

Translations Quick Guide

State Voters' Pamphlet



Secretary of State

Elections Division Rev. 7/2026

Translations Quick Guide

The Elections Division publishes a State Voters' Pamphlet for each Primary and General Election, as well as for any statewide special election. One copy is mailed to every household in the state. In addition, the Division also produces abbreviated online, [translated pamphlets](#) in the state's [most commonly spoken languages](#), [ORS 251.167](#), [ORS 251.170](#). Candidates running for federal or statewide offices, filers of arguments in support of or in opposition to a state measure, the Legislature, and political parties (in General Elections) may submit their *own* professional translations of their English statement or argument filing for inclusion in the abbreviated online, translated pamphlet.

This Guide is a supplement to the [State Voters' Pamphlet Manual](#) and the [ORESTAR User's Manual: Voters' Pamphlet Filing](#), offering additional information about translations best practices and considerations for eligible filers.

Table of Contents

Translations Quick Guide.....	1
Best Practices for Translations	2
Electronic Submission of Translations & Formatting	3
Languages of Translations	3
Translated Candidate Statements	4
Translated Measure Arguments	5
Translated Arguments in Support of Legislative Referral	6
Translated Political Party Statements	6
Frequently Asked Questions.....	7
Help.....	8

Best Practices for Translations

Submitted translations must be consistent with the meaning of the original English version as required by [ORS 251.170\(4\)\(a\)](#). The Elections Division highly recommends filers work with professional translators and provide translators with translated [Secretary of State Election Glossaries](#) and the [Secretary of State Translation Style Guide](#) to ensure translations meet requirements. Translations in the abbreviated online translated State Voters' Pamphlet will include a disclaimer that the filer provided the translation, not the Secretary of State.

Highest Quality

Poor quality translations which distort intended meaning, include grammatical errors, and read like machine translation may negatively influence voters' perceptions of a campaign, misunderstandings, or may result in a translation being excluded from the voters' pamphlet.

Translations are reviewed for compliance with [ORS 251.049](#), [251.055](#), [251.085](#), [ORS 251.087](#), [251.170](#), and [251.260](#), as applicable. When issues are allowed by law to be corrected after the filing date, the Elections Division will notify the filer, identify the necessary correction(s), and provide instructions for re-submission. The deadline to file corrected translations will be provided by the Elections Division. Corrected translations must be submitted as a PDF by email to: orestar-support.sos@sos.oregon.gov. If required compliance changes are not corrected by the deadline, the translation will be excluded from the pamphlet.

Professional translators have specialized skills, knowledge, and credentials including:

- ✓ years of experience;
- ✓ higher education and relevant educational backgrounds in one or more languages;
- ✓ academic linguistic expertise for the correct use of grammar, terminology, word flow (syntax), style, and tone (register);
- ✓ lived, cultural expertise in more than one culture;
- ✓ college level vocabulary in two or more written languages;
- ✓ translation credentials: certifications, licenses, or degrees;
- ✓ licensure/certification continuing education requirements;
- ✓ professional association membership(s); and
- ✓ professional work references.

Professional translators must abide by a professional code of conduct and ethics. Translators also frequently specialize in subject matter, for example, elections, law, science, or business.

ex Professional Translators' Codes of Ethics

- American Translator Association (ATA) [Code of Ethics](#)
- Oregon Society of Translators and Interpreters (OSTI) [Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility](#)
- National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) [Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities](#).
- Institute of Translation and Interpreting [ITI Code of Professional Conduct](#).

Electronic Submission of Translations & Formatting

ORS 251.014

All translations must be filed electronically according to timelines established by rules and law, in the [State Voters' Pamphlet Manual](#) and the [ORESTAR User's Manual](#). Translations must be submitted in PDF file format and maintain the English version's formatting. Translators should never omit information in translation nor add anything such as line numbers, translator's name or certifications, new formatting, or the original English text in a bilingual format.

Corrected translations must be submitted as a PDF by email to: orestar-support.sos@sos.oregon.gov.

