

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
AND  
FORT BEND COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE NUMBER 171-76-19**

**I. BACKGROUND**

- A. The Department of Justice (DOJ) received complaints that alleged the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts (FBC Courts) denied limited English proficient (LEP) individuals meaningful access to court programs and activities, and that Fort Bend County (FBC) and the FBC Courts retaliated against a complainant in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., and its implementing regulations, 28 C.F.R. Subpart C (Title VI).
- B. DOJ initiated a Title VI investigation and informed FBC of the allegations in each complaint.
- C. FBC engaged DOJ in an informal process to voluntarily resolve the Title VI court access and retaliation allegations in this investigation.
- D. DOJ acknowledges the work FBC has done in advance of this agreement to bring their programs and activities into compliance with Title VI.
  - 1. FBC created a Title VI nondiscrimination policy and complaint process.
  - 2. FBC Courts adopted an interim language access plan, attached as Appendix A, that required all FBC Courts to provide LEP individuals notice of available language interpretation services at no cost in civil and criminal cases and proceedings. Each interim language access plan will be reviewed and revised pursuant to Section VIII. B. of that language access plan.
- E. After several years of collaboration between the DOJ and FBC on the best approach to provide language access in the FBC Courts, the parties agree to this Memorandum as a collaborative, cost effective and compromise resolution to the issues presented, the parties' disagreements, and this investigation.

**II. INTRODUCTION**

- A. Title VI prohibits national origin discrimination in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance and retaliation against any person who engages in protected activities, which include filing a Title VI complaint or participating in a Title VI investigation, and authorizes DOJ to investigate and resolve discrimination complaints. 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d - 2000d-7; 28 C.F.R. §§ 42.104(b), 42.107(c)-(e).

- B. This agreement memorializes the commitment by FBC to institute a language access program that will provide language assistance services<sup>1</sup> at no cost to LEP individuals in all civil and criminal cases in FBC Courts and to implement policies and procedures that are compliant with Title VI.
- C. This agreement is not an admission of Title VI liability by either FBC or FBC Courts regarding the language access or retaliation allegations in any of the complaints in this Title VI investigation.
- D. FBC and FBC Courts will not threaten, coerce, discriminate, or take other adverse actions against any individual who has made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated in any matter in this Title VI investigation.
- E. DOJ and FBC are the sole parties to this agreement.
- F. In consideration for the terms in this agreement, DOJ will end its investigation of the allegations in the complaints.
- G. DOJ will continue to provide FBC and FBC Courts technical assistance to implement all aspects of this agreement.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. FBC shall mean Fort Bend County.
- B. FBC Courts shall mean Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts.
- C. Fort Bend County Courts at Law shall mean the elected and appointed Judges, Magistrates, Visiting Judges, and their staffs.
- D. Fort Bend County District Judges shall mean the elected and appointed Judges, Magistrates, Visiting Judges, and their staffs.

### **IV. RELIEF FOR COMPLAINANTS**

- A. Complainant 1: Within **30 days** of the completion and signing of a release, FBC shall pay Complainant 1 \$2,580.00. Contemporaneously with making the payment, FBC shall confirm the disbursement of funds via email to Michael Mulé at Michael.Mule@usdoj.gov.
- B. Complainant 2: Within **30 days** of the completion and signing of a release, FBC shall pay Complainant 2 \$22,500.00. Contemporaneously with making the payment, FBC shall confirm the disbursement of funds via email to Michael Mulé at Michael.Mule@usdoj.gov.

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<sup>1</sup> As used in this MOA, language assistance services refer to oral services.

- C. FBC represents that there are no references in the personnel file of Complainant 2 to the charges of Title VI discrimination filed against FBC or FBC Courts, Complainant 2's participation in this investigation, or any references to Complainant 2's internal complaints with FBC or FBC Courts or complaints filed with the Texas Judicial Branch Certification Commission. In addition, absent advance written approval from DOJ, FBC shall not make any future reference to this investigation, this agreement, or the related complaints in any of the files that FBC or FBC Courts maintains regarding Complainant 2 or any employment databases it uses to store information about workers' qualifications or eligibility for employment opportunities, except as required to comply with this agreement or applicable local, state, or federal law.
- D. Unless required by local, state, or federal law, FBC will offer no explanation for why it will not provide additional employment information to prospective employers or any other entity regarding Complainant 2 other than to state that it is the policy of FBC to provide only the dates of employment and salary history in response to such a request for an employment reference.
- E. FBC and FBC Courts shall not retaliate against any complainant in this matter in any way, including, but not limited to, by refusing to offer them employment, business, and/or contracting opportunities based on any complainant engaging in protected activities or behavior.

**V. ACTIONS BY FBC AND FBC COURTS**

- A. FBC will improve how it addresses Title VI compliance in FBC Courts by:
  - 1. Developing a mandatory Title VI training for FBC Courts within **180 days** of the effective date of this agreement that will be delivered annually to all incumbent employees as well as new hires within **14 days** of their first day of employment.
  - 2. Requiring a separate Title VI retaliation training before any person can be a member of a hiring committee for any available position in FBC Courts.
  - 3. Within **180 days** of the effective date of this agreement, providing all FBC Courts employees, staff, and the public with notice in the non-English languages listed in Section III. of the language access plans in Appendix A (Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Urdu, Malayalam, Tagalog, Gujarati, Hindi, and Arabic) of the FBC Courts' Title VI nondiscrimination statement and complaint process. This notice will be translated by a competent translator. FBC will not rely solely on the use of online or automatic translation services to translate this notice.
  - 4. Within **180 days** of the effective date of this agreement, providing notice, in the non-English languages specified in V.A.3., of the FBC Courts Title VI nondiscrimination and retaliation policies in conspicuous public locations, on the main page of all relevant FBC Courts' websites, and as a link on each job posting by FBC Courts. Each of these notices will be translated by a

competent translator. FBC Courts will not rely solely on the use of online or automatic translation services to translate these notices.

