

# **GUIDE TO COMMUNICATING WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT INDIVIDUALS**

The Maryland Judiciary provides court services to many people, including those who are Limited English Proficient (LEP). This Guide will help court staff when assisting Limited English Proficient individuals.

## **What does the Term “LEP” mean?**

“LEP” stands for “Limited English Proficient”. It is the inability of an individual to adequately understand or communicate effectively in English. The U.S. Census Bureau’s definition for LEP is an individual’s ability to speak English less than “very well”. By this definition, LEP individuals may speak limited English and require language assistance, particularly when trying to access court services.

## **How to Determine if an Individual is LEP**

The best way to determine if an individual needs language assistance is to ask simple questions, such as:

- “How can I help you?”
- “Please tell me your name and address”
- “Do you have a case pending in this court?”
- “What is your preferred language?”
- “Are you comfortable speaking English or would you like me to obtain an interpreter for you?”

If you and the LEP individual are able to communicate in English, proceed to assist them. Speak slowly and be prepared to repeat your statements. Be patient. Remember that those who self-identify themselves as English speakers may still have difficulty understanding court terminology. If you are unable to communicate with the LEP person, you will need to make arrangements for interpreter assistance.

## **If the LEP Individual Needs Language Assistance at the Counter**

To facilitate communication between LEP individuals and court staff, the Maryland Judiciary offers several resources of language assistance. Follow these steps to obtain interpreter assistance by telephone:

- Ask the LEP what language they speak or have them point to their language on the **Maryland Judiciary Language Card or Language Line Poster** (both are included in this packet).
- Once you identify the language, call Language Line at 1(866) 874-3972 and follow the instructions included on the **Language Line Quick Reference Guide** (on the back of the Language Line Poster).
- Once you are connected with an interpreter, speak with the LEP individual through the interpreter.
- Additional information on how to use telephone interpreters can be found on the Language Line Quick Reference Guide.

## **If the LEP Individual Needs an Interpreter for a Court Proceeding**

The Maryland Judiciary provides qualified interpreters to litigants, defendants, witnesses, and victims or victim’s representatives at no charge in court proceedings. These services are funded by the Maryland Judiciary.

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- To request a spoken language interpreter for a court appearance, inform the LEP individual or their representative to submit a completed Request for Spoken Language Interpreter Form (CC-DC41) to the court where their proceeding is scheduled to take place.
- Interpreter requests by e-mail or phone are not allowed.

### **How to Work Effectively with an Interpreter**

- If you are communicating with the LEP individual through an interpreter, speak slowly so that the interpreter can maintain the conversation.
- Speak directly to the LEP individual in the first person. Do not say: “Ask him if he understands...”
- Do not ask the interpreter to explain rules or procedures to the LEP individual. Do not use acronyms or abbreviations that may present a challenge for the interpreter. Fully state the name for which the acronym or abbreviation stand.
- Do not ask the interpreter to perform extra duties other than interpreting your statements to the LEP individual.
- If you do not understand the LEP individual’s responses through the interpreter, rephrase the question or statement.
- Be patient when using an interpreter. Interpreted conversations take longer.

### **How to Locate an Interpreter**

- Each courthouse has a Court Interpreter Coordinator who schedules interpreters for court proceedings. Contact the Clerk or Court Administrator’s Office.
- If you do not know who schedules interpreters in your court, call the Administrative Office of the Courts at (410) 260-1291 for assistance.

### **Translated Court Forms and Brochures**

The Maryland Judiciary has numerous forms and brochures translated in Spanish. Spanish speaking LEP individuals can find these forms by visiting the Maryland Judiciary website at <http://mdcourts.gov/> and clicking on the Circuit Court and District Court “Forms and Brochures” links.

The Court Interpreter Program staff created the following brochures to assist LEP individuals and their representatives: **“Do You Need a Court Interpreter?”** (Also available in Spanish) and **“How to Work Effectively with Interpreters”**. Both brochures are available on the Maryland Judiciary website. Refer LEP individuals to these sources should they have questions about interpreters.

### **Program Contact Information:**

**Program Services, Administrative Office of the Courts**

**Phone Number (410) 260-1291 or (410) 260-3569**

**Maryland Court Interpreter Program: - <http://www.mdcourts.gov/interpreter>**

## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE



### MARYLAND JUDICIARY

Keep this Quick Reference Guide (QRG) nearby for easy reference to effectively utilize Language Line® Over-the-phone Interpretation Service.

#### WHEN RECEIVING A CALL:

1. Use Conference Hold to place the limited English speaker on hold.
2. Dial: **1 (866) 874-3972**
3. Enter on your telephone keypad or provide the representative:
  - 6-digit Client ID: **5 3 0 2 8 4**
  - Enter Access Code (contact the Clerk's or Court Administrator's Office)
  - Press 1 for Spanish
  - Press 2 for all other languages and speak the name of the language you need at the prompt. An Interpreter will be connected to the call.
4. Brief the Interpreter. Summarize what you wish to accomplish and give any special instructions.
5. ADD THE limited-ENGLISH SPEAKER to the line.
6. Say "End of Call" to the Interpreter when the call is completed.

NOTE: When placing a call to a limited-English speaker, begin at Step 2. If you need assistance placing a call to a limited-English speaker, please inform the interpreter at the beginning of the call.

#### IMPORTANT TIPS:

**UNKNOWN LANGUAGE** – If you do not know which language to request, our representative will help you.

**LINE QUALITY PROBLEMS** – If you have problems before reaching a representative, press "0" to be transferred. If there is a sound quality problem, ask the representative to stay on the line to check for sound quality. If you have problems connecting to an Interpreter call Customer Service at 1-800-752-6096.

**WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER** – Address the LEP individual directly through the interpreter using "the first person" (e.g. "Do you have a case pending in this court?", instead of "Ask him if he has a case in this court". Pause to allow the interpreter to interpret your question or statement into the foreign language.

**LENGTH OF CALL** – Expect interpreted comments to run a bit longer than English phrases. Interpreters convey meaning-for-meaning, not word-for-word. Concepts familiar to English speakers often require explanation or elaboration in other languages and cultures.

**INTERPRETER IDENTIFICATION** – Our Interpreters identify themselves by first name and number only. For reasons of confidentiality, they do not divulge either their full names or phone number.

**DEMONSTRATION LINE** – To hear a recorded demonstration of over-the-phone interpretation call our demonstration line at 1-800-996-8808 or visit our website at [www.LanguageLine.com](http://www.LanguageLine.com)

**CUSTOMER SERVICE** – To provide feedback, commend an Interpreter, or report any service concerns, call Customer Service at 1-800-752-6096.

Language Line Services • 1 Lower Ragsdale Drive, Bldg. 2 • Monterey, CA 93940

[www.LanguageLine.com](http://www.LanguageLine.com)



# Interpretation Services Available

**English Translation:** Point to your language. An interpreter will be called. The interpreter is provided at no cost to you.

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| <p><b>Arabic</b> عربي 📞<br/>أشر إلى لغتك. وسوف يتم جلب مترجم فوري لك.<br/>سيتم تأمين المترجم الفوري مجاناً.</p>   | <p><b>Korean</b> 한국어 📞<br/>귀하께서 사용하는 언어를 지적하시면 해당 언어 통역 서비스를 무료로 제공해 드립니다.</p>   |
| <p><b>Burmese</b> မြန်မာ 📞<br/>သင့်ဘာသာစကားကို ညွှန်ပြပါ။ စကားပြန် ခေါ်ပေးပါမယ်။<br/>သင့်အတွက် စကားပြန် အခမဲ့ ပေးပါမယ်။</p>                               | <p><b>Mandarin</b> 國語 📞<br/>請指認您的語言，<br/>以便為您提供免費的口譯服務。</p>  |
| <p><b>Cantonese</b> 廣東話 📞<br/>請指認您的語言，<br/>以便為您提供免費的傳譯服務。</p>   | <p><b>Polish</b> Polski 📞<br/>Proszę wskazać swój język i wezwiemy tłumacza. Tłumacza zapewnimy bezpłatnie.</p>  |
| <p><b>Farsi</b> فارسي 📞<br/>به زبان مورد نظر اشاره کنید. ما برای شما مترجم می آوریم.<br/>این کار هیچ هزینه ای برای شما نخواهد داشت.</p>                   | <p><b>Portuguese</b> Português 📞<br/>Indique o seu idioma. Um intérprete será chamado.<br/>A interpretação é fornecida sem qualquer custo para você.</p>           |
| <p><b>French</b> Français 📞<br/>Pointez vers votre langue et on appellera un interprète qui vous sera fourni gratuitement.</p>                            | <p><b>Punjabi</b> ਪੰਜਾਬੀ 📞<br/>ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਇਕ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਆ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਜਾਏਗਾ।<br/>ਇਹ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਆ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਬਿਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਰਚ ਦੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਏਗਾ।</p>                   |
| <p><b>Haitian Creole</b> Kreyòl 📞<br/>Lonje dwèt ou sou lang ou pale a epi n ap rele yon entèprèt pou ou. Nou ba ou sèvis entèprèt la gratis.</p>         | <p><b>Russian</b> Русский 📞<br/>Укажите язык, на котором вы говорите. Вам вызовут переводчика. Услуги переводчика предоставляются бесплатно.</p>                   |
| <p><b>Hindi</b> हिंदी 📞<br/>अपनी भाषा पर इंगित करें और एक दुभाषिया बुलाया जाएगा।<br/>दुभाषिये का प्रबन्ध आप पर बिना किसी खर्च के किया जाता है।</p>        | <p><b>Somali</b> Afsoomaali 📞<br/>Farta ku fiiq luqadaada... Waxa laguugu yeeri doonaa turjubaan. Turjubaanka wax lacagi kaaga bixi mayso.</p>                     |
| <p><b>Hmong</b> Hmoob 📞<br/>Taw rau koj hom lus. Yuav hu rau ib tug neeg txhais lus.<br/>Yuav muaj neeg txhais lus yam uas koj tsis tau them dab tsi.</p> | <p><b>Spanish</b> Español 📞<br/>Señale su idioma y llamaremos a un intérprete.<br/>El servicio es gratuito.</p>  |
| <p><b>Italian</b> Italiano 📞<br/>Puntare sulla propria lingua. Un interprete sarà chiamato. Il servizio è gratuito.</p>                                   | <p><b>Tagalog</b> Tagalog 📞<br/>Ituro po ang inyong wika.<br/>Isang tagasalin ang ipagkakaloob nang libre sa inyo.</p>   |
| <p><b>Japanese</b> 日本語 📞<br/>あなたの話す言語を指して下さい。<br/>無料で通訳を提供します。</p>  | <p><b>Vietnamese</b> Tiếng Việt 📞<br/>Hãy chỉ vào ngôn ngữ của quý vị. Một thông dịch viên sẽ được gọi đến, quý vị sẽ không phải trả tiền cho thông dịch viên.</p> |