

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Administrative Code - Language Assistance and Services at Board of Supervisors Meetings]

Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to require the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs to provide interpretation services upon request at every meeting of the Board of Supervisors between September 1, 2015, and July 31, 2016; and to require the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs to translate agendas of Board of Supervisors meetings and the public document listing all legislation introduced at each Board of Supervisors meeting during that period.

Existing Law

Under the San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance, the Board of Supervisors must provide translators at each of its regular meetings and all meetings of its committees when a member of the public submits a request to the Clerk of the Board at least 48 hours before the meeting. But the law does not require City staff to attend Board of Supervisors meetings to provide translation unless the Clerk receives a request.

The Language Access Ordinance requires City departments to provide language services in languages other than English that are spoken by 10,000 or more City residents. That ordinance requires boards and commissions to translate meeting notices, agendas, and minutes upon written request.

Amendments to Current Law

The proposed ordinance would create an 11-month pilot program from September 1, 2015 through July 31, 2016. During that period, staff from the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs (“OCEIA”) would attend all regular and special meetings of the Board of Supervisors to provide live interpretation services to members of the public upon request in each of the languages spoken by 10,000 or more City residents. Additionally, staff from OCEIA would translate into those languages the following two documents each week during the pilot program period: (A) the agenda for a regular or special meeting of the Board of Supervisors, and (B) the Legislation Introduced at Roll Call document listing titles of the legislation introduced at a meeting of the Board of Supervisors. OCEIA would have three business days to translate each of those documents and provide it to the Clerk of the Board for posting on the Board’s website. The ordinance would require OCEIA to translate only those two documents, not the content of any legislation.

The ordinance would require OCEIA to draft a proposed protocol to carry out the duties under the ordinance, and would authorize the Clerk of the Board to amend and approve that protocol. And during the pilot program period, OCEIA would coordinate with the Clerk of the Board in providing the services required by the ordinance.

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The ordinance would also state that it will be City policy to provide sufficient funding for OCEIA and the Clerk of the Board to fulfill the duties imposed by the ordinance.

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