B. The FBC Courts will implement a language access program by:

1. Within **one year** of the effective date of this agreement, conducting an initial review of the FBC Courts language access plans in Appendix A.
2. Requiring the FBC Language Access Director to conduct community outreach to inform and engage stakeholders and gather comments and concerns related to the language access plans of the FBC Courts.
3. Within **180 days** of the effective date of this Agreement, the Language Access Director shall coordinate a public meeting with interested persons to discuss the current language access plans of the FBC Courts and available court services for LEP individuals in Fort Bend County.
  - a. Judges and their staffs will be encouraged to publicize the date and time of the meeting through the FBC Court of Law and District Court websites.
  - b. Written comments will be accepted by the Language Access Director.
  - c. The Language Access Director will send information about the meeting to organizations involved in legal advocacy or who service LEP individuals including the Fort Bend County Bar Association, the Fort Bend County Criminal Defense Attorneys Association, the Asian American Bar Association of Houston, the South Asian Bar Association, the Hispanic Bar Association of Houston, Lone Star Legal Aid, Catholic Charities, Child Advocates, and the Fort Bend Women's Center.
  - d. The Language Access Director will contact area school districts for input and information gathering on how to best serve the LEP community.
  - e. Future meetings shall be publicized to such community organizations as are appropriate at that time.
4. Within **180 days** of the effective date of this agreement, educating all court staff and judges on Title VI obligations, the contents of the language access plan, and all related policies and procedures including how to identify the need for language assistance services, how to provide LEP individuals notice about court interpreter services, how to identify and track court interpreter events and related costs, and how to effectively interact with and assist an LEP individual in person, over the phone, by video, or by email.
5. Within **180 days** of the effective date of this agreement, developing a bench card for FBC Courts staff and judges that addresses how to identify instances when an interpreter is needed and how to assess and document the competence and certifications of in-person and remote interpreter.
6. Within **180 days** of the effective date of this agreement, providing translated print

and electronic complaint forms, notices, and signs in public locations, and on the public website of each individual FBC Court, that address the current interpreter policies and procedures, how to request an interpreter and how to file a Title VI or language assistance service complaint, in the non-English languages specified in V.A.3. of this agreement. Each complaint form, sign, and all related website content will be translated by a competent translator. FBC Courts will not rely solely on the use of online or automatic translation services to translate each item.

7. Within **one year** of the effective date of this agreement, begin improving the FBC Courts case commencement process and all case management systems to uniformly identify and track interpreter requests, when interpreters were provided, and the resources expended by each individual FBC Court on interpreters.
- C. FBC will provide DOJ copies of all draft language access plans, policies, plans, procedures, notices, complaint forms, bench cards, and training materials for FBC Courts, including any amendments to existing documents or website content, before they are issued or implemented. DOJ will provide technical assistance and feedback on each item within a reasonable amount of time. Upon request by 1) DOJ or 2) FBC, the non-requesting party will provide additional supportive information regarding the draft or feedback and will meet in person, by telephone, or by video, to discuss any concerns or questions.

## **VI. MONITORING AND REPORTING**

- A. FBC will provide DOJ with monitoring and status reports that address each item in V. A. and B. every six months.
- B. FBC and FBC Courts and DOJ will agree on the report format within **60 days** of the effective date of this agreement.
- C. DOJ will review each monitoring and status report and will provide timely feedback.

## **VII. GENERAL TERMS**

- A. This agreement will be applicable to, and binding upon, the parties to this agreement, their officers, agents, employees, assigns, and successors in office.
- B. This agreement resolves this DOJ Title VI investigation, DJ# 171-76-19, and is limited to the facts and issues presented in the complaints identified during this investigation. This agreement does not affect FBC or FBC Court's continuing obligation to comply with Title VI and all other federal laws and applicable regulations, or preclude DOJ from taking appropriate action to evaluate the FBC or FBC Court's compliance with any laws enforced by DOJ.
- C. If at any time DOJ believes that the FBC or FBC Courts have failed to comply in a timely manner with any obligation under this agreement, DOJ may issue FBC or the

FBC Courts a notice of alleged non-compliance and will provide a reasonable opportunity of no less than 45 days to respond. The parties will attempt to resolve any issue in good faith, including but not limited to a cure or corrective period of no less than six months. Should the parties not be able to resolve any issue, DOJ and the FBC or FBC Courts may pursue any action allowed by law or this agreement.

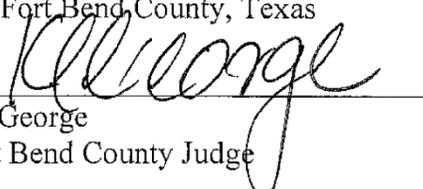
- D. The provisions in this MOA constitute the entire agreement.
- E. If any part of the agreement is deemed invalid, all other provisions remain valid.
- F. The signatories represent that they are authorized to bind FBC.
- G. This agreement is a public document that will be available on the public websites of DOJ and FBC and upon a request by any individual.

**VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION**

- A. The effective date of this agreement is the date of the last signature below.
- B. Except as specified, all deadlines are based on the effective date.
- C. This agreement and the Parties' obligations hereunder will terminate **two years** after effective date of this agreement, provided that FBC has substantially complied with the terms in this agreement.

**IX. SIGNATURES**

For Fort Bend County, Texas

BY   
KP George  
Fort Bend County Judge

Date: 6/22/21

For the United States of America

BY   
CHRISTINE STONEMAN  
Principal Deputy Chief of FCS, performing  
duties of Chief

ANNA MEDINA  
Acting Deputy Chief  
KEVONNE SMALL  
Attorney  
MICHAEL MULÉ  
Attorney  
Federal Coordination and Compliance Section  
Civil Rights Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530  
(202) 307-2222

Date: 6/28/21

MARK E. DONNELLY  
Acting United States Attorney  
DANIEL DAVID HU  
Assistant United States Attorney  
Chief, Civil Division

MARK  
BY DONNELLY

Digitally signed by MARK  
DONNELLY  
Date: 2021.06.28 09:06:56  
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U. S. Attorney's Office  
Southern District of Texas  
1000 Louisiana, Ste. 2300  
Houston, TX 77002  
(713) 567-9000

Date: 6/28/21

Appendix A: FBC Court Orders approving the interim language access plans.

THE STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF FORT BEND

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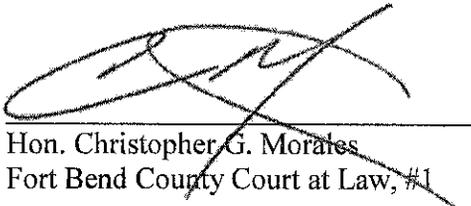
IN RE: LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

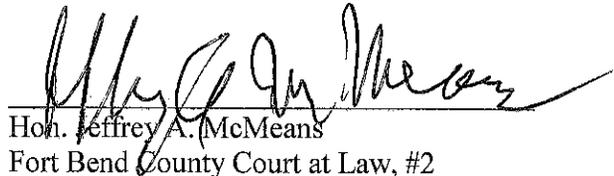
ORDER ADOPTING  
LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

On this the 17th day of June, 2020, the Language Access Plan for Fort Bend County, Texas was presented for the approval of the Fort Bend County Court at Law Judges.

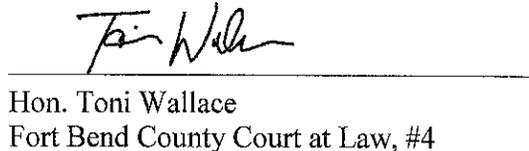
It is hereby ORDERED that the attached Language Access Plan is adopted for use in the Fort Bend County Courts of Law.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Christopher G. Morales  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Jeffrey A. McMeans  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #2

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Juli Mathew  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #3

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Toni Wallace  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #4

*Teana V. Watson*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Teana Watson  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #5

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Sherman Hatton, Jr.  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #6

# FORT BEND COUNTY COURTS AT LAW AND DISTRICT COURTS

## LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

### I. Policy Directive & Legal Basis

This document serves as the Language Access Plan (LAP) for the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts to provide limited English proficiency (LEP) services that are in compliance with constitutional due process and equal protection requirements, federal statutory and regulatory requirements, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. and 28 C.F.R. § 42.101-42.112), and Texas state constitution, statutes and rules. The Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts will provide meaningful access to all LEP individuals in the form of Language Assistance at no cost, subject to the appropriation of funds by the County.

