

Wednesday, October 11, 2023

**Elena Vasiliev, ULS**

**Re: Comments for Options Poll**

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I vote for #5 with the below adjustment:

One of the organizations listed below (their choice) receives additional funding to manage the WA State Interpreter/Translator Testing, Training, and Certification program for Medical, Social, and Court Interpreters/Translators through the qualified private entity selected via the official RFP process:

- DSHS LTC  
*or*
- DES  
*or*
- State Centralized Office [proposed name: Department of Language Testing and Certification (DLTC)]

NOTE: the selected private entity would be prohibited from testing/training themselves and will partner with organizations that have invested in various comprehensive test/training development/regular improvements, etc. and have proven years of experience successfully managing training and testing programs. The managing organization will issue the Recognition Certificate as per [WAC 388-03-114](#).

This system should be similar to how HCA, L&I, and DES manage their contracts through qualified vendors selected via the RFP process.

Some of the key expectations are highlighted below:

1. Testing, all types – Medical, Social, Court, Translations:
  - a. The private coordinating entity would be prohibited from testing themselves and will partner with organizations that have already invested in various comprehensive test development/regular improvements (nationally recognized organizations, CCHI, NBCMI, others) to coordinate and manage the test options/locations based on interpreters' or bilingual individuals' needs, ability to use online technology and ability to travel.
  - b. Negotiate high volume discounts with professional testing organizations to keep costs down for interpreters/bilingual individuals/state organizations.
  - c. Support/coordinate the online and in-person testing events to accommodate individuals with limited technical knowledge/comfort zone/ability limitations related to various health conditions. Negotiate with local organizations for cost-free leasing of testing locations (e.g. local hospitals, social service offices) for in-person testing events.
2. Training:
  - a. Partner with professional training organizations (e.g., community colleges, recognized training organizations – Bridging the Gap, other) and assist in coordinating the training schedules between organizations to prevent quarters from being canceled due to lack of student enrollment.

- b. Coordinate training classes through various professional organizations based on language groups to keep the overall course cost down.
  - c. Partner with professional organizations to coordinate continuing education programs for interpreters.
- 3. Technology/Online Presence:
  - a. Set up and maintain a website to keep the listing of credentialed interpreters up to date.
  - b. Provide the technology for tracking and managing continuing education credits for interpreters/translators, tracking their credentials expiration dates, etc.
- 4. Customer Service Support:
  - a. Setup a live contact center to support interpreters/translators/organizations/stakeholders with their online/email/phone inquiries; utilize a cases ticketing system to ensure timely responses.
- 5. Career Opportunities Support:
  - a. Regularly survey WA organizations (e.g. Hospitals, Administrations of XYZ) for their existing and projected language needs.
  - b. Research the projected language demand based on refugee migration statistics for a specific geographical area.
  - c. Assist credentialed interpreters with language demands to help re-locate to the area of their language pair spoken (as needed) for various reasons (lack of interpreting work in their existing area, or looking for relocation based on personal reasons).
  - d. Organize and maintain webinars and in-person events to guide bilingual individuals in starting their interpreter careers.
  - e. Partner with refugee organizations, WA Department of Health, WorkSource, and other professional organizations to connect bilingual individuals and interpreters to interpreter career opportunities and hiring events.