

GR 11.1
**PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF INTERPRETER AND
LANGUAGE ACCESS COMMISSION**

(a) Purpose and Scope. This rule establishes the Interpreter and Language Access Commission (Commission) and prescribes the conditions of its activities. This rule does not modify or duplicate the statutory process directing the Court Interpreter Program as it is administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) (chapter 2.43 RCW). The Commission will develop policies for the Interpreter Program and the Program Policy Manual, published on the Washington Court's website at www.courts.wa.gov, which shall constitute the official version of policies governing the Court Interpreter Program. The Commission shall establish and promulgate guidelines on interpreting, translation, and language access matters affecting individuals who are Limited-English-proficient or who use a signed language.

(b) Jurisdiction and Powers. Every interpreter serving in a legal proceeding must comply with GR 11.2, the Code of Professional Responsibility for Judiciary Interpreters, and is subject to the rules and regulations specified in the Court Interpreter Disciplinary Policy Manual. The Commission shall establish four committees to fulfill ongoing functions related to language access issues, discipline, and judicial/court administration education. Each committee shall consist of at least three Commission members and one member shall be identified as the chair.

(1) The Issues Committee is assigned issues, complaints, and/or requests from or about interpreters and interpreting for review and response. If the situation cannot be resolved at the Issues Committee level, the matter will be submitted by written referral to the Disciplinary Committee.

The Issues Committee will also address issues, complaints, and/or requests regarding access to interpreter services in the courts and may communicate with individual courts in an effort to assist in complying with language access directives required by law.

(2) The Disciplinary Committee may sanction any interpreter serving in a legal proceeding for a violation of GR 11.2, the Code of Professional Responsibility for Judiciary Interpreters, and has the authority to decertify or deny credentials to interpreters based on the disciplinary procedures for: (a) violations of continuing education/court hour requirements, (b) failure to comply with Code of Professional Responsibility for Judiciary Interpreters (GR 11.2) or professional standards, or (c) violations of law that may interfere with their duties as an interpreter in a legal proceeding. The Disciplinary Committee will decide on appeal any issues submitted by the Issues Committee.

(3) The Judicial and Court Administration Education Committee shall provide ongoing opportunities for training and resources to judicial officers, court administrators, and court staff related to court interpretation improvement.

(4) The Translation Committee shall provide guidelines to courts on matters that involve written documents of a legal nature or that are related to accessing the court through textual means, whether digital or otherwise.

(c) Establishment. The Supreme Court shall appoint no more than 20 members to the Commission and shall designate the chair and cochair of the Commission. The Commission shall include representatives from the following areas of expertise: judicial officers from the appellate and each trial court level (3), spoken language interpreter (2), sign language interpreter (1), certified Deaf interpreter representative (1), court administrator (1), attorney (1), public member (2), representative from ethnic organization (1), an AOC representative (1), Deaf community representative (1), translator or translation services representative (1) who shall hold a certified interpreting credential from the AOC and be practicing professional translator, and other representatives as needed. The term for a member of the Commission shall be three years. Members are eligible to serve a subsequent 3-year term. Members shall serve on at least one

committee and committees may be supplemented by ad hoc professionals as designated by the chair. Ad hoc members may not serve as the chair of a committee.

(d) Regulations. Policies outlining rules and regulations directing the interpreter program are specified in the Interpreter Program Manual. The Commission, through the Issues Committee and Disciplinary Committee, shall enforce the policies of the interpreter program. Interpreter program policies may be modified at any time by the Commission and AOC.

(e) Existing Law Unchanged. This rule shall not expand, narrow, or otherwise affect existing law, including but not limited to chapter 2.43 RCW.

(f) Meetings. The Commission shall hold meetings as determined necessary by the chair. Meetings of the Commission are open to the public except for executive sessions and disciplinary meetings related to action against an interpreter.

(g) Immunity from Liability. No cause of action against the Commission, its standing members or ad hoc members appointed by the Commission, shall accrue in favor of a court interpreter or any other person arising from any act taken pursuant to this rule, provided that the Commission members or ad hoc members acted in good faith. The burden of proving that the acts were not taken in good faith shall be on the party asserting it.

[Adopted effective September 1, 2005; Amended effective April 26, 2016; December 18, 2018; September 1, 2022.]