

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Relating to language services in courts.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

Section 57.002, Subchapter A, Chapter 57, Subtitle D, Title 2, Government Code is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 57.002. APPOINTMENT OF INTERPRETER OR CART PROVIDER; CART PROVIDER LIST. (a) A court shall appoint a certified court interpreter or a certified CART provider for an individual who has a hearing impairment or a licensed court interpreter for an individual who can hear but does not comprehend or communicate in English if a motion for the appointment of an interpreter or provider is filed by a party or requested by a witness in a civil or criminal proceeding in the court.

(a-1) Notwithstanding any other rule or law requiring the payment of costs attributable to the services of an interpreter, a party who files a Statement of Inability to Afford Payment of Court Costs under the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure is not required to provide their own interpreter or pay the costs attributable to the services of an interpreter unless the Statement has been contested and denied by a court.

(b) A court may, on its own motion, appoint a certified court interpreter or a certified CART provider for an individual who has a hearing impairment or a licensed court interpreter for an individual who can hear but does not comprehend or communicate in English.

(b-1) A licensed court interpreter appointed by a court under Subsection (a) or (b) must hold a license that includes the appropriate designation under Section [157.101](#)(d) that indicates the interpreter is permitted to interpret in that court.

(c) Subject to Subsection (e), in a county with a population of less than 50,000, a court may appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a licensed court interpreter.

(d) Subject to Subsection (e), in a county with a population of 50,000 or more, a court may appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a certified or licensed court interpreter if:

- (1) the language necessary in the proceeding is a language other than Spanish; and
- (2) the court makes a finding that there is no licensed court interpreter within 75 miles who can interpret in the language that is necessary in a proceeding.

(d-1) Subject to Subsection (e), a court in a county to which Section [21.021](#), Civil Practice and Remedies Code, applies may appoint a spoken language interpreter who is not a licensed court interpreter.

(e) A person appointed under Subsection (c) or (d):

- (1) must be qualified by the court as an expert under the Texas Rules of Evidence;
- (2) must be at least 18 years of age; and
- (3) may not be a party to the proceeding.

(f) The department shall maintain a list of certified CART providers and, on request, may send the list to a person or court.