

## **DSHS Language Testing and Certification Program Advisory Committee Charter**

### **Mission and Scope**

Advise Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Language Testing and Certification (LTC) on best practices for the department in order to provide the best possible language services to DSHS' Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients.

### **Background**

In 1991, the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) in Washington State initiated an effort to certify its bilingual staff, social service and medical interpreters, and translators working for DSHS throughout its many divisions and programs. This effort was the culmination of lawsuits and civil rights complaints brought against DSHS for not providing equal access to services for Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients. As part of a consent decree, DSHS agreed not only to provide (and pay for) interpreters for clients, but also to ensure the quality of interpreter services provided. DSHS chose to ensure quality through the development and administration of standardized tests.

The Language Testing and Certification program (LTC) was created to develop systems, methods, procedures, and policies in carrying out the department's legal commitment. State laws (RCW 41.56.030; 41.56.113; 41.04.810; 43.01.047; and 74.04.025) requiring the department to provide language services to its LEP clients and to certify and authorize its language access providers were each amended and enacted during the 2010 legislative session.

LTC has recently implemented changes to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) chapter 388-03 in order to raise the program's requirements for interpreters and translators to industry standards. By July 1, 2015, the parties will establish a volunteer Advisory Group to provide input to the State on its duties per Chapter 388-03 WAC, Rules and Regulations for the Certification of DSHS Spoken Language Interpreters and Translators.

A workgroup comprised of LTC stakeholders will be formed as follows per WFSE, AFSCME Council 28 and OFM guidelines:

### **Interpreter Advisory Group (13 members) (potentially 16, pending Union and OFM bargaining agreement)**

#### **A. Composition of the Interpreter Advisory Group**

The DSHS Secretary or designee will make all appointments to the 13-member Advisory Group to include:

1. One (1) designated representative each from DSHS, HCA, the Department of Enterprise Services, and another agency; (4)
2. Two (2) spoken language interpreters; (2)
3. One (1) physician licensed by the state under Chapter 18.57, 18.29, or 18.71; (1)
4. One (1) hospital language access administrator; (1)
5. Two (2) representatives from the immigrant or refugee advocacy organizations; (2)
6. One (1) member from the public; (1)
7. One (1) representatives from the WFSE, AFSCME Council 28; (1)

8. One (1) representative from DSHS Language Testing and Certification program (LTC). (1)
- B. The Advisory Group shall meet three times per year, or as needed or as requested by DSHS.

**Objectives and Desired Outcomes**

Objective	Desired Outcome
To advise on how services related to WAC Chapter 388-03 can be improved. Initial areas of improvement suggested: develop an organized structure; standard practices; and implementation for the interpreter/translator decertification process.	Successful incorporation of committee recommendations while abiding WAC chapter 388-03, and preserving budgetary allotments.

**Participants**

The success of the proposed future state depends on the contribution of all participants.

Role	Responsibilities	Time Commitment
<b>Committee Sponsors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clarity of the project vision and objectives.</li> <li>• Allocate resources (if needed) to the project.</li> <li>• Provide executive authority necessary to overcome organizational obstacles and barriers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Initially</u> to establish the committee vision.</li> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> allocate resources and assistance needed for the committee.</li> <li>• <u>As needed</u> to overcome organizational obstacles and barriers. Escalate issues as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Committee Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop project plan and seek buy-in and direction from Executive and Project Sponsors.</li> <li>• Coordinate and integrate activities across multiple functional lines.</li> <li>• Manage project scope, time, and outcomes to meet project objectives.</li> <li>• Ensure agreed-upon project tasks are completed using resources within the project lead’s span of control.</li> <li>• Facilitate stakeholder discussion to meet project vision and objectives.</li> <li>• Develop communications and status reports on project actions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Initially</u> to develop the plan and gain buy-in from sponsors.</li> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> participate in the overall coordination and management of the committee.</li> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> communicate to all participants and sponsors on progress and barriers.</li> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> engage participants and sponsors; gather and collect information; implement and adjust the committee as needed; and communicate status and barriers preventing successful implementation.</li> <li>• <u>As needed</u> reassess and provide recommendations for alternate courses of action.</li> </ul>

DSHS Language Testing and Certification Program Advisory Committee

<b>Committee Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide feedback on current and potential procedures and policies</li> <li>• Attend and actively participate in committee meetings</li> <li>• Serve on subcommittee(s)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> suggest agenda items for committee meetings</li> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> share concerns/suggestions from area of representation</li> <li>• <u>Ongoing</u> actively participate in meeting discussion</li> </ul>
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**Committees and Communication**

*To keep the committee focused on LTC service improvement, various subcommittees will be formed. These committees will be determined with the help of committee members.*

**Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Frequency:**

3 times/year, suggested up to 4 hours per meeting, excluding travel time

**Participants:** Committee Members and Committee Lead

**Suggested Term:** up to 2 years

**Purpose and Role:** Project Lead coordinates meetings, and provides agenda. Committee Lead and Members provide guidance and approval on changes to scope, policies, and procedures. Provides recommendations to LTC on changes to program based on experience with interpreters/translators.

**Committee Milestones**

Activity	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First meeting</li> </ul>	July 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop subcommittees</li> </ul>	September 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review charter and gain agreement on focus</li> </ul>	September 2015