This LAP demonstrates how the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts have implemented policies to ensure language assistance is provided to all court users, outlines the responsibilities of providing language access at various levels throughout the court system, and provides a framework for the provisions of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who have contact with the Courts. Compliance with the LAP will be achieved over time and in consultation with affected stakeholders.

This LAP addresses language assistance services for LEP individuals. Reasonable accommodations for persons who are Deaf or hard of hearing are not addressed in this LAP. Nothing in the LAP requires or shall be construed to require anyone to act contrary to any legal duty, and in the event of a conflict between the LAP and any statute, the statute shall prevail.

### II. Definitions

BI	Basic Licensed Interpreter under Texas Government Code §157.101(d)(1)
Bilingual Court Staff	Court Staff who are not employed to provide Language Assistance, who speak both English and a second language, who are not licensed as either basic or master level interpreters
Civil Language Intake Form	The form attached as Exhibit "A"
County	The local government of Fort Bend County with the authority to appropriate funds for Court Operations
Court Operations	Services and programs, other than courtroom proceedings, that are specifically required or ordered by the Court.

Court Staff	Court Coordinator, Court Clerk, Probate Auditor, Bailiff, Court Reporter or any individual assigned or hired by the Court to help with essential court operations
Court Users	Parties to or witnesses in a Civil, Criminal, Juvenile or Probate action
Department of Justice	United States Department of Justice
Interpreter	An individual licensed under Chapter 157 of the Texas Government Code to interpret court proceedings for an individual who can hear but who has no or limited English proficiency, or an individual who is substituted for such a licensed interpreter in accordance with law who has received training in the skills of interpretation and can competently render a message spoken from one language into one or more other languages
"I speak" cards	A form substantially the same as the City of Houston form attached as Exhibit "B"
Judge	Elected Judge, Appointed Associate Judge or Magistrate, or any other presiding judicial officer of the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts, including specifically or temporarily assigned or designated judges
Justice Center	Fort Bend County Justice Center 1422 Eugene Heimann Circle Richmond, TX 77469
Language Access Training	Information and education for Court Staff in language access resources, policies and procedures.
Language Assistance	Interpretation or translation services
LAD	Language Access Director or Court Interpreter. The LAD's/Court Interpreter's roles and responsibilities are subject to the funding and job responsibilities approved by the County.
LAP	This Language Access Plan
Language Line	Public or commercial service for provision of interpretation services over the telephone or internet

Language Services Outside the Courtroom	Signage located throughout the courthouse directing LEP Individuals to the Information Desk for helpful information for LEP Individuals. "I Speak" cards, language line and translated critical forms that will be kept at the Information Desk or other location as determined by the LAD with input from concerned stakeholders
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MI	Master Licensed Interpreter under Texas Government Code §157.101(d)(2).
Meaningful Access	Timely and reasonable access to the Courts for LEP individuals.
Request for Language Interpretation Services	The form attached as Exhibit "C"
Sight Translation	The reading of text written in one language by an Interpreter who orally translates it into another language
Translator	An individual who has received training in the skills of translation and can competently render written text from one language into one or more other languages

### III. County/Court Need Assessment

According to the 2010 census data, Fort Bend County has nine (9) languages other than English spoken at home by at least one thousand (1,000) Fort Bend County LEP residents. These languages are as follows:

Spanish;	Tagalog;
Vietnamese;	Gujarati;
Chinese;	Hindi; and
Urdu;	Arabic.
Malayalam;	

### IV. Court Interpreter Program

#### A. Identifying the Need for an Interpreter

It is imperative to identify LEP individuals as early in the process as possible. Failure to promptly request and identify Language Interpretation Services may cause a delay in court proceedings and court operations. To identify and facilitate communication between LEP individuals and staff, the Courts will use the following resources:

**(1) Generally**

- a. Bilingual Court Staff will assist in identifying LEP individuals. Bilingual Court staff shall not serve as Interpreters.
- b. Staff will use "I speak" cards to identify the language spoken by LEP individuals for whom a bilingual speaker is not available.
- c. Court Staff will have access to a "language line" to identify the spoken language of an LEP individual who cannot read his or her spoken language.
- d. Staff will note LEP individuals with whom they interact on a case.<sup>1</sup>
- e. Once the language is known, counsel for the LEP person or, if pro se, the LEP person, shall complete a request for Language Interpretation Services at least 72 hours before any appearance, hearing, or trial at which counsel reasonably anticipates the need for language interpretation in one of the nine languages identified in Section III. Counsel should give fourteen (14) days notice for the need of Language Interpretation Services in any other language. Pro se LEP Individuals shall be informed of the requirement to complete a request for Language Interpretation Services in their native language by use of a Language Line or other means. Absent such notice or request, the Court will exercise its discretion and act in the interest of justice and pursuant to applicable law.
- f. Matter(s) may be adjourned/reset at the Court's discretion and in the interest of justice when interpreters cannot be timely located, in accordance with applicable law.

**(2) Criminal**

Available information regarding LEP arrestees will be provided to the Judge hearing the case, who will make note of the language spoken in the case file.<sup>2</sup>

**(3) Civil**

When filing a civil matter, Plaintiff(s) shall disclose whether they reasonably anticipate that a party or witnesses will require Language Interpretation Services and the language spoken. All other parties to a suit shall disclose whether they reasonably anticipate that a party or witness will require Language Interpretation Services at the time of appearance in the case.

**V. Language Access Resources**

The Courts have designated each courts' coordinator as the primary point of contact for all LEP services. All staff will be trained to direct anyone inquiring about LEP services to the

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<sup>1</sup> The Notation will be made on a form developed by the LAD for this purpose. A copy of the completed form will be connected to the case file in Odyssey. The notation will include the name of the LEP individual, the LEP individual's connection to the case, the language spoken, and the language assistance services rendered.

<sup>2</sup> The Notation will be made in the Pre-trial assessment form and will include the name of the LEP individual and the language spoken.

Court Staff LEP individuals may contact the Courts' personnel via the phone, in Court, e-mail, or other means.

Court Staff may obtain Language Interpretation Services for LEP individuals by contacting the Language Access Director (LAD) or as otherwise directed by each individual Court.

#### **A. Language Access Director**

To the extent practicable, the Courts shall employ a MI to be the LAD for the Courts. The LAD shall:

- (1) provide Language Interpretation Services in Spanish during court proceedings;
- (2) schedule MI to provide Language Interpretation Services for the Courts; and
- (3) develop policies, forms and procedures to effectuate the LAP.

