

LTC Advisory Committee Meeting

6/19/17

Attendees

- Karen Jost (member)
- Yvonne Simpson (member)
- Ubah Warsame (member)
- Katherine Templet (member)
- Cindy Roat (member)
- Larysa House (member)
- Don Barnes (attendee)
- Jim Schnellman (attendee)
- Jodi McBride (facilitator)

Introductions

All positions on LTCAC are filled except for a second representative from an immigrant or refugee or advocacy organization

Background of LTCAC

Result of a collective bargaining agreement between the State of Washington and the Federation of State Employees, AFSCME Council 28, For Language Access Providers, effective July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017.

- Prescribed the makeup of the committee: 13 members representing various stake holders
- Required three meetings per year
- Purpose of the committee - to provide input and guidance to LTC
- New contract will be signed on or around July 1, 2017 that calls for some changes including 15 members rather than 13
- Katherine Templet will share a draft of new contract when there is a potential budget
- Committee members should use DSHS/LTC as a resource. Questions, contact jodi.mcbride@dshs.wa.gov

LTC History

- Tests designed in the 1990s by Dr. Fu with help of Department of Personnel, stakeholders, linguists, and medical professionals (first of its kind - medical interpreter testing)
- Test employees and others who wish to provide interpreter/translator services to the DSHS LEP community

- About 3,500 written and oral tests administered per year
- Certify interpreters and translators in eight languages: Spanish, Russian, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laotian; authorize interpreters in all other languages ('screening' languages)
- Test in Seattle, Olympia, Yakima and Spokane
- Contract with people to proctor and others to grade

Subcommittees

- **Professional Development Committee**
 - Reviews and approves or denies applications for continuing education courses
 - Addresses issues relevant to professional development of interpreters and translators
 - Recently discussed: limiting topics for CEs and raising ethics standards
 - The approval criteria requires the topic or subject matter of the CE course to be relevant to healthcare or social service interpreting (not interpreting for DSHS)
- **Decertification Request Review Committee**
 - Reviews decertification/de-authorization requests
 - WAC 388-03-170 describes what types of actions can result in revocation of certification/authorization, for instance violations of the [code of conduct](#) (also in WAC)
 - [Charter](#) and Credential Revocation Request Form available on LTC [website](#)
 - No forms have been filed with LTC to date
 - 14 are being prepared currently by HCA
 - Complaints include theft, fraud, violation of code of ethics, misrepresentation, not showing up for multiple appointments
 - Committee will review these forms and determine appropriate actions
- **Languages of Lesser Diffusion**
 - classes designed to help those who wish to pass the LTC tests
 - Special testing sessions have been accommodated by LTC
 - Not much success in the past
 - Latest round of testing will be on June 27-29 in Spokane -- LTC will report results

News

- **Laotian and Cambodian – no longer certified languages**
 - Very low number of tests
 - Not enough tests to attract graders to contract with DSHS
 - These languages will be treated as screening languages as of 7/1/17
 - Formerly certified interpreters/translators will not be affected
- **Government Shutdown**

- If the legislature has not agreed on a budget by midnight on 6/30/17 the government will shutdown
- LTC is considered non-essential and will be closed
- Will notify candidates with tests scheduled in July that they could be affected
- Will do our best to mitigate the inconveniences to test candidates

General Discussion

- **Endorsements** in certain specialties for interpreters
 - Issue for Professional Development Committee
 - will add to next agenda
- **Upgrade tests**
 - Improve quality of Interpreter pool
 - Interpreters are well paid
 - Many complaints made about poor quality
 - Change pass requirement/content to make more difficult
 - Different pass rates for different languages depending on demand
 - Better way to distinguish which people will be truly qualified
 - Screening test – bar too low and does not determine the person’s ability to interpret in the field
 - Costs to develop those tests are high
- **Update tests**
 - Demographics have changed – different languages more pervasive
 - All tests and all versions were reviewed and updated in 2009 by a work group with members from DSHS service programs and internal as well as external linguists in various languages. Updated tests were fully implemented in 2010 (confirmed by Dr. Fu)
 - LTC must balance the need for interpreters with the sufficiency of the skills those interpreters have
 - Many other tests are redone every three years
 - If the test results in underqualified interpreters – better to have no one – maybe use tele/video interpreting services instead
- **Expiring Certificates**
 - What to do with those interpreters who did not complete their mandatory ethics requirement on or before December 31 2016, not in compliance with WAC
 - Their certificates/authorizations will expire on 4/6/19. Under the provisions of the WAC a person must either get 20 credits, four of which are ethics credits one per year, in four years OR re-test every four year – so not technically out of compliance until 4/6/19

- Should there be a way for those who missed both the 2015 and the 2016 ethic submission to avoid losing their certificate/authorization?
 - Recognize that many did not receive notice while many also did
 - May lose a lot of interpreters because of this technicality – may not be willing to test again
 - Have already told many that there is no way around the expiration because we are bound by the provisions of the [WAC](#) 388-03-160
 - Future discussion on issue of past and future ability to notify the interpreter pool.
- **HCA new procurement this year**
 - Will send procurement notice to LTC who will forward to advisory committee members
 - Potential bidders may want to register on [WEBS](#)

Housekeeping

- Next meeting scheduled for October 23 - sooner if needed
- Submit discussion topics to LTC at any time
- LTC to distribute contact list of committee members and Sub-Committee sign-up sheet