



Frequently Asked Questions for Applicants to the *Language of Justice* Interpreter Training

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I. About *Language of Justice*

1. What is the *Language of Justice* training?

The *Language of Justice* curriculum was developed by Ayuda and Cross-Cultural Communications (CCC) with funding from the DC Bar Foundation (DCBF), with input from experts around the country. The first training was offered in 2008. The training focuses on the skills required for an interpreter to work with a lawyer and the lawyer's client in an out-of-court setting. In July of 2020, pieces of the curriculum, along with additional content developed by interpreter trainer Carla Mathers, will be presented for the first time in American Sign Language. The course will also be taught in spoken English on separate dates in July of 2020 by interpreter trainer Drew Bahr.

Ayuda is a Washington, DC nonprofit that envisions a community where all immigrants overcome obstacles in order to succeed and thrive in the United States. Ayuda realizes its vision by advocating for low-income immigrants through direct legal, social and language services; training; and outreach in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Ayuda's language access program also helps to increase access to legal and victim services for the Deaf community.

In July of 2019, the *Language of Justice* training will be presented for free through the assistance of various funding sources, including funding from DCBF and the Immigrant Justice Legal Services (IJLS) grant program from the Executive Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

DCBF is the leading funder of civil legal aid in the District of Columbia. DCBF is committed to the vision that residents of the District have equal access to justice, regardless of income. DCBF's mission is to fund, support, and improve legal representation of the poor, vulnerable, and otherwise disadvantaged in the District of Columbia. In 2006, the Council of the District of Columbia appropriated funds for civil legal services grants and a poverty lawyer loan repayment assistance program, designating DCBF as administrator. The Bar Foundation awards grants to the District's legal services organizations that provide free civil legal services to low-income and underserved people in the District.

The IJLS grant program was launched by Mayor Muriel Bowser in 2017 with the intention of funding community-based organizations, private organizations, associations, and law firms that do legal work for

immigrants in Washington, DC. This program is a national model for aiding residents in their journey to citizenship as well as providing services relating to immigrant justice. In 2020, the Mayor increased the funding dedicated to this program to more than \$2.3M, allowing for service providers to assist more clients.

DCBF, IJLS, and several other funding sources provide funding to Ayuda to administer the Community Legal Interpreter Bank -- an interpreter service of highly trained interpreters who work with public interest and pro bono lawyers and their clients in out-of-court settings.

Because Ayuda and its funders firmly believe that special training is needed before interpreters can work directly with lawyers and their clients, the *Language of Justice* training was created to help DC area interpreters gain necessary skills. Interpreters who have completed the *Language of Justice* training are very strong candidates to work for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank. However, applying to work for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank is a separate process from applying for the *Language of Justice* training, and interpreters who take the *Language of Justice* training are not guaranteed to be offered the chance to be an independent contractor for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank. Likewise, interpreters who want to work as independent contractors for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank do not have to take the *Language of Justice* training (it is possible for an interpreter to have other equivalent training in working with lawyers and their clients in an out-of-court setting that would qualify the interpreter to apply to accept work from the Bank).

2. What will I learn in the training?

Participants in the training will learn about the ethics and skills of legal interpretation in the attorney-client context focusing on:

- Duty to maintain confidentiality
- Protecting attorney-client privilege
- Avoiding the unauthorized practice of law
- Appropriate techniques for linguistic mediation
- Overview of the US legal system, including issues most likely to confuse individuals unfamiliar with the system
- Interpreter skills, and terminology development, with respect to the legal field
- Role-playing and sample sight translations based on actual attorney-client meetings

3. Who will be teaching the training?

The training will be taught by the following individuals:

Drew Bahr Will Teach the July 11-13 Training Conducted in Spoken English for Spoken Language Interpreters

Andrew (“Drew”) Bahr is an experienced interpreting and language instructor, a former immigration court and legal interpreter, and an immigration lawyer licensed to practice immigration law nationwide. Drew began interpreting in 2014 as a law student at American University Washington College of Law for the school’s law clinics and has since interpreted in immigration court, the Department of Homeland Security, state jails, federal jails and prisons, at white shoe firms in downtown Washington, D.C., at many non-profits, and for the Virginia Circuit Courts.

Drew’s love of teaching and the law both stem from his childhood role models, and he loves to pay their kindness forward by helping students practice new skills fearlessly and have confidence to tackle difficult terms and techniques. Outside of work and teaching, Drew enjoys reading science-fiction, playing table-top games, and trying new foods.

