

24 R 641

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF FORSYTH

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
SUPERIOR/DISTRICT COURT DIVISION

**JOINT DISTRICT AND SUPERIOR
COURT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
REGARING INTERPRETER
REQUESTS FOR PARTIES WITH
LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

FILED
2024 OCT -3 A 11:42
FORSYTH CO., N.C.
C. J. GARNETT

THIS ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER seeks to facilitate the efficient and orderly administration of justice in the 31st Judicial District. The undersigned enter this Administrative Order pursuant to the inherent authority of the court and pursuant to their administrative supervision and authority over the operation of the Superior Courts and District Courts under N.C.G.S. 7A-41.1 and N.C.G.S. 7A-146 as Senior Resident Superior Court Judge and Chief District Court Judge, respectively, for the 31st Judicial District of North Carolina.

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) has prescribed Standards for Language Access Services (the “Standards”), which establish effective policies, procedures, and best practices for North Carolina courts to follow when providing language access services to individuals with limited English proficiency (“LEP”);

WHEREAS, as of July 1, 2024, NCAOC’s initiating forms have fields to indicate if a LEP party needs interpreter services, which are used to add an indicator flag to the case in NCAOC’s Legacy (e.g., ACIS, VCAP, CCIS-CC, CCIS-DA) and Enterprise Justice systems;

WHEREAS, the indicator flags in NCAOC’s Legacy and Enterprise Justice systems are currently intended to track LEP needs across the entire court system and do not have the functionality to automatically schedule interpreters for LEP parties;

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Standards, for each calendared court event (e.g., hearing, administrative session) an interpreter request form must be submitted to the Local Access Coordinator (“LAC”) through the NCAOC’s Office of Language Access Services (“OLAS”) website at nccourts.org/LanguageAccess at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled court event, or as soon as the proceeding is placed on the court calendar, whichever is earlier;

WHEREAS, the Standards provide that Judicial Branch staff assist self-represented litigants with requests for interpreters in accordance with NCAOC’s policies and guidelines;

WHEREAS, the Standards require that attorneys for LEP parties (including Public Defenders, appointed counsel, or retained counsel) submit an interpreter request form for each calendared court event in which their client requires an interpreter; and

WHEREAS, OLAS has become aware of instances where attorneys are not submitting the interpreter request forms either intentionally to obtain a continuance, or because they are not aware of the Standards' requirements.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby ORDERED, effective 10-3, 2024:

1. All attorneys practicing in the 31st Judicial District shall read the Standards, including any periodic revisions to the Standards, and become familiar with the procedures for requesting interpreters. The Standards can be found at:
[http://www.nccourts.org/LanguageAccess/Documents/NC Standards for Language Access.pdf](http://www.nccourts.org/LanguageAccess/Documents/NC_Standards_for_Language_Access.pdf).
2. All attorneys practicing in the 31st Judicial District shall follow the Standards to ensure that interpreters are requested for each calendared event before the Court.

Entered this, the 3rd day of October, 2024.



L. Todd Burke
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge



Victoria L. Roemer
Chief District Court Judge