

RCW 2.43.090 Language access plans. (1) Trial courts organized under this title and Titles 3 and 35 RCW must develop and maintain a written language access plan to provide a framework for the provision of language access services for persons with limited English proficiency accessing the court system and its programs in both civil and criminal legal matters. Courts may use a template developed by the administrative office of the courts in developing their language access plan.

(2) The language access plan must at a minimum include provisions designed to provide procedures for court staff and the public, as may be necessary, that address the following:

(a) Procedures to identify and provide the language needs of persons with limited English proficiency using the court system;

(b) Procedures for requesting and appointing interpreters as required under RCW 2.43.030;

(c) Procedures for notifying court users of the right to an interpreter and the availability of interpreter services. Such information shall be prominently displayed in the courthouse in the five or more languages other than English that reputable data indicates are predominate in the jurisdiction;

(d) A process for providing timely communication between individuals with limited English proficiency and all court employees who have regular contact with the public and effective access to court services provided by the clerk's office and other court-managed programs;

(e) Procedures for evaluating the need for translation of written materials, and prioritizing and providing those translated materials. Courts should take into account the frequency of use of forms by the language group, and the cost of providing the forms by other means;

(f) A process for training judges, court clerks, and court staff on best practices in serving individuals with limited English proficiency in legal proceedings and how to effectively assign and work with interpreters and provide interpretation; and

(g) A process for an ongoing evaluation of the language access plan and a process for monitoring the implementation of the language access plan.

(3) Each court, when developing its language access plan, must consult with judges, court administrators, court staff, court clerks, interpreters, and members of the community, such as domestic violence organizations, pro bono programs, courthouse facilitators, legal services programs, and/or other community groups whose members speak a language other than English.

(4) Beginning January 1, 2026, and every two years thereafter, all courts must submit their most recent language access plan to the administrative office of the courts.

(5) The administrative office of the courts shall provide technical assistance to trial courts in developing their language access plans.

(6) Each court must provide a copy of its language access plan to the administrative office of the courts in accordance with criteria for approval recommended by the interpreter and language access commission for approval prior to receiving state reimbursement for interpreter costs under this chapter.

(7) Each court shall make available on its website translated information that informs the public of procedures necessary to access a court's language access services and programs. The information shall be provided in five or more languages other than English that

reputable data indicates are predominant in the jurisdiction. [2025 c 55 s 10; 2008 c 291 s 1.]