

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

RICHARD J. WILLIAMS, J.A.D.
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COURTS



RICHARD J. HUGHES JUSTICE COMPLEX
PO BOX 037
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0037
(609) 984-0275
FAX: (609) 292-3320

Questions or Comments May
be Directed to (609) 984-5024

DIRECTIVE # 14-01

TO: Assignment Judges

FROM: Richard J. Williams *RJW*

SUBJ: OPERATIONAL STANDARDS FOR TELEPHONE INTERPRETING

DATE: August 29, 2001

The Judicial Council has approved the attached Operational Standards for Telephone Interpreting. The Council adopted the Standards at its April 24, 2001 meeting; this Directive is the formal promulgation document.

As set forth in Standard 1, "[t]elephone interpreting is to be used instead of on-site interpreting whenever: (a) there is no on-site staff or freelance interpreter reasonably available and there is an emergent matter; or (b) there is no on-site staff or freelance interpreter for a non-emergent matter of thirty minutes duration or less so long as: (1) it is more fiscally responsible to obtain the service by telephone than by bringing in an on-site freelance interpreter, and (2) the quality of interpretation is not compromised." The Operational Standards ensure the proper and efficient operation of this program in the vicinages.

The approval by the Judicial Council also included three manuals for various categories of users of the telephone interpreting program: (a) "Manual for Judges and Other Court Officials Who Use Interpreting Services Delivered by Telephone," (b) "Manual for Interpreters Delivering Services by Telephone to Court Proceedings and Court Support Services," and (c) "Manual for Managers Who Coordinate Interpreting Services Delivered by Telephone." Copies of those three manuals are attached for your information. All of this material also will be posted on the Judiciary's Internet website, as well as on the Judiciary intranet (the "InfoNet").

The telephone interpreting program is being implemented in four phases. The first phase was Superior Court judges (March-May 2001). The second phase was for the hearing officers in the Comprehensive Enforcement Program, Domestic Violence Hearing Officer Program, and Child Support Hearing Officer Program (April 2001). The target startup date for the third phase, which encompasses the court support units (Civil, Criminal, and Family Division Management) and Probation, is January 1, 2002. The final phase will be the Municipal Courts, at a startup date to be determined later.

Note that the Operational Standards provide that for the first six months evaluation forms are to be completed by the participants after each telephone interpreting event. There are separate evaluation forms for (a) the judge, hearing officer or other presiding official, (b) the court manager who coordinated the event, and (c) the interpreter, each of which is included as an appendix to the appropriate procedures manual. Additionally, all three forms are included as Appendices to the Operational Standards themselves. Because the first phase of the program has been operational in all vicinages for several months, a number of evaluation forms have already been submitted; the appropriate individuals should continue to complete the evaluation forms throughout the six-month period (with the dates for that six-month period determined by the specific startup date in that particular vicinage). The evaluation forms, which can easily be completed in a few minutes, will enable us to closely monitor the program and thus help us to identify and resolve problems in the program's early stages.

Any questions regarding these Operational Standards, any of the procedures manuals, or the telephone interpreting program in general may be directed to Robert Joe Lee, of the Judiciary's Court Interpreting, Legal Translating and Bilingual Services. He can be reached by telephone at (609) 984-5024.

R.J.W.

attachments
/sdb

cc: Chief Justice Deborah T. Poritz
Theodore J. Fetter, Deputy Administrative Director
AOC Directors and Assistant Directors
Trial Court Administrators
Operations Division Managers
Marilyn C. Slivka, Special Programs Unit
Robert Joe Lee, Special Programs Unit
Steven D. Bonville, Special Assistant
Francis W. Hoeber, Special Assistant