#### **B. Licensed Interpreters Generally**

The LAD shall provide a MI in the language spoken by the LEP individual in accordance with Texas law. If there is a MI for the language within 75 miles of the Justice Center, but the MI is unavailable at the time needed for Language Interpretation Services, then the Court may adjourn/reset the proceedings until a MI is available.

If there is no MI within 75 miles of the Justice Center, then the LAD shall provide a BI in the language spoken by the LEP individual. If there is a BI for the language within 75 miles of the Justice Center, but the BI is unavailable at the time needed for Language Interpretation Services, then the Court shall adjourn/reset the proceedings until a BI is available. In this case: (1) the Interpreter shall be qualified by the Court as an expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence; (2) the Interpreter must be at least 18 years of age; (3) the Interpreter may not be a party or an attorney for a party to the proceeding; and (4) the Court shall make a finding that there is no MI within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

If there is neither a MI nor a BI within 75 miles of the Justice Center in the language spoken by the LEP individual to provide in person interpretation, then the LAD shall use its best efforts to locate a MI or BI for the provision of remote interpretation services over the telephone or by video. If a MI or BI is not available remotely, the LAD shall use its best efforts to locate an Interpreter who is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services to the LEP individual either in person or through a Language Line. The Court shall make reasonable inquiry to assure that such Interpreter is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services. In addition: (1) the Interpreter shall be qualified by the Court as an Expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence; (2) the Interpreter must be at least 18 years of age; (3) the Interpreter may not be a party or an attorney for a party to the proceeding; and (4) the Court shall make a finding that there is no MI or BI within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

If a Litigant or witness requests to provide his or her own Interpreter at his or her own cost, after being made aware that an Interpreter will be made available at no cost to the litigant or witness, then the Court shall make reasonable inquiry to assure that such Interpreter is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services in compliance with both Federal and Texas law. The Interpreter must be a MI, unless no MI is available within 75 miles of

the Justice Center. In that case, the Interpreter must be a BI, unless no BI is available within 75 miles of the Justice Center. In that case, the Court shall make reasonable inquiry to assure that such Interpreter is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services. In addition: (1) the Interpreter shall be qualified by the Court as an Expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence; (2) the Interpreter must be at least 18 years of age; (3) the Interpreter may not be a party or an attorney for a party to the proceeding; and (4) the Court shall make a finding that there is no Interpreter within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

It is inappropriate for court staff to request that an LEP person use a family member or an attorney in the case as an Interpreter. However, in the unusual and limited circumstance in which an LEP individual has rejected the Court Provided Interpreter and has not provided one of his/her own, then an attorney who does not represent a party may be used as an Interpreter provided that procedure outlined above for using a non- MI or BI is used.

### **C. Written Language**

The Courts will utilize Court Staff and other resources to assist in the process of translating key forms, FAQs, and parts of the Courts' homepage intended for the general public, into the languages most commonly spoken in Fort Bend County. These translations will be located on the Courts' website. The LAD will assist in coordinating and prioritizing translation of forms.

Interpreters at court hearings are expected to provide sight translations of court documents and correspondence associated with the case.

## **VI. Education and Training**

The LAD is responsible for conducting on-going education for Court Staff and other stakeholders on state and federal requirements for providing Language Interpretation Services and best practices for working with interpreters. The LAD will:

- i. Provide training for current Court Staff to make them aware of the LAP;
- ii. Conduct new employee orientation training on Language Interpretation Services for employees that interact with the public;
- iii. Provide training to any individual or organization that is deemed essential to Language Interpretation Services in Fort Bend County; and
- iv. Provide periodic training sessions to refresh the foregoing.

## **VII. Complaint Process**

Any individual who wants to report; (1) requested interpreter services not being provided; or (2) a language barrier (such as poor quality interpreting) identified when interacting with Court Staff or Interpreters shall complete the Complaint Form attached as Exhibit "D" and deliver the completed form to the LAD. The LAD shall develop policies and procedures to investigate complaints.

**VIII. Public Notification & Evaluation of LAP**

**A. Public Notification**

The Courts shall provide notice of the availability of Language Interpretation Services at no cost to LEP individuals by the following methods, to the extent they are available:

- i. Posting on the Fort Bend County website;
- ii. Posting at points of entry into the Justice Center;
- iii. Materials at the Information Desk at the entry into the Justice Center;
- iv. Notification of local Bar Associations; and
- v. Notification of statewide LEP-related advocacy groups and other community based organizations.

The notices described in sections i, ii, and iii will be translated into the languages referenced in Section III.

**B. Evaluation of LAP**

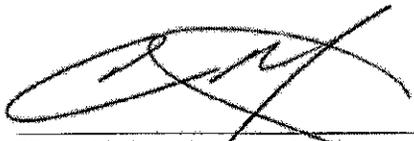
The LAD will routinely review the LAP for any required modifications resulting from changes to federal or state laws, demographic shifts, or operating procedures. If appropriate, the LAP may be revised to reflect public comments and suggestions. The initial review of the LAP will be on or before September 30, 2020, with subsequent reviews every four years, unless the LAD or the Fort Bend County Courts at Law or District Courts choose to deviate from this schedule.

**C. LAP Effective Date**

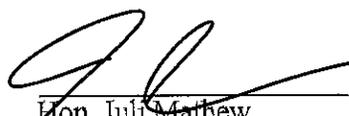
When Adopted.

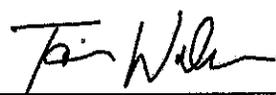
**D. Approved By:**

On June 17, 2020, the following Judges Approved the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts Language Access Plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Christopher G. Morales  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Jeffrey A. McMeans  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #2

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Juli Mathew  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #3

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Hon. Toni Wallace  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #4

*Teana V. Watson*

Hon. Teana Watson  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #5



Hon. Sherman Hatton, Jr.  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #6

Hon. Frank J. Fraley  
240<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. O'Neil Williams  
268<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Walter Armatys  
328<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Brenda G. Mullinix  
387<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Maggie Perez-Jaramillo  
400<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. James H. Shoemaker  
434<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Robert L. Rolnick  
458<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. David S. Perwin  
505<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Cause No. \_\_\_\_\_

CIVIL LANGUAGE INTAKE FORM

Plaintiff anticipates that either a party or witness in the case will need an interpreter at one or more hearings or at trial in the following languages:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT "A"**

# iSPEAKHOUSTON

EXHIBIT "B"

Houston's Language Access Solution

## LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

### How to Use This Card

Use this card to identify the foreign language spoken by non-English speakers. Show the card to the individual and ask them to point to the language they speak. Call 311 or [713-837-0311](tel:713-837-0311) and ask the operator to connect you to the Language Line for telephonic interpretation services. **For more information: [www.ispeakhouston.org](http://www.ispeakhouston.org)**