Carla Mathers Will Teach the July 25-27 Training Conducted in American Sign Language for Sign Language Interpreters

Carla M. Mathers, Esquire, SC: L practiced law in Maryland and the District of Columbia for twenty years. She currently is an independent consultant teaching legal interpreters and interpreting in legal settings. Ms. Mathers' law degree is from Howard University School of Law. Ms. Mathers' interpreting degree is from the College of Southern Idaho. She currently serves on the District of Columbia Courts Language Access Advisory Committee, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Legal Interpreting Credential Task Force and the National Association of the Deaf's Video Remote Interpreting in Court Task Force. Ms. Mathers previously sat on the Advisory Group for Language Access to develop standards for language access in courts for the American Bar Association. Ms. Mathers also sat on the Maryland Administrative Office of the Courts' Advisory Committee on Interpreters Sub-committee on Ethics and Sub-committee on Testing and Training. Ms. Mathers formerly served as the Legal Program Coordinator for MARIE Center/DOIT Center at the University of Northern Colorado. She serves as an adjunct instructor for the Gallaudet University Department of Interpretation teaching legal interpreting, among other courses. She served as Vice President for the Conference of Interpreter Trainers and sat on the Board of Directors for the Deaf Abused Women's Network in Washington, D.C. Ms. Mathers is the author of *Sign Language Interpreters in Court: Understanding Best Practices*, a text for interpreters, attorneys and courts to understand the principles underlying ASL court interpreting.

4. Where will the *Language of Justice* training take place?

The training will take place in Washington, D.C., at a location accessible by Metro. Specific information on the location of the training will be provided to accepted applicants.

5. How long is the *Language of Justice* training?

This year, there will be two trainings: one designed for spoken language interpreters and one designed for sign language interpreters.

The first training, designed for spoken language interpreters, will be held Saturday, July 11 – Monday, July 13, 2020.

The second training, designed for sign language interpreters, will be held Saturday, July 25 – Monday, July 27, 2020.

The trainings will occur every day from 9:00AM-5:00PM.

6. What is the cost of attending the *Language of Justice* training?

Ayuda is committed to increasing the number of highly trained interpreters in the Washington, DC area who are prepared to work with pro bono and public interest lawyers and their clients. As such, the training is free for interpreters who are selected to participate.

II. Expectations of Participants

7. What are the expectations for participants in the training?

Participants in the training are expected to arrive on time every day, to attend the training in its entirety (see number 17 below), to respect the instructors and their fellow participants, to spend a reasonable

amount of time preparing for the training by reviewing the training materials distributed in advance, to participate in discussions and activities during the training, to complete a test of the material covered at the end of the training, and to provide feedback on the training.

III. CEUs

8. I would like to know whether I can earn CEUs by participating in the *Language of Justice* training. For American Sign Language and Certified Deaf Interpreters, Ayuda will work with the Potomac Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to offer CEU credits for this training. In the past, the training provided approximately 2 CEUs, and we expect that the same will be true this year as well. Ayuda will also work with the American Translators Association and local courts to offer CEU credits from those entities for this training.

IV. Qualifications of Participants, Class Size, and the Selection Process

9. What kind of experience or qualifications do I need in order to take this training?

The *Language of Justice* training is not for individuals who are just beginning their training as interpreters; it is an advanced training. You need some level of experience and existing training in order to complete and contribute to this training course. You must already have familiarity with interpreting ethics and skills because you will be practicing with other interpreters; many of whom are specialized in different areas and this helps elevate the training experience. Additionally, the subject matter contained in the *Language of Justice* training is complex and sensitive, necessitating qualified and experienced professional interpreters. Everyone who has already taken Ayuda's *Breaking Silence* training is qualified for the *Language of Justice* training. *Breaking Silence* is not a prerequisite, but rather Ayuda screened *Breaking Silence* participants prior to that training to ensure that they were already advanced in the field.

If you have not taken the *Breaking Silence* training, then you will need to demonstrate your credentials and training experience that qualify you to take this training. For spoken language interpreters, the application will ask you whether you have taken any of the following trainings or possess any of the following credentials, one of which is required as a prerequisite to taking this training:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> NAJIT certified<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Court certified<input type="checkbox"/> State Department Conference Interpreter<input type="checkbox"/> Consortium for State Court Interpreting Certification (passing score of oral certification exam)<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor or Master's degree in Interpreting from an accredited university<input type="checkbox"/> DC/MD/VA Court Interpreter<input type="checkbox"/> Breaking Silence, Ayuda<input type="checkbox"/> Completion of a locally or nationally recognized interpreter training of at least 40 hours<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____<input type="checkbox"/> _____

For American Sign Language interpreters, the application will ask you whether you have taken any of the following trainings or possess any of the following credentials, one of which is required as a prerequisite to taking this training:

Deaf Interpreters

- Certified Deaf Certification (CDI)
- CLIP-R
- PDIC
- Bachelor or Master's degree in Interpreting from an accredited university
- Documented related work, alternate training, and references
- Other:

Hearing Interpreters

- National Interpreter Certification (NIC)
- CI/CT certification
- NAD V
- BEI Certification
- Other: _____

Ayuda will make an individualized determination as to whether each interpreter is qualified to take the *Language of Justice* training.

10. How many interpreters will be trained at the upcoming *Language of Justice* training, and how will they be selected?

Between 25 and 30 interpreters will be trained in each *Language of Justice* class (spoken language and American Sign Language interpreters will be instructed separately this year). Interpreters will be chosen based on the demonstrated needs of the legal services community and based on the applications submitted by applicants to the training. Submitting a completed application does not guarantee admission into the program; Ayuda will contact selected interpreters to let them know that they have been chosen to receive the training and will provide notice to those who have not been selected.

11. Is the *Language of Justice* training intended for interpreters who work in specific languages?

Ayuda prioritizes training interpreters who are in high demand. In determining which languages to prioritize, Ayuda considers various factors, such as the spoken and sign languages used by individuals who seek legal services, the languages used by individuals represented in census data, languages that have been identified as being used by very few professional interpreters, and languages used by individuals frequently encountered by the DC government.

The *Language of Justice* trainings in July of 2020 will place a focus on training interpreters who work in the following languages: American Sign Language, Amharic, Arabic/Moroccan Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, indigenous Latin American languages, West African languages, Farsi, French, Dari, Hindi, Indonesian, Korean, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Sylheti, Tagalog, Thai, Tigrinya, Vietnamese, and Urdu. Although these languages will receive priority, interpreters who work in other languages are also encouraged to apply. The *Language of Justice* training is always a wonderful opportunity to learn alongside individuals whose working languages are different than your own.

12. Do I have to live in Washington, DC in order to take this training?

This training is sponsored by several entities (including the DC Bar Foundation and the Executive Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia/the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs), with the goal of increasing the number of specially trained interpreters who are available to assist legal service providers in Washington, DC. As such, interpreters applying for this training should frequently accept interpretation assignments in Washington, DC.

13. I have a full-time job that does not allow me to accept interpretation assignments during the workday.

Can I take this training?

This training is sponsored by several entities (including the DC Bar Foundation and the Executive Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia/the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs), with the goal of increasing the number of specially trained interpreters who are available to assist legal service providers in Washington, DC. Most often, legal service providers need interpretation assistance during the workday. Priority will be given to interpreters who are freelance interpreters whose primary vocation is accepting interpretation assignments from various agencies, companies, nonprofits, courts, etc.

V. How to Apply

14. How do I apply to take the *The Language of Justice*?

You're almost halfway through the process already! The application process has two parts. The first is to read the "Frequently Asked Questions for Applicants to the *Language of Justice* Training." You must read and understand the information provided in the Frequently Asked Questions. **Secondly, applicants must FULLY complete and submit the online application form, including all requested attachments. Please note that we will not consider you for admission into the training unless you have successfully submitted a complete application.** If you are selected to attend the training, you will be asked to submit a \$50 deposit, but that deposit *will be returned to you* at the end of successfully completing the training. For spoken language interpreters, you must complete language proficiency testing before the training if Ayuda determines that it is necessary based on credentials and experience (Ayuda will pay for the testing) in order to have the deposit returned to you. Additionally, for spoken language interpreters and sign language interpreters, you must attend all days of the training, and take the half hour test at the end of the final day in order to have your deposit returned to you (you do not need to pass the test in order to have your deposit returned to you). We will not return the deposit if you fail to complete language proficiency testing (for those for whom it is required), if you only partially attend the training, or if you decide not to attend the training after submitting your deposit.

15. Why do I have to submit a deposit if I am accepted to the training, and will I get it back?

The *Language of Justice* training offers valuable professional development. Ayuda wants to offer this training to individuals who are serious about taking full advantage of the opportunity. For that reason, we ask for a refundable \$50 deposit. The deposit will be collected online; instructions will be sent to applicants who are selected to attend the training. The deposit that you submit will be returned to you, unless one of the following circumstances occurs:

- A. You fail to complete language proficiency testing before the training date (that is, if Ayuda determines that such testing is necessary after reviewing your credentials and experience). Ayuda will pay arrange, and pay for, language proficiency testing for any interpreter asked to complete the testing before taking the training.
- B. You fail to complete the training and the test at the end (you do not have to pass the test in order to get your deposit back).
- C. You are accepted to take the training, pay your deposit, and then decide that you will not take the training.

Applicants who are not selected to attend the training are not expected to submit a deposit.

16. What will happen to my application if I am not selected for the training?

If you are not selected for the training, Ayuda will add your contact information to our listserv for future announcements and training opportunities.

