



Language Access Fund How it Works

What Does the Fund Cover? The Fund pays for interpretation and translation services based on the following conditions. Please see “FAQ’s” for more information, available here: <http://bit.ly/LanguageAccessFund>. Your organization’s Language Access Fund liaison can also answer questions and provide you with any necessary forms. If you don’t know who the Language Access Fund liaison for your organization is, please contact LAF@TexasBar.com or (512) 427-1857.

1. Telephonic Interpretation:

- a. The Fund only covers telephonic interpretation through LanguageLine telephonic interpretation services.
- b. Generally, telephonic interpretation should be used for all interpretation services with the exceptions of depositions, court or other hearings where onsite or video interpretation is available, and ASL interpretation. Telephonic interpretation can even be used in client meetings by using the speaker function on a phone. Using telephonic interpretation in this way is much less expensive than hiring an on-site interpreter, especially for short meetings because most on-site interpreters require a 2 hour minimum. However, if there is a special circumstance where telephonic interpretation is not sufficient, please contact LAF@TexasBar.com or (512) 427-1857.
- c. ****Each member of the staff or pro bono volunteer may use the LanguageLine telephonic interpretation provided by the Language Access Fund up to 5 times each month.****
After 5 calls in one month, staff members and volunteers must no longer use the Language Access Fund’s 3-digit organization code to access telephonic interpretation services until the following month when they may again make up to 5 calls. Each organization is responsible for instructing its staff and volunteers about how to access telephonic interpretation after they have exhausted their allotted 5 calls via the Language Access Fund’s LanguageLine account. See “FAQ’s” for information about how to access the same discounted LanguageLine contract that the State Bar uses for the Language Access Fund.
- d. Violations of the 5 call limit will result in the temporary suspension of the organization’s 3-digit access code and the organization may be required to reimburse the State Bar of Texas for the unauthorized phone calls. Repeated or willful violations will result in permanent suspension of the 3-digit code and the organization will be required to reimburse the State Bar of Texas for the unauthorized phone calls.

2. On-site Interpretation:

- a. Generally, the Fund will **reimburse** providers for on-site interpretation costs **only when they are needed for depositions, court or other hearings, or ASL interpretation**. If on-site interpretation is needed for other reasons, please contact LAF@TexasBar.com or (512) 427-1857.
- b. At this time, the Fund **does not** cover on-site interpretation through LanguageLine On-Site Interpretation Service.
- c. Providers are responsible for locating their own interpreter. Interpreters must be qualified and competent. Interpreters must hold the appropriate license or certification required by law or court rules, if any.
- d. If any one person anticipates using more than 6 hours of interpretation in one week, you must contact LAF@TexasBar.com or (512) 427-1857 for pre-approval.

3. Video Interpretation: The Fund covers video interpretation in situations where remote interpretation is cost-effective as compared to an on-site interpreter. For example, a provider needs an on-site interpreter that is not available in his/her community, and paying an interpreter to travel from another community is cost-prohibitive;

or a provider needs to have a short conversation with a deaf client, and the on-site interpreter has a 2-hour minimum.

4. Document Translation:

- a. The Fund covers approved translation services provided by LanguageLine.
- b. The Fund covers approved translation services provided by a translator other than LanguageLine if the alternate translator costs less than LanguageLine and the provider has received pre-approval for the translation.
- c. Documents that contribute directly to the provision of legal services are a higher priority for translation services than documents that support the provision of legal services, such as representation agreements, or that are more administrative in nature, such as closing letters without advice. As such, documents in the latter categories will only be accepted for translation if funds are available, and they will be used as templates in the future.

How Do I Access the Fund?

1. Interpretation Services

a. Telephonic Interpretation through LanguageLine:

- i. *Organization Code:* Each provider will be given a unique code that must be used when using telephonic interpretation services through LanguageLine. When a telephonic interpreter is needed, call LanguageLine and the caller will be prompted to input this code at the beginning of the call.
- ii. **Court or medical interpreters are reserved for use in court or in cases involving highly technical medical or legal terminology.** Regular interpreters should be used for most cases.
- iii. If you have problems with an interpreter, feel free to ask to be transferred to someone else or to hang up and call back to be connected to a different interpreter. If you still have problems after trying a new interpreter, you may ask to be transferred to a court interpreter or hang up and call back to be connected to a court interpreter.
- iv. If you have problems with an interpreter or LanguageLine, please note the interpreter number, language, date, and time, and send this information to LAF@TexasBar.com, especially if you end up needing a court interpreter.
- v. *LAD Access:* The Language Access Division will have access to all provider account information.
- vi. ****Limitations:** Each member of the staff or pro bono volunteer may use the LanguageLine telephonic interpretation provided by the Language Access Fund up to 5 times each month. After 5 calls in one month, staff members and volunteers must no longer use the Language Access Fund's 3-digit organization code to access telephonic interpretation services until the following month when they may again make up to 5 calls. Each organization is responsible for instructing its staff and volunteers about how to access telephonic interpretation after they have exhausted their allotted 5 calls via the Language Access Fund's LanguageLine account.
- vii. **Penalties:** Violations of the 5 call limit will result in the temporary suspension of the organization's 3-digit access code and the organization may be required to reimburse the State Bar of Texas for the unauthorized phone calls. Repeated or willful violations will result in permanent suspension of the 3-digit code and the organization will be required to reimburse the State Bar of Texas for the unauthorized phone calls.