أنا أتحدث اللغة العربية

I speak Arabic

Ես խոսում եմ հայերեն

I speak Armenian

আমী বাংলা কথা বোলতে পারী

I speak Bengali

Ja govorim bosanski

I speak Bosnian

Аз говоря български

I speak Bulgarian

ကျွန်တော်/ကျွန်မ မြန်မာလို ပြောတတ်ပါတယ်

I speak Burmese

ខ្ញុំនិយាយភាសាខ្មែរ

I speak Cambodian

我講廣東話 (Traditional)

我讲广东话 (Simplified)

I speak Cantonese

Parlo català

I speak Catalan

Govorim hrvatski

I speak Croatian

من درى حرف مى زنىم

I speak Dari

Mluvíím česky

I speak Czech

Ik spreek het Nederlands

I speak Dutch

من فارسى صحبت مى كنم

I speak Farsi

Je parle français

I speak French

Ich spreche Deutsch

I speak German

Μιλώ τα ελληνικά

I speak Greek

હુ ગુજરાતી બોલુ છુ

I speak Gujarati

M pale kreyòl ayisyen

I speak Haitian Creole

אני מדבר עברית

I speak Hebrew

मैं हिंदी बोलता हूँ ।

I speak Hindi

Kuv has lug Moob

I speak Hmong

Beszélek magyarul

I speak Hungarian

Agsaonak ti Ilokano

I speak Ilocano

Parlo italiano

I speak Italian

私は日本語を話す

I speak Japanese

Quin chagüic'ká chabal' ruin' fí  
tzújon cakchiquel

I speak Kackchiquel

한국어 합니다

**I speak Korean**

man Kurdii zaanim

**I speak Kurdish**

man Kurmaanjii zaanim

**I speak Kurmanci**

ຂ້ອຍປາກພາສາລາວ

**I speak Laotian**

Es runāju latviski

**I speak Latvian**

Að kalbu lietuviškai

**I speak Lithuanian**

我講國語 (Traditional)

我讲国语/普通话 (Simplified)

**I speak Mandarin**

Bán chiyola tuj kíyol mam

**I speak Mam**

အိုပို အတင် ခုတ်

**I speak Mon**

Jeg snakker norsk

**I speak Norwegian**

من فارسی صحبت می کنم.

**I speak Persian**

Mówię po polsku

**I speak Polish**

Eu falo português do Brasil  
(for Brazil)

Eu falo português de Portugal  
(for Portugal)

**I speak Portuguese**

ਮੈਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲਦਾ/ਬੋਲਦੀ ਹਾਂ।

**I speak Punjabi**

Ayin tí chí wal q'anjó'ál

**I speak Qanjóbal**

In kinch'aw k'úin ch'é quiche

**I speak Quiche**

Vorbesc românește

**I speak Romanian**

Я говорю по-русски

**I speak Russian**

Ja govorim српски

**I speak Serbian**



**I speak Sign Language**

Hovorím po slovensky

**I speak Slovak**

Waxaan ku hadlaa af-Soomaali

**I speak Somali**

Yo hablo español

**I speak Spanish**

Ninaongea Kiswahili

**I speak Swahili**

Jag talar svenska

**I speak Swedish**

Marunong akong mag-Tagalog

**I speak Tagalog**

พูดภาษาไทย

**I speak Thai**

Türkçe konuşurum

**I speak Turkish**

Я розмовляю українською мовою

**I speak Ukrainian**

میں اردو بولتا ہوں

**I speak Urdu**

Tôi nói tiếng Việt

**I speak Vietnamese**

Dwi'n siarad

**I speak Welsh**

Ndithetha isiXhosa

**I speak Xhosa**

איד רעד יידיש

**I speak Yiddish**

Mo nso Yooba

**I speak Yoruba**

Ngiyasikhuluma isiZulu

**I speak Zulu**



Department of Neighborhoods  
Office of International Communities

EXHIBIT "C"



FORT BEND COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER

Interpreting Services Request Form

- District Court No. \_\_\_\_\_
- County Court at Law No. \_\_\_\_\_
- Magistrate Court

Language: \_\_\_\_\_ Cause # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_ License # \_\_\_\_\_

Date of service: \_\_\_\_\_ Start time: \_\_\_\_\_ End time: \_\_\_\_\_

Case Name: \_\_\_\_\_ This person is a:

- Defendant
- Party to a civil case
- Parent of a minor
- Witness
- Other. Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ (plea, trial, motion, etc.)

- WILL require whispering equipment.
- WILL NOT require whispering equipment

Services requested by:

- Judge \_\_\_\_\_
- FBJC Staff \_\_\_\_\_
- Attorney \_\_\_\_\_
- Parties \_\_\_\_\_
- Pro se \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:	
Authorized by: _____	On: _____

Fort Bend County Courts  
Language Access Director  
301 Jackson Street  
Richmond, TX 77469

**LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINT FORM**

The Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts are committed to providing language access for individuals who are unable to understand English. If you believe you have not been provided with reasonable or professional language access, please complete this form and submit it via email or by mail.

Person making the complaint (Please print):

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NO.: DAY ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ EVENING ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DETAIL YOUR COMPLAINT BELOW (Please specify what occurred, the date, who was involved, the identity of any witnesses and their contact information and the existence of supporting documents. Please include copies of any relevant documents.)

Case No: \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Courthouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Room/Dept. No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT "D"**

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To fully investigate your complaint, the Language Access Director (LAD) may need to contact you for additional information. Please note that if your complaint does not fall within LAD's jurisdiction, it will be forwarded to the appropriate department/agency for investigation. All complaints must be mailed via certified mail with return receipt requested to the address above, or may be emailed to [LanguageAccess@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:LanguageAccess@fortbendcountytexas.gov). The Court will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 10 business days of receipt.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THE STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF FORT BEND

§  
§  
§

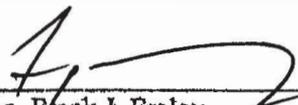
IN RE: LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

ORDER ADOPTING  
LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

On this the 8 day of March, 2021, the Language Access Plan for Fort Bend County, Texas was presented for the approval of the Fort Bend County District Court Judges.

