S-1223.2

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5051**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Wellman, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Keiser, Kuderer, Nobles, Pedersen, Rolfes, Saldaña, Warnick, and C. Wilson)

AN ACT Relating to language understanding of documents used in dissolution proceedings; and adding new sections to chapter 26.09 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 26.09 RCW to read as follows:

In any matter brought pursuant to domestic relations proceedings under this chapter:

(1) A court must provide translated standard forms to a limited English proficiency party or a deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing party when the party requests translated standard forms, or when the court finds good cause to provide the party translated standard forms. The court must provide translated standard forms pursuant to this subsection at no cost to the party.

(2) A court may order sight translation of standard forms to a limited English proficiency party or a deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing party when the court finds good cause to require sight translation of standard forms. The interpreter appointed for this purpose for a person with limited English proficiency must be an interpreter certified or registered by the administrative office of the courts pursuant to chapter 2.43 RCW or a qualified interpreter registered by the administrative office of the courts in a noncertified language, or where the necessary language is not certified or registered, the interpreter must be qualified by the judicial officer pursuant to chapter 2.43 RCW. In the event the party who is deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing relies on any form of a signed language, the interpreter appointed for this purpose must be an interpreter appointed pursuant to chapter 2.42 RCW. An interpreter appointed pursuant to this subsection must be provided at no cost to the party.

(3) A court must give special consideration on whether good cause exists to order a sight translation of standard forms pursuant to subsection (2) of this section in matters involving the creation of a permanent parenting plan under RCW 26.09.184.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 26.09 RCW to read as follows:

(1) By July 1, 2024, the administrative office of the courts shall:

(a) Develop and distribute standard forms for petitions and orders issued under this chapter, which must be made available online to view and download at no cost;

(b) Develop and distribute information regarding domestic relations proceedings under this chapter, which must be made available online to view and download at no cost. The information must include an explanation of how a judgment or order may be vacated or modified pursuant to RCW 4.72.010(4);

(c) Determine the significant non-English-speaking or limited English-speaking populations in the state. The administrative office of the courts shall then arrange for translation of the standard forms and information required by this section into the languages spoken by at least the top five significant non-English-speaking or limited English-speaking populations, and shall distribute a master copy of the translated standard forms and information to all superior court clerks, superior courts, and to the Washington supreme court's interpreter commission. Such materials must be updated and distributed if needed due to relevant changes in the law.

(2) All superior court clerks' offices shall make available the standard forms and information required under this section.

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