

Expenditures for Court Interpretation Services

SB 380/HB 3474 (88th Legislature)

Section 57.002(h) of the Texas Government Code requires each county auditor, or other individual designated by the commissioners court of a county, in consultation with the district and county clerks, to submit a report on the money the county spent during the preceding fiscal year to provide court-ordered interpretation services in civil and criminal proceedings. Interpretation services includes spoken language interpretation as well as interpretation for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have communication disabilities.

The information must include:

- (1) the number of interpreters appointed;
- (2) the number of interpreters appointed for parties or witnesses who are indigent;
- (3) the amount of money the county spent to provide court-ordered interpretation services; and
- (4) for civil proceedings, whether a party to the proceeding filed a statement of inability to afford payment of court costs under Rule 145, Texas Rules of Civil Procedure, applicable to the appointment of an interpreter.

For this report, the fiscal year is defined as **October 1 through September 30**.

Reports must be submitted on an annual basis by **November 1**. The first report, covering October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024, is due by November 1, 2024.

Since county auditors and treasurers typically report information to the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC), OCA is working with TIDC to add the court-ordered interpretation services report to the TIDC reporting portal for convenience.

Reporting Elements	Civil	Criminal and Juvenile	Total
Number of interpreters appointed or used			
Number of interpreters appointed or used for parties or witnesses who are indigent			
Total expenditures for court-ordered interpretation services			
Number of parties that filed a statement of inability to afford payment of court costs			

Reporting Instructions

Report the following information for matters held at the **district** and **county court** levels—civil (including civil, family, probate, guardianship, and civil mental health commitments), felony, class A and B misdemeanors, and juvenile cases.

Totals are required. If possible, report expenditures for civil and criminal matters separately. If separating data for civil and criminal matters, **include juvenile cases in the criminal statistics.**

Include any activity for which an interpreter was used on district and county cases at a magistrate level and in cases filed whether there was a formal appointment or court order, including county-employed or contract interpreters.

1. Number of interpreters appointed or used

In counties using interpreters on a case-by-case basis, the number of interpreters appointed or used during the fiscal year.

In counties employing or contracting with interpreters, the number of interpreters employed or contracted with during the year, regardless of length of time employed/contracted during the fiscal year.

2. Number of interpreters appointed or used for parties or witnesses who are indigent

In counties using interpreters on a case-by-case basis, the number of interpreters appointed or used during the fiscal year for parties or witnesses who are indigent.

In counties employing or contracting with interpreters, the number of interpreters employed or contracted with during the year that were used for parties or witnesses who are indigent, regardless of length of time employed/contracted during the fiscal year.

If interpreters provide service regardless of indigency status and information on indigency is not tracked enter **“Unknown.”**

3. Total expenditures for court-ordered interpretation services

In counties employing or contracting with interpreters, include salaries and fringe benefits for the fiscal year, regardless of length of time employed/contracted during the fiscal year.

4. Number of parties filing statements/affidavits of inability to pay in cases where interpreter appointed or used

a. In civil proceedings (see definition of civil above), number of parties that filed a statement of inability to afford payment of court costs (Rule 145, TX Rules of Civil Procedure) applicable to the appointment of an interpreter.

b. In criminal or juvenile proceedings, number of parties that filed an affidavit of indigency in cases where an interpreter was appointed or used.¹

Please direct questions to the Data and Research Division at JudInfo@txcourts.gov.

¹ While not required by statute, this item was added for consistency since the other 3 items include criminal and juvenile cases.