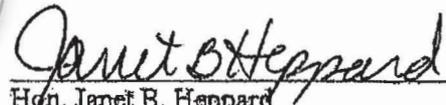
It is hereby ORDERED that the attached Language Access Plan is adopted for use in the Fort Bend County District Courts.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED:

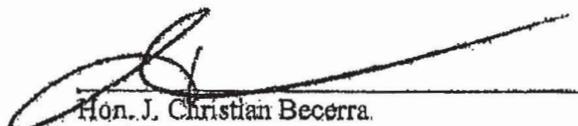
  
Hon. Frank J. Fraley  
240<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

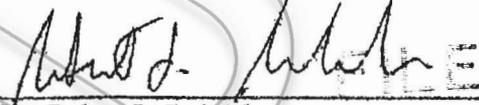
  
Hon. O'Neil Williams  
268<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

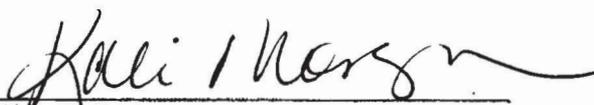
  
Hon. Walter Armatys  
328<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

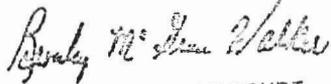
  
Hon. Janet B. Heppard  
387<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

  
Hon. Tameika Carter  
400<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

  
Hon. J. Christian Becerra  
434<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

  
Hon. Robert L. Rolnick  
458<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

  
Hon. Kali Morgan  
505<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

FILED  
2021 MAR 11 PM 2:41  
  
CLERK DISTRICT COURT  
FORT BEND CO., TX

## FORT BEND COUNTY COURTS AT LAW AND DISTRICT COURTS

### LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

#### I. Policy Directive & Legal Basis

This document serves as the Language Access Plan (LAP) for the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts to provide limited English proficiency (LEP) services that are in compliance with constitutional due process and equal protection requirements, federal statutory and regulatory requirements, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. and 28 C.F.R. § 42.101-42.112), and Texas state constitution, statutes and rules. The Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts will provide meaningful access to all LEP individuals in the form of Language Assistance at no cost, subject to the appropriation of funds by the County.

This LAP demonstrates how the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts have implemented policies to ensure language assistance is provided to all court users, outlines the responsibilities of providing language access at various levels throughout the court system, and provides a framework for the provisions of timely and reasonable language assistance to LEP persons who have contact with the Courts. Compliance with the LAP will be achieved over time and in consultation with affected stakeholders.

This LAP addresses language assistance services for LEP individuals. Reasonable accommodations for persons who are Deaf or hard of hearing are not addressed in this LAP. Nothing in the LAP requires or shall be construed to require anyone to act contrary to any legal duty, and in the event of a conflict between the LAP and any statute, the statute shall prevail.

#### II. Definitions

BI	Basic Licensed Interpreter under Texas Government Code §157.101(d)(1)
Bilingual Court Staff	Court Staff who are not employed to provide Language Assistance, who speak both English and a second language, who are not licensed as either basic or master level interpreters
Civil Language Intake Form	The form attached as Exhibit "A"
County	The local government of Fort Bend County with the authority to appropriate funds for Court Operations
Court Operations	Services and programs, other than courtroom proceedings, that are specifically required or ordered by the Court.

Court Staff	Court Coordinator, Court Clerk, Probate Auditor, Bailiff, Court Reporter or any individual assigned or hired by the Court to help with essential court operations
Court Users	Parties to or witnesses in a Civil, Criminal, Juvenile or Probate action
Department of Justice	United States Department of Justice
Interpreter	An individual licensed under Chapter 157 of the Texas Government Code to interpret court proceedings for an individual who can hear but who has no or limited English proficiency, or an individual who is substituted for such a licensed interpreter in accordance with law who has received training in the skills of interpretation and can competently render a message spoken from one language into one or more other languages
"I speak" cards	A form substantially the same as the City of Houston form attached as Exhibit "B"
Judge	Elected Judge, Appointed Associate Judge or Magistrate, or any other presiding judicial officer of the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts, including specifically or temporarily assigned or designated judges
Justice Center	Fort Bend County Justice Center 1422 Eugene Heimann Circle Richmond, TX 77469
Language Access Training	Information and education for Court Staff in language access resources, policies and procedures.
Language Assistance	Interpretation or translation services
LAD	Language Access Director or Court Interpreter. The LAD's/Court Interpreter's roles and responsibilities are subject to the funding and job responsibilities approved by the County.
LAP	This Language Access Plan
Language Line	Public or commercial service for provision of interpretation services over the telephone or internet

Language Services Outside the Courtroom	Signage located throughout the courthouse directing LEP Individuals to the Information Desk for helpful information for LEP Individuals. "I Speak" cards, language line and translated critical forms that will be kept at the Information Desk or other location as determined by the LAD with input from concerned stakeholders
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MI	Master Licensed Interpreter under Texas Government Code §157.101(d)(2).
Meaningful Access	Timely and reasonable access to the Courts for LEP individuals.
Request for Language Interpretation Services	The form attached as Exhibit "C"
Sight Translation	The reading of text written in one language by an Interpreter who orally translates it into another language
Translator	An individual who has received training in the skills of translation and can competently render written text from one language into one or more other languages

### III. County/Court Need Assessment

According to the 2010 census data, Fort Bend County has nine (9) languages other than English spoken at home by at least one thousand (1,000) Fort Bend County LEP residents. These languages are as follows:

Spanish;	Tagalog;
Vietnamese;	Gujarati;
Chinese;	Hindi; and
Urdu;	Arabic.
Malayalam;	

### IV. Court Interpreter Program

#### A. Identifying the Need for an Interpreter

It is imperative to identify LEP individuals as early in the process as possible. Failure to promptly request and identify Language Interpretation Services may cause a delay in court proceedings and court operations. To identify and facilitate communication between LEP individuals and staff, the Courts will use the following resources:

**(1) Generally**

- a. Bilingual Court Staff will assist in identifying LEP individuals. Bilingual Court staff shall not serve as Interpreters.
- b. Staff will use "I speak" cards to identify the language spoken by LEP individuals for whom a bilingual speaker is not available.
- c. Court Staff will have access to a "language line" to identify the spoken language of an LEP individual who cannot read his or her spoken language.
- d. Staff will note LEP individuals with whom they interact on a case.<sup>1</sup>
- e. Once the language is known, counsel for the LEP person or, if pro se, the LEP person, shall complete a request for Language Interpretation Services at least 72 hours before any appearance, hearing, or trial at which counsel reasonably anticipates the need for language interpretation in one of the nine languages identified in Section III. Counsel should give fourteen (14) days notice for the need of Language Interpretation Services in any other language. Pro se LEP Individuals shall be informed of the requirement to complete a request for Language Interpretation Services in their native language by use of a Language Line or other means. Absent such notice or request, the Court will exercise its discretion and act in the interest of justice and pursuant to applicable law.
- f. Matter(s) may be adjourned/reset at the Court's discretion and in the interest of justice when interpreters cannot be timely located, in accordance with applicable law.

**(2) Criminal**

Available information regarding LEP arrestees will be provided to the Judge hearing the case, who will make note of the language spoken in the case file.<sup>2</sup>

**(3) Civil**

When filing a civil matter, Plaintiff(s) shall disclose whether they reasonably anticipate that a party or witnesses will require Language Interpretation Services and the language spoken. All other parties to a suit shall disclose whether they reasonably anticipate that a party or witness will require Language Interpretation Services at the time of appearance in the case.

