

January 3, 2025

Happy Chinese Asian Lunar New Year to all of our interpreter partners who are celebrating today! **YoYo Kim** (Certified Korean interpreter) clued me in that this is the year of the Blue Snake but that we shouldn't be scared because the blue snake represents wisdom, epiphany, and intuition! 🍀 Koreans traditionally eat/drink rice cake soup (rice cakes in the beef/egg soup) on the Asian New Year's day. Thanks, YoYo!

Upcoming State Holidays The Nebraska Judicial Branch will be closed on February 17th in observance of President's Day.

Conference

Language Access would like to hold an interpreter conference for you in 2025 and needs your input to make it a dynamic and engaging event! **Please complete the 2-minute survey by February 17th** <https://forms.office.com/g/Z5pkVUYCsc>

Interpreter Certification Ceremony

Myhanh Che's certification ceremony will be held Tuesday, February 25th at 2:30pm at the Douglas County Courthouse, Courtroom #229. County Court Presiding Judge Marcela Keim will administer the oath. Myhanh would love for her colleagues to attend and celebrate with her!

Interpreter Certification Pathway

The Nebraska Judicial Branch's Language Access Program has announced dates for the 2025 Interpreter Certification Pathway. Please visit [Interpreter Certification Pathway](#) for more information and to register for Orientation, the written exam, Skill Building, and the oral exam. *Orientation will be held Feb 27th & 28th, so I would need to receive your registration form and payment by February 13th.*

If you still have questions after reviewing the webpage, attend an upcoming 30-minute Zoom informational sessions:

- February 5th at 12pm [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
- February 12th at 12pm [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
- February 19th at 12pm [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
- March 5th at 12pm [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
- March 19th at 12pm [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Interpreter Statements



Please welcome Robin Baer a new Administrative Assistant at the AOC to the Interpreter Statement team! She will be reviewing all Statements to ensure accuracy and completeness before I review, approve, and submit to Finance for processing. Since this will now be a team effort between her and I, we have created a new mailbox for you to submit your Interpreter Statements to that both she and I can access. Effective February 1st, email your Interpreter Statements to Admin.LanguageAccessStatements@nejudicial.gov. In her short time here, Robin has proven to be amazingly fast and efficient! She also has great stories from her previous life working in the movie industry that you should ask her about!

Please save the updated [Interpreter Statement](#) form to your files now! What's updated you ask?

- Effective 1/1/25, the IRS mileage reimbursement rate is \$0.70/mile.
- The top left directs you to "Submit Statements and direct questions to Admin.LanguageAccessStatements@nejudicial.gov".
- The top right advises that "In order to process, all fields must be completed".

Watch this 21 minute recording [Interpreter Statements 101](#). As an extra incentive, fill out the form and receive 0.5 professional responsibility CEUs.

Juvenile Probation TRACKS (courtesy of Lindsay Meyer, Juvenile Justice Reform Specialist)

As part of the AOC's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Nebraska (JSEN) initiative, work has been underway since 2021 to enhance juvenile probation's behavioral health screening tools and process specific to including screening for trauma amongst justice involved youth. Through this work, a practice model branded TRACKS or Targeted, Responsive Assessment for the Court is Key to Youth Success. This practice model features enhancements to the behavioral health screening process and tools used by juvenile probation officers during the predisposition investigation (PDI); specifically incorporating the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument – second edition (MAYSI-2) and the Child Trauma Screen (CTS). The practice model also focuses on completing the behavioral health screens early on in the PDI process; specifically, within eight days following the youth's adjudication in juvenile court. Findings from the behavioral health screening process are then incorporated into the predisposition investigation submitted to the court.

Interpreters will likely find that they are introduced to this new process when assisting juvenile probation officers completing predisposition investigations which now include completing an orientation with the youth and their caregiver and then moving into completing the behavioral health screens. Probation officers will utilize dialogue guides (similar to a script) to assure that all youth receive consistent information and that the behavioral health screens are administered in a consistent manner with all youth. Interpreters may be utilized to deliver this information consistent with the dialogue guide. These interactions could occur as early as immediately following the adjudication hearing and will typically be separate from the predisposition investigation interview.

