

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**"Celebrating Quality Service"**

**2017 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Audio Remote Interpreting Assistance at Public Counters

**DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION:** October 2015

(Must have been implemented at least one year - on or before July 1, 2016)

**PROJECT STATUS:**  Ongoing  One-time only

**HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT?**  Yes  No

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 Audio Remote Interpreting (ARI) Assistance at Public Counters is a language access  
 2 initiative. The service is provided for Limited English Proficient (LEP) court clients that  
 3 visit public counters. ARI employs a vendor-supplied interpreter, located at a remote  
 4 location, via telephone. The interpreter listens to the communication event and interprets  
 5 the communication into the target language for the client. ARI interprets information back  
 6 into English, for court staff assisting the court clients.


7  
 8 In the Los Angeles Superior Court (LASC), ARI is used for languages other than Spanish.  
 9 All public counters at all LASC locations have bilingual staff available to assist Spanish-  
 10 speaking clients. A window at each public counter is equipped with a dual handset  
 11 phone/receiver. This configuration allows court staff, the client, and the ARI-provided  
 12 interpreter to engage in a three-way conversation. ARI arose from the need to provide  
 13 meaningful, on-demand language access services to (LEP) court clients, at all points of  
 14 contact. Live interpreters are supplied to LEP clients during judicial proceedings.

15

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

<b>SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS</b> Los Angeles Superior Court 111 N. Hill Street, Room 105 E Los Angeles, CA 90012		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-830-0805
<b>PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME</b> Kathie O'Connell, Director, Courtroom Support		<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-633-0688 <b>EMAIL</b> koconnell@lacourt.org
<b>PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE</b> (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Mary Eckhardt Hearn, Public Information Director 	<b>DATE</b> 07/7/17	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER</b> 213-830-0816 <b>EMAIL</b> mhearn@lacourt.org

Quality and Productivity Commission  
31<sup>st</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program  
"Celebrating Quality Service"

2017 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Audio Remote Interpreting Assistance at Public Counters

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

Sherri R. Carter,  
Executive Officer/Clerk



DATE

07/06/17

TELEPHONE NUMBER

213-830-0805

Quality and Productivity Commission  
31<sup>st</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program  
“Celebrating Quality Service”

2017 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Audio Remote Interpreting Assistance at Public Counters

**1<sup>st</sup> FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY:** Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success. Use Arial 12 point font.

**Challenge:** California’s incredible cultural and linguistic diversity is one of its greatest assets. However, within predominantly English-speaking courthouses, it also presents a great challenge in regard to access to justice. The numbers communicate the complexity of this issue: approximately 40 percent of Californians speak a language other than English at home; there are more than 200 languages and dialects spoken in the state; and roughly 20 percent of Californians (nearly 7 million) are restricted by English language limitations.

Los Angeles County is the most linguistically diverse region in California and one of the most linguistically diverse regions in the world. According to University of California, Los Angeles Professor Vyacheslav Ivanov, there are at least 224 identified languages spoken in Los Angeles County. This estimation does not include distinct dialects within the languages. More than 25,000 people come to Los Angeles courthouses each day. Their language access needs are unknown until they enter the facility.

LASC has provided Spanish language assistance at public counters for decades. It is accessible through bilingual staff. However, the Court lacked a comprehensive and sustainable language assistance program to offer other-than-Spanish-speaking court clients at its public counters. ARI fills this gap in language access.

**Solution:** Planning for ARI began in late 2014. A survey of all 38 courthouses was conducted in order to assess: a) the locations of the windows that would be dedicated for ARI assistance; b) the need for additional Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephones and data lines; c) the need for additional handsets; and d) the need for handset cradles in areas where the handset for court clients required placement on the external sides of bullet-resistant glass windows. The Court entered into an agreement with an interpreting service provider that already retained a master service agreement with the Judicial Council of California. In September 2015, “soft” or experimental implementations were assessed at several court locations. Finally, the Court Language Access Services Department submitted a budget proposal for approval of one-time costs associated with telephones and data lines, as well as monthly, recurring costs to fund the telephone interpreting service. ARI was officially implemented in October 2015.

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**“Celebrating Quality Service”**

**2017 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Audio Remote Interpreting Assistance at Public Counters

ARI is activated when bilingual service is not available through public counter staff. In these instances, staff employ “I Speak” cards to identify the language required by the client. Once the required language is established, staff place a call to the ARI.

