WASHINGTON COURTS

Administrative Office of the Courts

Court Interpreter Scheduling System Project

Business Requirements

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Document Information

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Revision History

Doc. Version #	Change Request #	Revision Date	Summary of Changes
1.1		3/19/2024	Initial draft
1.2		8/13/2024	Added Scope of work, capabilities feature, context diagrams, functional and non-functional requirements.
1.3		8/21/2024	Addressed comments from Kevin Ammons
1.4 & 1.5		8/23/24	Updated and responded to Jamie's comments
1.6		9/3/2024	Resolved Isabelle Molamphy's comments
1.7		9/04/2024	COMBINED comments with resolutions/tch
1.8		9/12/24	Comments resolved

I. Introduction and Background

All trial courts in Washington State must provide interpreters for court customers to ensure equal access to justice and scheduling of court interpreters can be a barrier to providing that access. To ensure equitable access to the courts, courts must provide interpreters for court customers who have limited English proficiency or are deaf or hard of hearing. Considerations for scheduling include the availability of interpreters in each language, the location and length of the encounter, the qualifications of the interpreter, the proximity of the interpreter to the court, the amount of notice the court needs to provide for the interpreter service, and so on.

This project would impact Washingtonians who are Limited English Proficient and those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Approximately 8 percent of Washington's total population are Limited English Proficient individuals, approximately 525,988 Washingtonians. About 4 percent are deaf or hard of hearing, approximately 254,619 Washingtonians. Every courthouse in Washington State has served, will serve, or currently is serving people from the Limited English Proficient or deaf or hard of hearing community.

If this project is unsuccessful, courts will continue to use their current processes to schedule interpreters. The current processes include third-party software systems, local systems, or manual processes.

This project also directly advances two Judicial Branch policy objectives:

1. **Accessibility and Commitment to Effective Court Management** by promoting equal access to justice for all individuals regardless of their ability to communicate in the spoken English language. Language interpreters play an essential role in ensuring due process and helping court proceedings function efficiently and effectively.
2. **Commitment to Effective Court Management** by making a state-provided software application available for courts to schedule court interpreters. This application would reduce costs to courts using third-party software products and would provide courts using manual process a more efficient process to complete this vital function.

II. Current State

Scheduling court interpreters can be a complex process for the courts as interpreter scheduling is often a manual, labor-intensive process for court staff, and the ramifications and stakes of not getting a court credentialed interpreter promptly is an access to justice issue.

Several courts have found solutions to the otherwise manual process of scheduling interpreters. One solution is to pay a commercial vendor who helps the court schedule interpreters. That solution adds more costs to the court and to the interpreter paying the vendor for the service. Another solution that courts have found is using an online interpreter scheduling service, operating as a software as service platform. This solution is a cost effective and efficient way for courts to schedule court credentialed interpreters promptly. Unfortunately, one of the most popular online interpreter scheduling services plans to discontinue this service. Without a statewide application to rely on, courts must find their own solution and replace that solution if a vendor changes or discontinues a service.

Currently, most courts do not have an interpreter assignment tracking system to make sure the same interpreter is assigned to the same case going forward without having to open other applications to do so. By conducting the requirements gathering, analysis, and options analysis, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) will be laying the foundation for implementing a statewide solution to address this key need of the state's courts.

III. Business Need

An ideal solution would provide a statewide online interpreter scheduling application that could be used by every court in Washington State. At a minimum, the system would allow searches for court credentialed and non-credential interpreters and schedule them based on location, language, payment terms, expected job duration, interpreter travel distance, etc. It would also provide notification, confirmation, and reminders to interpreters via email or text. Ideally, the system could also directly connect to remote participation with the interpreter either by telephone or video. The system could also connect to the Language Access Interpreter Reimbursement Program and have the possibility of connecting to the courts' case management systems. Connecting to the reimbursement program would provide greater efficiency for courts and AOC staff administering the program, as courts would no longer have to manually enter data on their interpreter usage data as it will already be captured by the scheduling software.

The interpreter scheduling system would provide these capabilities:

- Greater accessibility to the courts for people who speak languages other than English or are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Enables courts to have quicker and easier access to the statewide interpreter database and let them schedule interpreters through a one-stop shop.
- An easier, more efficient, and more effective way for courts to ask for court credentialed interpreters, and for interpreters to accept and calendar multiple court assignments.
- Reduces court staff time needed to schedule interpreters, allowing more court staff time for other court matters.
- Reduce costs associated with interpreter cancellations because it will be easier and quicker for courts to schedule and cancel interpreters without incurring cancellation costs.

- Reduces court staff time needed to input court interpreting data needed for the Language Access Interpreter Reimbursement program.
- Interpreters can accept assignments instantly with enough information to ascertain if they are the proper fit for a case or Limited English Proficiency party.
- The Limited English Proficiency or deaf or hard of hearing person has the potential to have consistent language services throughout a case.

