

Remote Interpretation Project – Interim Report

Scope of the project:

The focus is court applications of remote interpretation using shared systems providing remote video access. We believe this focus offers the most comprehensive solution to the challenges presented by language access in the judicial system.

Guiding principles:

1. Equal Justice & Quality Justice

Remote interpretation addresses quality of justice requirements that many court systems simply cannot afford using current approaches. Remote interpretation will improve access to qualified interpreters, access to interpreters at all, and lower the cost of access to qualified interpreters.

2. Accountability & Public Trust and Confidence

Remote interpretation improves efficient use of interpreters, reduces travel and expense, reduces the need for each court to spend hours of administrative time in finding interpreters in hard to access languages, reduces contractor expenses, improves case flow management, reduces incarceration days, reduces the need to recreate the wheel in technology investments, reduces blocks of time purchased to minutes used, and reduces administrative time scheduling and finding interpreters.

How it will work:

NCSC will centrally administer a national cloud-based provision of certified interpreters, but would contract competitively with vendors for the technical implementation. The scope of the nationally coordinated capability would include contracts and liability, quality assurance oversight, complaint processing, maintenance of a certified interpreter database, rules of exchange and billing, policies and rules of participation, coordination with court governing bodies and associations, and contracting with technical vendors.

Technology Platforms:

NCSC and the courts will create a national on-demand system of acquiring an interpreter through call center technology. This will require coordinated investment in infrastructure for servers, software, databases and secure network administration. It will require standards based technical infrastructure and video/audio endpoints. It will require business quality video and audio. It will support a variety of standards based video endpoints in courtroom settings. It will allow simultaneous, consecutive, and private sidebar interpreting, and allow the interpreter to switch between modalities. It will allow a telephone connection into the system.

Issues To be considered later:

Use of the video infrastructure to support other court functions
Implementation best practices