



Language Access Specialist (LAS) Certification Program

Scholarship Guidelines

Purpose

The LAS Scholarship Program supports the expansion of statewide language access capacity within the New Mexico Judiciary. Scholarships are awarded to promote equitable distribution of certified Language Access Specialists (LAS), particularly in courts with limited or no existing LAS coverage and in courts serving languages of lesser diffusion (LLD).

The program does not operate from a dedicated scholarship budget. All program-related expenses are supported through the AOC general fund.

Scholarship Availability

Scholarships may cover:

- **100% of tuition (\$1,000), or**
- **50% of tuition (\$500)**

The number and type of scholarships awarded per cohort depend on:

- Available program funding,

- Number of applicants,
- Existing LAS coverage statewide,
- Documented language access needs.

Determination of Scholarship Amount

100% Tuition Scholarships

Priority for full tuition coverage is given to:

- Courts that **do not currently have a certified Language Access Specialist**, and/or
- Courts serving **languages of lesser diffusion (LLD)** where LAS support is needed.

50% Tuition Scholarships

Partial tuition coverage may be awarded to:

- Courts that already have certified LAS staff but seek to expand coverage, or
- Courts with sufficient existing LAS presence where full coverage is not necessary to meet equity goals.

Scholarship determinations are based on **statewide equity and program coverage needs**, not on court size classifications used in other programs.

Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for scholarship funding, applicants must:

1. Be a **current employee** of the New Mexico Judiciary or other qualifying justice system partner agency.
2. Receive **endorsement from their court or supervising authority**, confirming support for participation.

3. Demonstrate **functional proficiency** in English and the language for which certification is sought.
4. Complete the required **LAS interview and/or assessment process**.

The LAS Certification Program **does not provide language instruction or language acquisition training**. Applicants must already demonstrate functional proficiency in the language they intend to use.

Selection Process

- Applications are reviewed **after the submission deadline**.
- Review includes:
 - Application evaluation,
 - Interview and/or assessment results,
 - Evaluation of the court's current LAS coverage and language needs.
- Each application is reviewed **on a case-by-case basis**.

Both the applicant and the court will be notified via email regarding:

- Acceptance into the program, and
- Whether a scholarship (100%, 50%, or none) has been awarded.

Ineligibility

Applicants are not eligible for scholarship funding if they:

- Were previously removed from the LAS roster due to non-compliance with CEU requirements; or
- Were previously accepted into the LAS Certification Program but did not complete it without demonstrating good cause.

Post-Certification Requirements

Scholarship recipients must:

- Successfully complete the LAS Certification Program.
- Actively serve in the LAS capacity within their court or agency.
- Complete **four (4) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) annually** to maintain certification in good standing.

Final Determination

The **AOC Language Access Services (LAS) Program** makes the final determination regarding:

- Scholarship eligibility,
- Scholarship amount (100%, 50%, or none),
- Program acceptance.

All decisions are based on program criteria, statewide language access needs, and equity considerations.