "I Speak" cards, to identify the individual's primary language;

- Written information in Spanish on how to access and navigate the court;
- Signs in Spanish located throughout court building;
- Telephonic interpreter services, (from contract interpreters or an agency); and,
- A public court phone line with key instructions provided in Spanish to request court services.

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

- Leaflets and forms in Spanish including Protective Order petitions, “Personal Safety Plan”, “Your Rights”, “Legal Resources & Information Guide” and “Civil Rights Division” leaflets along with “City of Tempe Community Health and Human Services Resources to Meet their needs” guide.
- Forms are available on the Court’s website at <https://www.tempe.gov/government/city-court/court-forms-english-and-spanish>

4. Bilingual Staff

The Tempe Municipal Court uses bilingual staff, if applicable, in the provision of linguistically accessible services for LEP individuals. These staff assist LEP individuals at public counters and over the phone, etc., in the same manner as that for English-speaking court users.

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

C. Court Appointed or Supervised Personnel

The Tempe Municipal Court also shall ensure that court appointed or supervised personnel, including but not limited to child advocates, court psychologists and doctors 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 Tempe Municipal Court currently uses forms and instructional materials translated into Spanish.

- The following forms and documents are available in Spanish:
 - Application to Set Aside Judgement of Guilt
 - Arraignments by Mail
 - Bond Posting Form
 - CAPP Class Information
 - Civil Hearing Information Sheet
 - Civil & Criminal Motion

- Compliance Assistance Program (CAP) Packet
- Court Appointed Attorney Financial Application
- Credit Card Authorization
- Criminal Notice of Right to Appeal
- Defendant Guide Sheet for Protective Orders
- Defensive Driving School Information Sheet
- Driving Without Insurance Information Sheet
- Financial Screening Application
- Jail – Self Surrender Packet
- Jury Instructions
- Leaflets – “Your Rights”, “Legal Resources & Information Guide”
- Notice of Rights & DV Warnings
- Pedestrian, Cyclist, and Scooter Diversion Class
- Petition to Expunge
- Petition to Seal Case Records & Instructions
- Protective Order Petition
- Request for Court Records
- Subpoena Information Sheet
- Traffic Ticket Enforcement Assistance Program (TTEAP) Waiver Petition
- Waiver of Counsel

These documents are located either with court personnel at the counter, or on the Tempe Municipal Court website <https://www.tempe.gov/government/city-court/court-forms-english-and-spanish>.

1. Sight Translation

The court will provide assistance so LEP persons may understand court-issued documents provided in English through sight translation by a qualified interpreter. Where this is impractical due to length, complexity or legibility, the document’s contents may be explained by a bilingual member of court staff, in accordance with the pertinent canons and codes of conduct, or by a member of staff in combination with a qualified interpreter.

E. Website/Online Access

Tempe Municipal Court’s website: <https://www.tempe.gov/court>.

The availability of language services is noted in English and Spanish on the home page. The Court Forms page contains forms and information in English and Spanish.

The Other Court/Law Resources page contains additional resources to a link to the Arizona Supreme Court’s Spanish webpage <https://www.azcourts.gov/elcentrodeautoservicio>.

IV. Court Staff and Volunteer Recruitment

A. Recruitment of Bilingual Staff for Language Access

The Tempe 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:

- Court interpreters to serve as regular full-time or part-time employees or regular interpreter contractors of the court.
- Bilingual staff to serve at public counters and by phone.

B. Recruitment of Volunteers for Language Access

Tempe Municipal Court does not currently use volunteers to assist with language access issues.

V. Judicial and Staff Training

The Tempe Municipal Court 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;
- Basic Spanish training for customer service for interested staff
- 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

The Tempe Municipal Court has various public information and education pamphlets translated into Spanish available in the court lobby. Public outreach and education programs will be monitored and made accessible to LEP persons as they are developed.

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

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.

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.

Complaint forms are available on the Tempe Municipal Court website at <https://www.tempe.gov/government/city-court/language-access>. Complaint forms in Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese are available for download from <https://www.azcourts.gov/selfservicecenter/Forms/Language-Access-Complaint>.

- 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:
 - Mailed or delivered to Tempe Municipal Court, Patricia Flam, Court Interpreter and Language Access Plan Coordinator, 140 E. Fifth Street, Tempe, AZ 85281
 - Emailed to court-inquiries@tempe.gov

VIII. Public Notification and Evaluation of LAP

A. LAP Approval and Notification

The Tempe Municipal Court's LAP is approved by the Presiding Judge and Court Director. 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 Director for approval, and then forwarded to the AOC. Copies of Tempe Municipal Court's LAP will be provided to the public on request and made available on the court's website.

B. Evaluation of the LAP

The Tempe 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 frequently than every two years.

Every two years(s) the Court's Interpreter or a management team designee 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 language assistance;
- Assessment of current language needs to determine if additional services or translated

- materials should be provided;
- 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: and
- Review any language access complaints received during this time period.

C. Trial Court Language Access Plan Coordinator:

Patricia Flam
Court Interpreter
Tempe Municipal Court
140 E. 5th St.
Tempe, AZ 85281
(480) 350-2953, Patricia_Flam@Tempe.gov

D. AOC Language Access Contact:

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E. LAP effective date: 02/01/26

F. Date of last revision: 01/29/26

G. Approved by:

Presiding Judge: Kevin Kane Date: 1/29/2026

Court Director: Alexis Allen Date: 1/29/2026