**V. Language Access Resources**

The Courts have designated each courts' coordinator as the primary point of contact for all LEP services. All staff will be trained to direct anyone inquiring about LEP services to the

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<sup>1</sup> The Notation will be made on a form developed by the LAD for this purpose. A copy of the completed form will be connected to the case file in Odyssey. The notation will include the name of the LEP individual, the LEP individual's connection to the case, the language spoken, and the language assistance services rendered.

<sup>2</sup> The Notation will be made in the Pre-trial assessment form and will include the name of the LEP individual and the language spoken.

Court Staff LEP individuals may contact the Courts' personnel via the phone, in Court, e-mail, or other means.

Court Staff may obtain Language Interpretation Services for LEP individuals by contacting the Language Access Director (LAD) or as otherwise directed by each individual Court.

#### **A. Language Access Director**

To the extent practicable, the Courts shall employ a MI to be the LAD for the Courts. The LAD shall:

- (1) provide Language Interpretation Services in Spanish during court proceedings;
- (2) schedule MI to provide Language Interpretation Services for the Courts; and
- (3) develop policies, forms and procedures to effectuate the LAP.

#### **B. Licensed Interpreters Generally**

The LAD shall provide a MI in the language spoken by the LEP individual in accordance with Texas law. If there is a MI for the language within 75 miles of the Justice Center, but the MI is unavailable at the time needed for Language Interpretation Services, then the Court may adjourn/reset the proceedings until a MI is available.

If there is no MI within 75 miles of the Justice Center, then the LAD shall provide a BI in the language spoken by the LEP individual. If there is a BI for the language within 75 miles of the Justice Center, but the BI is unavailable at the time needed for Language Interpretation Services, then the Court shall adjourn/reset the proceedings until a BI is available. In this case: (1) the Interpreter shall be qualified by the Court as an expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence; (2) the Interpreter must be at least 18 years of age; (3) the Interpreter may not be a party or an attorney for a party to the proceeding; and (4) the Court shall make a finding that there is no MI within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

If there is neither a MI nor a BI within 75 miles of the Justice Center in the language spoken by the LEP individual to provide in person interpretation, then the LAD shall use its best efforts to locate a MI or BI for the provision of remote interpretation services over the telephone or by video. If a MI or BI is not available remotely, the LAD shall use its best efforts to locate an Interpreter who is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services to the LEP individual either in person or through a Language Line. The Court shall make reasonable inquiry to assure that such Interpreter is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services. In addition: (1) the Interpreter shall be qualified by the Court as an Expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence; (2) the Interpreter must be at least 18 years of age; (3) the Interpreter may not be a party or an attorney for a party to the proceeding; and (4) the Court shall make a finding that there is no MI or BI within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

If a Litigant or witness requests to provide his or her own Interpreter at his or her own cost, after being made aware that an Interpreter will be made available at no cost to the litigant or witness, then the Court shall make reasonable inquiry to assure that such Interpreter is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services in compliance with both Federal and Texas law. The Interpreter must be a MI, unless no MI is available within 75 miles of

the Justice Center. In that case, the Interpreter must be a BI, unless no BI is available within 75 miles of the Justice Center. In that case, the Court shall make reasonable inquiry to assure that such Interpreter is competent to provide Language Interpretation Services. In addition: (1) the Interpreter shall be qualified by the Court as an Expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence; (2) the Interpreter must be at least 18 years of age; (3) the Interpreter may not be a party or an attorney for a party to the proceeding; and (4) the Court shall make a finding that there is no Interpreter within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

It is inappropriate for court staff to request that an LEP person use a family member or an attorney in the case as an Interpreter. However, in the unusual and limited circumstance in which an LEP individual has rejected the Court Provided Interpreter and has not provided one of his/her own, then an attorney who does not represent a party may be used as an Interpreter provided that procedure outlined above for using a non- MI or BI is used.

### **C. Written Language**

The Courts will utilize Court Staff and other resources to assist in the process of translating key forms, FAQs, and parts of the Courts' homepage intended for the general public, into the languages most commonly spoken in Fort Bend County. These translations will be located on the Courts' website. The LAD will assist in coordinating and prioritizing translation of forms.

Interpreters at court hearings are expected to provide sight translations of court documents and correspondence associated with the case.

## **VI. Education and Training**

The LAD is responsible for conducting on-going education for Court Staff and other stakeholders on state and federal requirements for providing Language Interpretation Services and best practices for working with interpreters. The LAD will:

- i. Provide training for current Court Staff to make them aware of the LAP;
- ii. Conduct new employee orientation training on Language Interpretation Services for employees that interact with the public;
- iii. Provide training to any individual or organization that is deemed essential to Language Interpretation Services in Fort Bend County; and
- iv. Provide periodic training sessions to refresh the foregoing.

## **VII. Complaint Process**

Any individual who wants to report; (1) requested interpreter services not being provided; or (2) a language barrier (such as poor quality interpreting) identified when interacting with Court Staff or Interpreters shall complete the Complaint Form attached as Exhibit "D" and deliver the completed form to the LAD. The LAD shall develop policies and procedures to investigate complaints.

## VIII. Public Notification & Evaluation of LAP

### A. Public Notification

The Courts shall provide notice of the availability of Language Interpretation Services at no cost to LEP individuals by the following methods, to the extent they are available:

- i. Posting on the Fort Bend County website;
- ii. Posting at points of entry into the Justice Center;
- iii. Materials at the Information Desk at the entry into the Justice Center;
- iv. Notification of local Bar Associations; and
- v. Notification of statewide LEP-related advocacy groups and other community based organizations.

The notices described in sections i, ii, and iii will be translated into the languages referenced in Section III.

### B. Evaluation of LAP

The LAD will routinely review the LAP for any required modifications resulting from changes to federal or state laws, demographic shifts, or operating procedures. If appropriate, the LAP may be revised to reflect public comments and suggestions. The initial review of the LAP will be on or before September 30, 2020, with subsequent reviews every four years, unless the LAD or the Fort Bend County Courts at Law or District Courts choose to deviate from this schedule.

### C. LAP Effective Date

When Adopted.

### D. Approved By:

On June 17, 2020, the following Judges Approved the Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts Language Access Plan.