NE Judicial Branch legislation of note (courtesy of Eric Asboe, Budget and Fiscal Officer)

The 2025 session of the Nebraska Legislature convened January 8. During the first ten legislative days, 715 bills and more than 15 constitutional amendments were introduced. AOC is tracking many bills that impact the Judicial Branch. Here are a few of them:

- Senator Holdcroft introduced [LB 216](#) that will transition the clerks of the district courts to the Nebraska Judicial Branch.
- Senator Dungan introduced [LB15](#) which states that it is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate \$600,000 each year of the next biennium (two year budget cycle).
- [LB684](#) introduced by Senator Bostar would move Juvenile Probation out of the Judicial Branch and place it in a new executive branch agency.

The full text of all bills, as well as legislative and hearing schedules, are available on the Nebraska Legislature Website: <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/>.

Professional Resources

- [NAJIT's The Couch](#): Since its debut in 2017, The Couch has been the place to provide professionals with the space to discuss dilemmas, help one another, and network within our field. Past discussions have tackled ethical challenges, professional growth, and best practices, offering valuable insights to judiciary interpreters and translators alike.
- University of Arizona's National Center for Interpretation is offering language neutral skill building courses for only \$25:
 - February 1st [Simultaneous interpreting: Techniques and Skills](#)
 - February 8th [Consecutive Interpreting: Techniques and Skills](#)

Recognitions

- ✚ **Kari Corkle** (Justice Language Access Coordinator) celebrates her 4-year work anniversary on February 1st – thank you for all you do! - *Kathleen, Adrian, Olivia, and Amiel*
- ✚ We at County Court appreciate all that you (**Kari Corkle**) and your interpreters have done year after year to make everything go smoothly!! Have a Merry Christmas! 😊 - *Michelle Michaels Lancaster CC Assistant Clerk Senior Administration*
- ✚ I worked last week in Adams County in front of Judge Burns. He spoke very highly of the interpreter (**Adrian Hinojosa**) that had appeared over Zoom. Judge said that he has never been a 'fan' of video conferencing, but that the interpreter had done an excellent job. He described the interpreter had suggested, very professionally, the use of the phones to be able to interpret simultaneously, and that it had worked unbelievably well. – *Irma Watt, Certified Spanish Interpreter*
- ✚ **Mai Nguyen** was amazing and helped me with an IHFS intake. - *Madison Carter, 3J Probation*
- ✚ He's (**Daniel Legon**) is great! - *Chris Rhynalds, District Court Bailiff, Lancaster County*
- ✚ Good morning, **Olivia (Brockman)**, I wanted to personally thank you for translating these maps for clients. I greatly appreciate you and all that you do for Probation. Thank you, - *Tiffany Bolter D2 Juvenile Supervisor*
- ✚ Shout out to **Kari Corkle** and **Ben Hammar** for jumping in last minute and covering a Zoom hearing when I got stuck in Douglas CC. Their help and willingness to take something on last minute kept things running smooth. Much appreciated! – *Kelly Varguez, Certified Spanish Interpreter*

Tax Documents

State Accounting will mail out the 1099s by January 31st. The minimum amount an individual needs to earn to receive a 1099 is \$600. If you have questions or do not receive your 1099 by the beginning of February, you can reach State Accounting directly at (402)471-2581.

Warrant Wipeout (courtesy of Kari Corkle)

6 times a year, Lancaster County Court has a night court session for arraignments, status hearings, and voluntary appearances for defendants that missed previously scheduled hearings. Staff from the Public Defender's office, County Attorney's office, and the City Attorney's office were present and had a wonderful turnout. The Language Access Program supported this initiative via participating in a [news interview](#), translating fliers into 4 languages (Arabic, Karen, Spanish, and Vietnamese), and providing interpreters. A big thank you to **Ben Hammar** (Registered Spanish) and **Salim Merza** (Non-Certified Arabic and Kurdish) for staying late into the evening to assist LEP that participated in this event to get their warrants recalled. It was encouraging to see the State and persons accused of crimes strike an accord through the Warrant Wipeout program to move forward in a way that benefitted all parties. This can be a

combative process, but the degree of clemency offered by the State helped many people advance their criminal cases in a positive way just in time for the holidays. *Pictured below L-R Ben Hammar, Judge Yardley, and Salim Merza.*



Did you know?

Plains Indian Sign Language (PISL) is an endangered sign language common to various Plains Nations across what is now central Canada, the central and western United States and northern Mexico. This language was used historically as a lingua franca, notably for trading among tribes. In 1885, it was estimated that there were over 110,000 signers including Blackfoot Confederacy, Cheyenne, Sioux, Kiowa and Arapaho. You can learn more below!

- <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/american-indian-sign-language.htm>
- <https://thinkwy.org/programs/plains-indian-sign-language/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pWAv9r3Rzow>