IV. Scope of Work

To support the Washington Courts, interpreters, and Limited English Proficiency or deaf or hard of hearing person in the management of interpreters, accounts, and scheduling, the AOC will pursue a technology-based system that will support the following business capabilities:

1. **Manage AOC Interpreter Information**
   The ability for AOC staff to manage Interpreter contact information, generate, and access interpreter service reports, and maintain a main list of interpreters. This includes adding, updating, and soft deleting interpreter information, and ensuring real-time updates for scheduling. Integrated with the reimbursement system.
2. **Manage Court Staff and System Settings**
   The ability for court staff to create, modify, and delete user roles, apply access controls, manage interpreter profiles, and control system settings through their dashboard. This capability ensures secure and up-to-date user management and system scalability.
3. **Manage Interpreter Profiles and Assignments**
   The ability for interpreters to manage their profiles, including availability, preferences, and qualifications. The system supports interpreters with a unique ID for accurate tracking and links their profiles to assignments and invoices, ensuring streamlined profile management and assignment tracking.
4. **Manage Notifications and Alerts**
   The ability to generate, view, add, and delete notifications and alerts for court staff and interpreters. This includes notifications for new cases needing interpreters, job postings, certification expiry alerts, booking confirmations, and status changes, ensuring all relevant parties are informed.
5. **Manage Credential Verification**
   The ability for court staff to easily identify credentialed and non-credentialed interpreters, ensuring proper assignment and compliance with certification standards.
6. **Manage Interpreter Scheduling**
   The ability for court staff to search for and schedule interpreters based on case requirements, availability, and language expertise. This includes managing recurring assignments, preventing overlapping bookings, and providing flexibility in assignment acceptance for interpreters.
7. **Manage Assignments**
   The system shall provide ongoing status updates for interpreter assignments at key stages, including when assignments are initiated, assigned, completed, or canceled. The ability for court staff to oversee and manage all interpreter assignments, including creating, updating, canceling, and reassigning bookings. The system ensures that interpreters have accurate case details and allows flexible scheduling and assignment management. Additionally, the system shall maintain real-time tracking and visibility of assignment statuses to help with efficient management and communication.
8. **Reporting and Analytics**
   The ability to generate, view, and export reports for both court staff and interpreters. This includes reports on billing, interpreter performance, workload, scheduling, and financial records, integrated with data visualization tools like Tableau and Power BI.

9. **System Customization and Accessibility**
   The ability to customize the user interface, including dashboard views, text resizing, and language options. The system supports accessibility features and provides context-based help and electronic training materials, ensuring usability and user satisfaction across all roles.
10. **System Capabilities and Efficiency**
    The ability to provide features like autocomplete, autofill, and calendar functionalities, enhancing user efficiency and accuracy in data entry. The system also includes real-time updates, role-based access control, and filters to easily locate specific reports.
11. **Integrate with Existing Systems**
    The ability to integrate with both the AOC-supported reimbursement system and the existing case management systems used by the courts. This integration streamlines business processes, reduces double-data entry, and increases automation between scheduling, reimbursements, and case data, improving accuracy and reducing manual effort.

V. Business Capability Features

The following describes the desired high-level features of the business capabilities identified above.

1. **Manage AOC Interpreter Information (Scheduling Dashboard with AOC access)**
   a) Ability to manage AOC Interpreter contact information, including adding, updating, and deleting details.
   b) Ability to generate, view, and download various reports related to interpreter services.
   c) Ability to maintain and manage a main list of interpreters.
   d) Ability to ensure real-time updates to interpreter information for effective scheduling.
2. **Manage Court Staff and System Settings (Court Staff Dashboard)**
   a) Ability to create, modify, and delete user roles and apply access controls.
   b) Ability to manage interpreter profiles, including status updates.
   c) Ability to manage user management and system scalability.
   d) Ability to control system settings and restrict report production based on user roles.
   e) Ability to add and schedule interpreters for immediate assignments.
3. **Manage Interpreter Profiles and Assignments (Interpreter Dashboard)**
   a) Ability to interpreter profiles, including availability, qualifications, and preferences.
   b) Ability to assign and link AOC Issued Unique IDs to interpreters for tracking and management.
   c) Ability to ensure accurate and consistent tracking of interpreter assignments and invoices.
4. **Manage Notifications and Alerts (Manage Notifications)**
   a) Ability to generate, view, add, and delete notifications for court staff and interpreters.
   b) Ability to notify relevant parties of new cases, job postings, certification expiries, and book confirmations.
   c) Ability to manage notifications regarding interpreter status changes.
5. **Manage Credential Verification (Manage Interpreter Credential Verification)**
   a) Ability to identify credentialed and non-credentialed interpreters to ensure proper assignment.
   b) Ability to ensure compliance with certification standards for interpreters.
6. **Manage Interpreter Scheduling (Manage Interpreter Scheduling)**
   a) Ability to search for and schedule interpreters based on case requirements, availability, and language expertise.
   b) Ability to manage recurring assignments and prevent overlapping bookings.
   c) Ability to give interpreters flexible assignment acceptance options.
7. **Manage Assignments (Manage Assignments)**

a) Ability to oversee and manage all interpreter assignments, including creating, updating, canceling, and reassigning bookings.
b) Ability to give interpreters detailed case information for informed decision-making.
c) Ability to allow flexible scheduling and assignment management.

8. **Reporting and Analytics (Reporting and Analytics)**
    a) Ability to generate, view, and export reports for court staff and interpreters.
    b) Ability to integrate reports with data visualization tools like Tableau and Power BI.
    c) Ability to schedule reports and run them on an ad hoc basis for timely access to information.
9. **System Customization and Accessibility (System Capabilities)**
    a) Ability to customize user interface elements, including dashboard views and accessibility features.
    b) Ability to provide context-based help and electronic training materials for all user roles.
    c) Ability to offer language options and ensure usability for users with disabilities.
10. **System Capabilities and Efficiency (System Capabilities)**
    a) Ability to enhance user efficiency with features like autocomplete, autofill, and calendar functionalities.
    b) Ability to provide real-time updates and role-based access control.
    c) Ability to include filters and search functionality for efficient data access.
11. **Integrate with Existing Systems (System Integrations)**
    a) Ability to integrate with the AOC reimbursement system to automate scheduling and reimbursement processes.
    b) Ability to integrate with AOC supported case management systems to automate and streamline case data entry and interpreter scheduling.