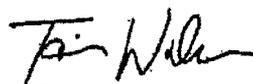
Hon. Christopher G. Morales  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #1



Hon. Jeffrey A. McMeans  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #2



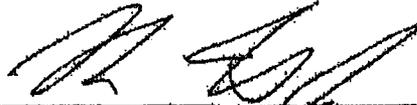
Hon. Juli Mathew  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #3



Hon. Toni Wallace  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #4

*Teana V. Watson*

Hon. Teana Watson  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #5



Hon. Sherman Hatten, Jr.  
Fort Bend County Court at Law, #6

Hon. Frank J. Fraley  
240<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. O'Neil Williams  
268<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Walter Armatys  
328<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Brenda G. Mullinix  
387<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Maggie Perez-Jaramillo  
400<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. James H. Shoemake  
434<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. Robert L. Rolnick  
458<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

Hon. David S. Perwin  
505<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court

FILED *fr*

2021 MAR 11 PH 2:38

*Brendy M. Anne Welles*

CLERK DISTRICT COURT  
FORT BEND COUNTY

Cause No. \_\_\_\_\_

**CIVIL LANGUAGE INTAKE FORM**

Plaintiff anticipates that either a party or witness in the case will need an interpreter at one or more hearings or at trial in the following languages:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBIT "A"**

# iSPEAKHOUSTON

EXHIBIT "B"

*Houston's Language Access Solution*

## LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

### How to Use This Card

Use this card to identify the foreign language spoken by non-English speakers. Show the card to the individual and ask them to point to the language they speak. Call 311 or [713-837-0311](tel:713-837-0311) and ask the operator to connect you to the Language Line for telephonic interpretation services. For more information: [www.ispeakhouston.org](http://www.ispeakhouston.org)

أنا أتحدث اللغة العربية

I speak Arabic

Ես խոսում եմ հայերեն

I speak Armenian

আমি বাংলা কথা বলতে পারি

I speak Bengali

Ja govorim bosanski

I speak Bosnian

Аз говоря български

I speak Bulgarian

ကျွန်တော်/ကျွန်မ မြန်မာလို ခြောက်သွေ့ ဝါထူး

I speak Burmese

ខ្ញុំនិយាយភាសាខ្មែរ

I speak Cambodian

我講廣東話 (Traditional)

我讲广东话 (Simplified)

I speak Cantonese

Parlo català

I speak Catalan

Govorim hrvatski

I speak Croatian

من دري حرف می زنم

I speak Dari

Mluvím česky

I speak Czech

Ik spreek het Nederlands

I speak Dutch

من فارسی صحبت می کنم

I speak Farsi

Je parle français

I speak French

Ich spreche Deutsch

I speak German

Μιλώ τα ελληνικά

I speak Greek

હુ ગુજરાતી બોલુ છુ

I speak Gujarati

M pale kreyòl ayisyen

I speak Haitian Creole

אני מדבר עברית

I speak Hebrew

मैं हिंदी बोलता हूँ ।

I speak Hindi

Kuv has lug Moob

I speak Hmong

Beszélek magyarul

I speak Hungarian

Agsaonak ti Ilokano

I speak Ilocano

Parlo italiano

I speak Italian

私は日本語を話す

I speak Japanese

Quin chagúlc'ká chabal'ruin'fi  
tzújon cakchiquel

I speak Kackchiquel

한국어 합니다

I speak Korean

man Kurdîlî zaanim

I speak Kurdish

man Kurmaanjiî zaanim

I speak Kurmanci

ຂ້ອຍປາກພາສາລາວ

I speak Laotian

Es runāju latviski

I speak Latvian

Að kalbu lietuviškai

I speak Lithuanian

我講國語 (Traditional)

我讲國語/普通話 (Simplified)

I speak Mandarin

Bán chiyola tuj kíyol mam

I speak Mam

အို ဟို အတင် မည်

I speak Mon

Jeg snakker norsk

I speak Norwegian

من فارسی صحبت می کنم

I speak Persian

Mówię po polsku

I speak Polish

Eu falo português do Brasil  
(for Brazil)

Eu falo português de Portugal  
(for Portugal)

I speak Portuguese

ਮੈਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲਦਾ/ਬੋਲਦੀ ਹਾਂ।

I speak Punjabi

Ayin tí chí wai q'anjó'al

I speak Qanjobai

In klñch'aw k'ulñ ch'e qulche

I speak Quiche

Vorbesc românește

I speak Romanian

Я говорю по-русски

I speak Russian

Ja govorim srpski

I speak Serbian



I speak Sign Language

Hovorím po slovensky

I speak Slovak

Waxaan ku hadlaa af-Soomaali

I speak Somali

Yo hablo español

I speak Spanish

Ninaongea Kiswahili

I speak Swahili

Jag talar svenska

I speak Swedish

Marunong akong mag-Tagalog

I speak Tagalog

พูดภาษาไทย

I speak Thai

Türkçe konuşurum

I speak Turkish

Я розмовляю українською мовою

I speak Ukrainian

میں اردو بولتا ہوں

I speak Urdu

Tôi nói tiếng Việt

I speak Vietnamese

Dwi'n slarad

I speak Welsh

Ndithetha isiXhosa

I speak Xhosa

איך רעד יידיש

I speak Yiddish

Mo nso Yooba

I speak Yoruba

Ngiyasikhuluma isiZulu

I speak Zulu



Department of Neighborhoods  
Office of International Communities

EXHIBIT "C"



FORT BEND COUNTY JUSTICE CENTER

Interpreting Services Request Form

- District Court No. \_\_\_\_\_
- County Court at Law No. \_\_\_\_\_
- Magistrate Court

Language: \_\_\_\_\_ Cause # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Interpreter: \_\_\_\_\_ License # \_\_\_\_\_

Date of service: \_\_\_\_\_ Start time: \_\_\_\_\_ End time: \_\_\_\_\_

Case Name: \_\_\_\_\_ This person is a:

- Defendant
- Party to a civil case
- Parent of a minor
- Witness
- Other. Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ (plea, trial, motion, etc.)

- WILL require whispering equipment.
- WILL NOT require whispering equipment

Services requested by:

- Judge \_\_\_\_\_
- FBJC Staff \_\_\_\_\_
- Attorney \_\_\_\_\_
- Parties \_\_\_\_\_
- Pro se \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:	
Authorized by: _____	On: _____

Fort Bend County Courts  
Language Access Director  
301 Jackson Street  
Richmond, TX 77469

**LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINT FORM**

The Fort Bend County Courts at Law and District Courts are committed to providing language access for individuals who are unable to understand English. If you believe you have not been provided with reasonable or professional language access, please complete this form and submit it via email or by mail.

Person making the complaint (Please print):

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NO.: DAY ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ EVENING ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DETAIL YOUR COMPLAINT BELOW (Please specify what occurred, the date, who was involved, the identity of any witnesses and their contact information and the existence of supporting documents. Please include copies of any relevant documents.)

Case No: \_\_\_\_\_ Location/Courthouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Room/Dept. No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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**EXHIBIT "D"**

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To fully investigate your complaint, the Language Access Director (LAD) may need to contact you for additional information. Please note that if your complaint does not fall within LAD's jurisdiction, it will be forwarded to the appropriate department/agency for investigation. All complaints must be mailed via certified mail with return receipt requested to the address above, or may be emailed to [LanguageAccess@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:LanguageAccess@fortbendcountytexas.gov). The Court will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 10 business days of receipt.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURNED AT COUNTER TO:

Debbie Davenport  
Court 1  
Helman Circle Richmond TX  
77469

FILED AND RECORDED  
OFFICIAL PUBLIC RECORDS

*Laura Richard*

Laura Richard, County Clerk

Fort Bend County Texas

June 18, 2020 02:11:39 PM



FEE: \$69.00 CDC

2020071925