VI. Training Policies

17. What if I am selected for the training and then I have an emergency and I must miss part of the training?

You cannot successfully complete the training if you miss more than 4 hours of the training. If you miss more than 4 hours of the training, you will be offered the opportunity to make up that time when Ayuda next offers the training. You will not receive a certificate of completion for the training until you have made up the time that you missed (if more than 4 hours).

18. Will training participants be fed during the training?

Participants are expected to purchase or bring their own lunch. Adequate time will be given for participants to have a lunch break. Coffee and light refreshments will be provided every day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

19. Will I be able to sit beside the same people every day at the training? Will I be able to sit with other interpreters who share the same working languages as me every day at the training?

The instructors who lead the training will determine seating arrangements, based on their knowledge of learning styles and effectiveness of group activities. You should be prepared to change the location of your seating and the groups in which you sit regularly throughout the training, as requested by the instructors. However, American Sign Language interpreters, while they may not sit with the same people every day, will be with interpreters who use the same working language each day (as the training over the weekend of July 25-27 will be composed entirely of American Sign Language interpreters).

20. Will I be paid for the time that I spend in the training?

Ayuda does not require the *Language of Justice* training of its employees nor as a condition of continuing in a contractual relationship with independent contractors. Rather, the *Language of Justice* training is given to any selected interpreters who wish to gain knowledge and skills necessary for working with pro bono and public interest lawyers and their clients. As such, students in the training are not compensated for the time that they spend learning; they are also not charged for the course.

VII. Other Considerations

21. Will I be offered assignments from Ayuda if I take this training?

The *Language of Justice* training will make you a more marketable interpreter as you pursue work from various entities in need of language services. Ayuda is always looking for additional interpreters to work for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank. Interpreters who have completed the *Language of Justice* training are very strong candidates to accept assignments from the Community Legal Interpreter Bank. However, applying to an independent contractor with the Community Legal Interpreter Bank is a separate process, and interpreters who take the *Language of Justice* training are not guaranteed to be offered the chance to be an independent contractor for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank. Likewise, interpreters who want to be independent contractors with the Community Legal Interpreter Bank do not have to take the *Language of Justice* training (it is possible for an interpreter to have other equivalent training in working with lawyers and their clients that would qualify the interpreter to apply to be an independent contractor with the Bank).

22. Does this training qualify me to apply to accept assignments from Ayuda’s Victim Services Interpreter Bank (VSIB)?

The Victim Services Interpreter Bank (VSIB) is distinct from the Community Legal Interpreter Bank; the two separate banks serve separate service providers and accomplish separate goals. Here is a summary of the two interpreter banks run by Ayuda:

- The Community Legal Interpreter Bank – Assignments through this bank involve working with lawyers who offer free or reduced-fee civil legal services (for non-criminal matters) to low-income residents of the District of Columbia (or people with legal matters in DC), to immigrants being helped by DC’s Immigrant Justice Legal Services (IJLS) Grant, to residents of Montgomery County, and to victims seeking legal services in Northern Virginia. Assignments through this bank are scheduled ahead of time and usually occur during business hours. This bank is funded by the DC Bar Foundation, the IJLS Program, the Montgomery County Council and Executive, and from private donations and the collection of fees.
- The Victim Services Interpreter Bank - Assignments through this bank involve working with social workers, therapists, forensic nurses, and others who offer free social services and advocacy to victims of crime in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Northern Virginia. Assignments through this bank are sometimes scheduled ahead of time and are sometimes on an unscheduled, short-notice basis. Assignments can occur at any time of the day or night. Incentives are offered for assignments that occur without certain notice or after-hours. This bank is funded by the DC Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, the Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, and from private donations.

Please visit Ayuda’s website to learn more about working for either interpreter bank:
<https://ayuda.com/what-we-do/language-services/#1525657165588-19a63918-e5d5>

23. What do I have to do to become an independent contractor who accepts assignments from the Community Legal Interpreter Bank?

Please visit Ayuda’s website to learn more about working for the Community Legal Interpreter Bank:
<https://ayuda.com/what-we-do/language-services/#1525657165588-19a63918-e5d5>

In addition, Ayuda will be holding information sessions in July of 2020 for interpreters who are interested in joining the Community Legal Interpreter Bank. The dates and times of those sessions will be announced in late June or early July.

24. I am a certified American Sign Language interpreter, and I have a Specialist Certificate: Legal (or have taken a Foundations of Legal Interpreting training or course). Should I take this course? Do I have to take this training in order to accept assignments from the Community Legal Interpreter Bank?

The advanced training that you have received is substantially similar to the Language of Justice training. You may choose to forgo this training opportunity, as it may be too duplicative with the training that you already have. Please contact Ayuda at interpreterbank@ayuda.com to communicate more about whether to take the training and to inquire whether you can become an independent contractor with the Community Legal Interpreter Bank with your existing credentials.