Remote Interpretation National Standards

Problem

From a national perspective, state and local courts have moved relatively slowly into the use of remote interpreters, either by voice or video. Cultural expectations, business practices and vendor products vary significantly. The approaches used to date are relatively inefficient and costly. Now, under legal pressure from federal Department of Justice audits, courts are being required to provide a much higher and potentially more costly level of interpreter services in civil cases. The Council of Chief Justices (CCJ) and the Council of State Court Administrators (COSCA) have reacted by directing NCSC to form a new dedicated business unit to establish policy, business and technical best practices.

In support of this objective, COSCA will be levying on itself a new state fee to fund the NCSC capability. NCSC is expected to continue and broaden its traditional role as a test creator and administrator for interpreter certification. To date, the certification market has been restricted to the state level and in most cases to court applications only. The policy goal now is at least potentially a national cross-certification among courts and possibly cross-certifications with other domains.

When a similar problem arose several years ago with the transition from court reporters to digital video documentation of the in-court record, CCJ and COSCA directed NCSC to develop business model best practices and technical open standards for courts and vendors to use. There is now a pressing need for similar business and technical standards for remote court interpretation. The problem is funding.

Scope

NCSC will develop a set of business model best practices and technical open standards for the use of remote interpretation. NCSC will do this by facilitating groups of court business experts and relevant vendors.

Benefits

The outputs of this project will help create a larger and more standardized market for court interpretation vendors. It will lower the cost to courts of providing interpreter services.

Tasks

This project consists of two sub-projects.

Sub-Project #1 – Business Model Best Practices. This sub-project will identify and document a set of best practices for remote interpreter business models and business processes. These best practices will ultimately be formally recommended by CCJ and COSCA for adoption by state and local courts.

Sub-project #2 – Technical Standards. This sub-project will identify and document a set of technical standards for the use of remote interpreters. Open standards for interfaces and other technical requirements will be drafted and vetted with an appropriate set of court representatives and vendors.

Deliverables

1. Business models for use of remote video interpreter services.
2. Technical standards for use of remote video interpreter services.
3. A COSCA draft resolution in support of use of these deliverables.