The LASC Court Technology Services (CTS) unit assisted the Language Access Services Department in deploying the telephone technology necessary to support ARI. The technology is relatively simple. It requires a dual handset connected to the Court’s VoIP phone system.

**Benefits:** The project achieves several quality and productivity-related outcomes. Measures of success include service utilization rates and public and employee response to the system. During the period of September 2015 through June 2017, 1,618 calls were placed using the ARI program. These calls represented 35 other-than-Spanish languages. Mandarin interpretation was requested the most, representing 43% of the calls placed. Korean interpretation was the second most requested, at 21%. Since inception, an average number of 80 calls were made through ARI each month, at an average monthly cost of \$745. The low cost of maintenance is leveraged against the confusion, delay and sub-optimal outcome that 80 or more clients might otherwise experience each month. Court employee time is spent productively helping the client, rather than failing to communicate. ARI justifies the cost investment with increased levels of community satisfaction and court productivity.

ARI provides on-demand, effective language access to a historically underserved sector of the population. It epitomizes a high-impact language access program that any county agency can replicate, at a relatively low cost. Only 6 months after implementation, the ARI program established cornerstone functionality by achieving the Court’s language access objectives. Court clients unable to communicate in English now receive service instantly, in their language of choice. Skilled ARI telephonic interpreters ensure they receive the required services in a prompt and clearly comprehensible manner.

In June of 2016, the National Association of Counties (NACo) Achievement Awards program formally recognized ARI’s exceptional results and unique innovations by conferring the “Best of Category” award in Court Administration and Management.

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
***“Celebrating Quality Service”***

**2017 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Audio Remote Interpreting Assistance at Public Counters

**Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only.** Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12 point font.

ARI addresses County Strategic Plan goals in several ways. First, ARI supports Goal I: to “Make Investments That Transform Lives,” in that it aggressively addresses one of society’s more complicated social challenges – linguistic barriers to service. Providing language access services through ARI enables the Court to operate as an organization that is highly responsive to this reality. Adopting the concept of ARI might assist other government agencies in responding to complex societal challenges in a similar way. The program relates to Strategy I.1 – “Increase Our Focus on Prevention Initiatives,” in that it focuses on the prevention of extended involvement with the County’s justice systems. By addressing client needs with consistent accuracy, it decreases the time and energy required for a wider range of the community’s diverse cultures to conclude their court matters.

Secondly, ARI supports Goal II. – to “Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities,” in that it in the lives of County residents. It accomplishes this by enabling the Court to work as a “hub” within a network of public-private partnering entities” that are centered upon providing fair and timely access to justice. The program also supports Strategy II.1 – “Drive Economic and Workforce Development in the County.” ARI enhances opportunities for the business community, including small businesses and social enterprises, because it supports local workforce job creation within the limited English proficiency community. As it facilitates more efficient and effective court processes for LEP clientele, it frees and facilitates the operation of a more active private community by encouraging ownership, management and staffing of small and private businesses. In doing so, it operates to expand the local tax base, and to provide greater social equity across the County’s highly diverse communities.

Finally, ARI supports Goal III. – to “Realize Tomorrow’s Government Today.” ARI strives to meet the challenges posed to government services by an increasingly dynamic and complex environment. The access to fairness and justice it provides enables the Court to respond to public needs and expectations as an innovative, flexible, effective and transparent partner. Advancement of the common good proceeds through Strategy III.2 – “to “Embrace Digital Government for the Benefit of Internal Customers and Communities.” Implementing ARI as a technological business solution supports the Court’s core mission of serving the community by providing equal access to justice through the fair, timely and efficient resolution of all cases. ARI transforms how the Court leverages information technology to enhance business operations and improve service delivery.

**Quality and Productivity Commission**  
**31<sup>st</sup> Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program**  
**“Celebrating Quality Service”**

**2017 APPLICATION**

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

**NAME OF PROJECT:** Audio Remote Interpreting Assistance at Public Counters

**COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY):** If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12 point font

**Cost Avoidance:** Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

**Cost Savings:** A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

**Revenue:** Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL COST</b> AVOIDANCE \$ N/A	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL COST SAVINGS</b> \$ N/A	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED <b>ANNUAL REVENUE</b> \$ N/A	(1) + (2) + (3) <b>TOTAL ANNUAL</b> ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT \$ N/A	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	---	--	---	--

**ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY**