

IN THE SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT,  
LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUDGE

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO: 2013-06

IN RE: COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Supreme Court issued Administrative Order AOSC11-45 in response to the Commission on Trial Court Performance and Accountability's report entitled *Recommendations for the Provision of Court Interpreting Services in Florida's Trial Courts*, containing general recommendations, standards of operation, and best practices; and

**WHEREAS**, the standards of operation are intended to be mandatory practices that must be implemented. Best practices are suggested practices, intended to improve operations, but are not required, due to local conditions beyond the court's control; and

**WHEREAS**, one of the mandatory standards of operation is that each circuit shall establish an assignment system for contract court interpreters; it is therefore

**ORDERED** that these standard operating procedures for the Second Judicial Circuit's Court Interpreter Program are adopted, effective immediately:

1. The Court Interpreter Services Coordinator will schedule and assign all court interpreting events.
2. Interpreters that are recognized by the state to be certified or duly qualified shall be given priority for assignments. Whenever possible, an interpreter certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf / National Association of the Deaf shall be appointed to provide interpreting services to court participants who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, or deaf blind. If, after diligent search, a certified or duly qualified interpreter is not available, an interpreter who is otherwise qualified may be appointed if the judge or hearing officer presiding over the proceeding finds that good cause exists for the appointment of an interpreter who is not certified, such as the prevention of burdensome delay, the request or consent of the participant, or other unusual circumstances; and the proposed interpreter is competent to interpret in the proceedings and agrees to do so. The Court Interpreter Services Coordinator shall be contacted in such instance.



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3. Remote interpreting shall be used when a live interpreter is not available or when circumstances render it the most feasible option. Remote interpreting includes telephonic and video interpreting. All remote interpreting events shall be reported to the Court Interpreter Services Coordinator.

4. Interpreter services may only be requested by a judge, judicial assistant, trial clerk, or Court Administration. If the services of an interpreter are needed at a hearing, the attorney must so inform the judicial assistant when scheduling the hearing. Counsel must inform the judicial assistant of the need for interpreter services as soon as counsel is made aware of the need. If interpreter services are needed for trial or plea or for a witness who will testify in court, the attorney shall so inform the court at the pre-trial conference.

5. Requests shall be made no less than two (2) business days in advance of the scheduled date for Spanish interpreters, and no less than ten (10) business days in advance of the scheduled date for all other languages. Arrangements will be made for same day requests depending upon the availability of resources.

6. When there is limited availability of interpreters, cases requiring interpreters should be prioritized as follows:

- First appearances, detention hearings and reviews, shelter hearings, and final injunction hearings;
- Felony trials;
- Other felony matters;
- Misdemeanor cases;
- Delinquency cases;
- Dependency cases, except shelter hearings;
- Civil commitment hearings;
- Civil traffic cases;
- Diversion programs operated by the courts; and
- Other civil cases

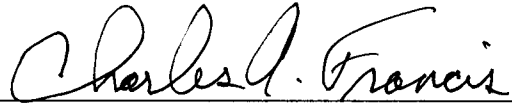
7. The presiding judge shall call cases involving the use of interpreters before other matters, but shall not be required to interrupt a proceeding that has already begun. Every effort shall be made to minimize the length of time the interpreter must remain in the courtroom.

8. Interpreters for first appearances will receive their assignments on a rotating basis, and be scheduled on a weekly basis for weekdays and a monthly basis for weekends and holidays within each month. Should the assigned interpreter become unavailable, the



assigned interpreter shall notify the Court Interpreter Services Coordinator as soon as possible so a replacement can be scheduled. Court Administration will notify all judges, judicial assistants, clerks, and bailiffs of the assigned interpreter each week.

**DONE and ORDERED** in Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida, on August 21, 2013.



CHARLES A. FRANCIS  
Chief Judge

Copies furnished to:

- All Circuit and County Judges, Second Judicial Circuit
- All Clerks of Court, Second Judicial Circuit
- All Sheriffs, Second Judicial Circuit
- Public Defender, Second Judicial Circuit
- State Attorney, Second Judicial Circuit
- General Magistrates and Hearing Officers, Second Judicial Circuit
- Col. Grant Slayden, Trial Court Administrator

