

Assessing Language Access in Massachusetts Courts

This survey will enable you to assess the quality and effectiveness of interpreter assignments for domestic violence, family law, and landlord/tenant hearings in various courts in Massachusetts. It should take about 15 minutes to fill out. YOUR IDENTITY AS A RESPONDENT FILLING OUT THIS SURVEY SHALL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL

A) What Court are you reporting about?

B) What is your background?

Q2: Your name and organization (optional)

Please write your answer here:

Q3: What kind of work do you do?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- I am a court interpreter
- I am an attorney in private practice
- I work for a government agency
- I work in a court
- I work in a law school clinical program
- I work in a legal services program
- I work in a social services provider program, such as a domestic violence service provider

Q3A: Generally speaking, how many observations or experiences form the basis of your assessment of quality and effectiveness of interpreter assignments?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- 1 - 5
 - 6 - 20
 - more than 20
-

Q3B: For which of these languages have you tried to get a court interpreter?

Please choose **all** that apply

- Albanian
- American Sign Language
- Arabic
- Armenian
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- French
- Greek
- Haitian Creole
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Ukranian
- Vietnamese

Q3C: Of which of these languages do you have a basic understanding?

Please choose **all** that apply

- Albanian
- American Sign Language
- Arabic
- Armenian
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- French
- Greek
- Haitian Creole
- Italian
- Japanese

- Korean
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Ukranian
- Vietnamese

C) Court staffing patterns, responsibilities, and performance

Q4: Does this court have assigned personnel whose responsibility is to seek and obtain interpreters for hearings? These personnel are called "court liaisons", and they act as liaisons between the court and the Office of Court Interpreter Services, the office that assigns interpreters.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- No
- Uncertain
- Yes

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q5: How hard does the court liaison (or other court staff) try to obtain interpreters for 209A plaintiffs for initial (unscheduled) hearings?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Does not try hard
- Tries somewhat hard
- Tries very hard

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q6: How effective is the court liaison (or other court staff) at seeking and obtaining interpreters for 209A plaintiffs for initial (unscheduled) hearings?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not effective
- Somewhat effective
- Very effective

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q7: How hard does the court liaison try to obtain interpreters for scheduled 209A, housing, or Probate and Family Court hearings?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Does not try hard
- Tries somewhat hard
- Tries very hard

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q8: How effective is the court liaison at seeking and obtaining interpreters for scheduled 209A, housing, or Probate and Family Court hearings.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not effective
- Somewhat effective
- Very effective

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q9: How effective is the court liaison at implementing the interpreter assignment priorities set forth in the OCIS Standards and Procedures that give priority to 209A, child support, and housing cases.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not effective
- Somewhat effective
- Very effective

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q10: What does the court liaison actually do to obtain interpreters for initial (unscheduled) 209A hearings?

Please choose all that apply and provide a comment

| | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact the interpreter directly | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fax OCIS | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Something else | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone OCIS | |

Q11: To what extent do interpreters assigned to this court help 209A plaintiffs fill out the complaint, affidavit, and other required court documents?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Always
- Never
- Sometimes

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q12: Does this court have any additional or unique language access barriers? For example, does the court require litigants to file a motion or get a court order to have an interpreter assigned?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- No
- Yes

Make a comment on your choice here:

Q13: Does this court provide any notable or special assistance (best practices) to help litigants with interpreter needs?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- No
- Yes

Make a comment on your choice here:

D) Languages

Q14: For each listed language about which you have an opinion concerning this court's effectiveness at obtaining interpreters for initial (unscheduled) 209A hearings, please rate the effectiveness.

Please choose the appropriate response for each item

Q15: For each listed language about which you have an opinion concerning this court's effectiveness at obtaining interpreters for scheduled 209A, family law, and landlord/tenant hearings, please rate the effectiveness.
Please choose the appropriate response for each item

E) Overall interpreter performance and professionalism

Q16 ACCURACY: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an interpreter, how do you rate the accuracy of the interpreters of those languages in this court, generally? Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not accurate
- Somewhat accurate
- Mostly accurate
- Very accurate
- Unable to assess

Q17 IMPARTIALITY: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an interpreter, how do you rate the impartiality of the interpreters of those languages in this court, generally? Court interpreters are supposed to avoid unnecessary discussions with counsel, parties, witnesses, or interested parties, either inside or outside the courtroom, to avoid any appearance of partiality.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not impartial
- Somewhat impartial
- Mostly impartial
- Very impartial
- Unable to assess

Q18 CONFIDENTIALITY: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an interpreter, how do you rate the respect for confidentiality of the interpreters of those languages in this court, generally? Court interpreters are prohibited from disclosing out-of-court communications made through them to another person if the communication was intended not to be disclosed.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not respectful of confidentiality
- Somewhat respectful of confidentiality
- Mostly respectful of confidentiality
- Very respectful of confidentiality
- Unable to assess

Q19 PROFICIENCY: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an interpreter, how do you rate the proficiency of the interpreters of those languages in this court, generally? Court interpreters are supposed to provide services only in matters or areas where they can perform proficiently.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Not proficient
- Somewhat proficient
- Mostly proficient
- Very proficient
- Unable to assess

Q20 PROFESSIONALISM: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an interpreter, how do you rate the professionalism of the interpreters of those languages in this court, generally? Court interpreters are supposed to maintain a low profile, speak at an appropriate volume, and be as unobtrusive as possible.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Demeanor is not professional
- Demeanor is somewhat professional
- Demeanor is mostly professional
- Demeanor is very professional
- Unable to assess

Q21 FORMS OF ADDRESS: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an interpreter, how do you rate the professionalism of the forms of address used by interpreters of those languages in this court, generally? Court interpreters are supposed to use the first person singular when interpreting for a person with limited English proficiency. Persons addressing the individual with limited English proficiency are supposed to use the second person.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Interpreters always use proper forms of address
- Interpreters usually use proper forms of address
- Interpreters rarely use proper forms of address
- Unable to assess

Q22 GIVING LEGAL ADVICE: Referring to languages of which you have a basic understanding or to languages for which you have tried to get an

interpreter, how do you rate whether interpreters of those languages in this court give legal advice, generally? Court interpreters are prohibited from giving legal advice to anyone, whether or not they were asked for it.

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Interpreters often give legal advice
- Interpreters sometimes give legal advice
- Interpreters do not give legal advice
- unable to assess

Q23: Please add any comments you wish to make

Please write your answer here:

Submit Your Survey

Thank you for completing this survey. Please fax your completed survey to:
Jeff Wolf - 617-357-0777.