

Translation and Interpretation Policy

(recommended)

A. Scope of the Translation and Interpretation Policy (Policy)

1. This Policy shall apply to the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society activities within the purview of the Presiding Bishop; the President of the House of Deputies; and the General Convention Office.
2. If not specifically mentioned, **interpretation decisions should follow the principles outlined in this Policy for translation** (e.g., an event of General Convention must provide interpretation; the host of an event sponsored by a ministry department should determine whether to provide interpretation based on the target audience).
3. Every Diocese, Province, affiliated organization, and ministry of the Church is encouraged to use this Policy and evaluate its own practices.

B. What must be translated

The following materials must be translated and made available in English, Spanish, French and Haitian Kreyol/Creole:

- Proceedings of official meetings and events
- Documents produced for and by the General Convention (e.g., resolutions, reports, Constitution and Canons, hearings, legislative sessions, the annual diocesan and parochial reports, and other official forms)
- Trainings and programs created by Acts of the General Convention (e.g., Title IV training materials)
- Products of large program initiatives by ministry departments intended for wide distribution to the church.
- Public Affairs press releases
- All announcements that involve funding implications and availability
- Announcements and applications for all competitive grants and scholarships
- Messages from the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies
- Pastoral letters from the House of Bishops

(The issues of Scripture translation and translation of liturgical texts are outside the scope of this policy for practical and canonical reasons.)

C. Interpretation must be provided for oral presentations or proceedings of official meetings and events (e.g., training programs, General Convention, etc.)

Exception: Interpretation may not be required if an event is limited “by invitation only” and participants have been asked and declined interpretation.

D. Translation and interpretation of all other material and events may be considered discretionary.

1. Discretionary materials may include:
 - Products of ministry departments not intended for wider church distribution at the discretion of the department head, in consultation with the responsible Canon to the Presiding Bishop. Depending on the product, additional input may be required from the Presiding Bishop.
 - Episcopal News Service stories
2. When determining whether to provide translations, the provider should consider:
 - The intended user audience and the number of users
 - Input from the expected users

E. Administration

1. All translation and interpretation (T&I) services throughout the DFMS shall be administered through the Language Services (LS). Members of any groups under the General Convention will send interpretation and translation requests to GC staff to handle via Language Services. LS shall determine and outline requirements for requesting, contracting, and scheduling T&I services. T&I services that have not been arranged through LS will not be honored unless prior arrangements have been made and agreed by LS.
2. The Language Services will train and update staff regarding Translation and Interpretation timelines and availability of services to ensure that services are cost effective and timely.
3. The DFMS seeks to work with a group of translators and interpreters who have done prior work with The Episcopal Church, who are familiar with Episcopal terminology, and whose work has been well received by the various constituencies that have encountered it. If a staff member wants to recommend a translator or interpreter who is not already under prior contract with the DFMS, he or she should submit a request to LS with the following information:
 - Identification and contact information for the translator and interpreter
 - A curriculum vitae and/or representative samples of work
 - A business recommendation
 - An explanation of why this translator or interpreter resource would be good for a particular project

After consultation, LS will determine if the recommended translator or interpreter is appropriate for pending projects, and if so, will negotiate and prepare a contract according to DFMS standards.

4. In some circumstances (e.g., short timetables, quick turnaround; draft documents), computer translations may initially be employed; for materials which are appropriately formatted and shared electronically.

5. Where possible, materials should be released in all languages simultaneously.
6. Funding
 - During each budgeting process, individual departments shall be responsible for identifying in a separate line a total amount required for translation and interpretation of documents and meetings that fall within their program purview.
 - The GCO shall be responsible for translations and interpretation related to all governance materials as directed and/or requested by the General Convention, Executive Council, and Interim Bodies.

F. Supporting Resources

A **Glossary of Church Terms** shall be produced in multiple languages by the Communications Department, in coordination with the General Convention Office. The Glossary shall be made widely available and be updated regularly.

Additional Considerations

Translation and interpretation enable communication between cultures and across languages with translation. These tasks are a rendering of meaning, not merely words, from one language into another language. Thus, translations seek to convey the original intent of a message while carefully considering cultural and regional differences between languages as well as variable expressions, understanding and interpretations based on the target audiences.

While not all materials [documents, PowerPoint, videos, etc.] can be translated into every language, we recommend dialogue with those affected to determine what translations would be welcome and useful for uniting us as the Body of Christ and Beloved Community.

In event and meeting planning, consideration should be made as to what materials will be provided and in what formats (e.g., handouts, slide shows, or videos.). Will translations and/or captioning be required to provide full participation.

Many items should be translated and/or interpreted that are not on the required list. We entrust these decisions to DFMS and GCO staff, Interim Bodies and encourage department heads at DFMS to consider what translations are required to exhibit the hospitality and inclusiveness our Baptismal Covenant envisions.