

Report to the Arizona Judicial Council
On
INTERPRETER ISSUES IN ARIZONA COURTS



By the
Committee To Study Interpreter Issues

In Arizona Courts

October 2002

Funding/Program Costs

Several cost components are included in administration of an effective court interpreter certification program. These include:

- Costs associated with ongoing program maintenance, including staff support,
- Interpreter training costs,
- Interpreter testing costs (test procurement, administering and scoring), and
- Judicial and court staff training costs,

Part of the charge to the committee was to include recommendations as to funding needs and a strategy to secure needed funding. While it is anticipated that some funding will be fees paid by interpreter candidates for the testing, registration and certification process, these fees will simply cover those training and testing costs. User fees will neither provide start-up funds nor be sufficient to cover on-going staffing costs.

Our research revealed that other states that have adopted statewide Court Interpreter Programs have received funding from a variety of sources, e.g. startup grants from private or public (state or federal) sources. Examples are grants from the Byrne Foundation, State Justice Institute and the Department of Justice. We found also that sources of funds needed to facilitate ongoing program expenses include direct appropriations through the legislature and/or internal State Court funding. Most states require some form of payment from interpreters, especially for testing and training costs. Appendix II is a survey of training and testing fees charged by states that are members of the National Center for State Courts Interpreter Consortium. Other findings include the example in Idaho, in which the Legislature provides funding for an on-going program. In the state of Washington, a grant from a private foundation provided initial funding. Several other states have also received federal or private grants for initial funding. The Committee expects that Judicial Interpreters Commission will be instrumental in developing funding sources.

Extensive research was done to determine where we might pursue various funding sources outside of the court system. However, the current state of the economy has resulted in both state and federal budget cuts. Many grant sources, such as the State Justice Institute, have lost their own funding. Therefore, despite our best efforts, at this time we can find no alternative funding sources. However, recognizing the necessity of interpreters in providing access to justice and in aiding due process rights for all court users, the recommendation is that the Supreme Court should make this a priority and make available the start-up costs from the court budget for the following estimated expenses.

Court Interpreter Certification Program Cost Estimates

	Estimated Cost:	
	Start Up	Ongoing Expense:
Test used for Certification: The process of certification requires that some form of testing must be put into place. The two most visible possibilities are:		
National Center for State Courts Interpreter Consortium	\$50,000	-0-
University of Arizona Agnese Haury Institute for Interpretation	\$50,000	-0-
Test Rating (Scoring) *	-0-	\$10,000
Interpreter Training: As referenced in Recommendation II, training is needed to both insure an acceptable number of applicants will successfully pass any test and provide continuing education. *	\$10,000	\$10,000
Judiciary and Staff training		\$15,000
Court Interpreter Program Support Staff	\$75,000	\$75,000
Estimated Total	\$135,000	\$110,000

* Includes curriculum development and assumes a portion of costs for test scoring and training will be paid by participants.