b. On-Site Interpretation:

- i. Generally, the Fund will **reimburse** providers for on-site interpretation costs **only when they are needed for depositions, court or other hearings, or ASL interpretation.** If on-site interpretation is needed for other reasons, please contact LAF@TexasBar.com or (512) 427-1857.
- ii. Providers must make their own arrangements with the interpreter and must pay the interpreter.
- iii. LAD will only reimburse providers for on-site interpretation services provided by a qualified, competent interpreter who holds any licenses or certifications required by law or court rules.

Reimbursement should not be sought for interpretation provided by friends, family members, or staff.

- iv. Providers may request reimbursement from LAD by submitting the On-Site Interpreter Reimbursement Form along with a copy of the interpreter's invoice and proof of payment such as a copy of a check or an invoice showing a zero balance to LAF@TexasBar.com.
 - v. Reimbursement should be requested within 30 days of the date that interpreter services were rendered. Providers should communicate with their vendors to ensure invoices are issued and paid in a timely manner to meet the 30 day deadline. Providers should receive reimbursement within 30 days of approval of the request.
 - vi. All reimbursements will be made payable to the provider, not to individual interpreters.
- c. Video Remote Interpretation (VRI):
- i. Providers may request reimbursement for VRI provided by a non-LanguageLine interpreter as if it were on-site interpretation by using the same form and process described above.
 - ii. The Fund will cover Video Remote Interpretation provided by LanguageLine. However, VRI should be reserved for situations when it is cost-effective as compared to an on-site interpreter. For example, a provider needs an on-site interpreter that is not available in their community, and paying an interpreter to travel from another community is cost-prohibitive; or a provider needs to have a short conversation with a deaf client, and the on-site interpreter has a 2-hour minimum. As of January 2021, prices for LanguageLine VRI are \$2.52/minute for ASL and \$1.51/minute for [all other available languages](#).
 - iii. LanguageLine VRI may also require registration of individual devices and may require coordination with IT staff in your office or court.
 - iv. To request access to LanguageLine's VRI services, send the Video Remote Interpretation Request Form to LAF@TexasBar.com.

2. Document Translation

- a. There are two options for translation service: (1) LanguageLine translators; or (2) a translator whose rates are equal to or lower than LanguageLine. No matter which option you choose, the first step is to submit a completed Translation Services Request Form to LAF@TexasBar.com. The request will be evaluated and you will be notified if the request has been approved.
- b. If you elect to use LanguageLine, send the document for translation along with your Request Form, available here: <http://bit.ly/LanguageAccessFund>. The document must be submitted in an editable format (e.g. MS Word, not PDF) if available. **You must send your request form and the document you wish to have translated as two separate attachments.** If your request is approved, the document will be forwarded to LanguageLine for translation and sent to you upon completion. Short 1-2 page documents in common languages can usually be translated within a week. Other documents will take longer. Plan accordingly. **We DO NOT provide "rush" translations.**
- d. **Translation certifications:** If you need a certification for your translation be sure to request it when you send your translation request form and your document. Also, please be aware that the translator will use the **name of the attachment** to refer to the document in the certification. **Therefore, you must name the attachment whatever you want the translator to call the document in the certification.** If your attachment is called "Scan005," the translator will refer to the document as "Scan005" in your certification even if your document is clearly a birth certificate. Please note obtaining or correcting certifications after the fact can be time consuming and very difficult.
- e. If you elect to use your own translator, you may proceed with the translation after your request is approved. Once the translation is complete, submit an invoice and proof of payment for the translation services along with your request form, and you will be reimbursed. All reimbursements will be made payable to the provider, not to individual translators. LAD will only reimburse providers for translation services provided by a qualified, competent translator. Reimbursement should not be sought for translation provided by friends, family members, or staff.