Languages of Translations

ORS 251.167 and 251.170

The list of languages for translations of the State Voters' Pamphlet is determined by data analysis of the [American Community Survey](#), United States Census Bureau. The Elections Division uses the estimated number of limited English proficient speakers who self-evaluate their ability to speak English as "less than very well". The inclusion of county languages beyond the most commonly spoken state languages requires at least 300 speakers of the language in a county. The formulas to determine the lists of languages for translated candidate statements, arguments, and political party statements are provided in [ORS 251.167](#) and [ORS 251.170](#).

Translated Candidate Statements

ORS 251.167 and 251.170

Any federal or statewide candidate may file their *own* professional translations of their English statement for the abbreviated online translated pamphlet. The languages of translation include the ten **most commonly spoken languages in Oregon** or of any **county** the office represents.

Office	Languages of Translations
• US President • US Vice President • US Senator • Governor • Secretary of State • State Treasurer • Attorney General • Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries • Judge of the Supreme Court • Judge of the Court of Appeals • Judge of the Tax Court	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), Farsi, French, German, Iu Mien, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Nepali, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Ukrainian, Vietnamese

Office	Languages of Translations
US House Representative 1 st District	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), Farsi, German, Iu Mien, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Nepali, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
US House Representative 2 nd District	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), French, German, Japanese, Korean, Marshallese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
US House Representative 3 rd District	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), German, Iu Mien, Japanese, Korean, Nepali, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
US House Representative 4 th District	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), German, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese

US House Representative 5 th District	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), French, German, Iu Mien, Japanese, Korean, Marshallese, Nepali, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
US House Representative 6 th District	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), Farsi, German, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Vietnamese

Candidate Statement Translation Requirements

- ✓ Candidates or their agents will bear the cost of preparing professional translations of English statements.
- ✓ Translations do not have a maximum word count.
- ✓ Translated statements must be consistent with the meaning of the English version ([ORS 251.170\(4\)\(a\)](#)).
- ✓ The Elections Division will add a disclaimer that the filer provided the translation.
- ✓ Translations must be submitted via ORESTAR in PDF file format. Instructions are available in the [ORESTAR User's Manual](#) available at www.oregonvotes.gov.

Translated Measure Arguments

[ORS 251.167 and 251.170](#)

Any argument filer may submit their *own* professional translations of their English argument for the abbreviated online, translated pamphlet. The languages of translation include the [ten most commonly spoken languages](#) in Oregon or of [any county](#) in which the measure will be voted on. Translated arguments must be consistent with the meaning of the English version as required by [ORS 251.170\(4\)\(a\)](#).

Jurisdiction	Languages of Translation
Statewide	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), Farsi, French, German, Iu Mien, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Nepali, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Ukrainian, Vietnamese
A state measure that is less than statewide	Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), German, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, Vietnamese and any of the ten most commonly spoken languages in any county which will vote on the measure.

Measure Argument Translation Requirements

- ✓ Argument filers will bear the cost of preparing professional translations.
- ✓ Translations do not have a maximum word count.
- ✓ Translated statements must be consistent with the meaning of the English version (ORS 251.170(4)(a)).
- ✓ The Elections Division will add a disclaimer that the filer provided the translation.
- ✓ Translations must be submitted via ORESTAR in PDF file format. Instructions are available in the ORESTAR User's Manual at www.oregonvotes.gov.

Translated Arguments in Support of Legislative Referral

ORS 251.167 and 251.170

The Legislature may submit their own professional translation of arguments in support of legislatively referred measures for the abbreviated online, translated pamphlet.

Languages of translation include the [most commonly spoken languages in the state](#) and each [county](#):

Arabic, Chinese (Simplified & Traditional characters), Farsi, French, German,
Iu Mien, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Marshallese, Nepali, Russian,
Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese.

Submitted translations must be consistent with the meaning of the original English version as required by ORS 251.170(4)(a). The Elections Division will add a disclaimer that the Legislature provided the translations.

Translated Political Party Statements

ORS 251.167 and 251.170

Political parties may submit their *own* professional translations of their English political party statement for the General Election abbreviated online, translated pamphlet in the [five most commonly spoken languages](#) in Oregon.

Political Party Translation Requirements

- ✓ The languages of translation include Chinese (Simplified and Traditional characters), Korean, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.
- ✓ Political parties will bear the cost of preparing professional translations.
- ✓ Translations do not have a maximum word count.
- ✓ Translated statements must be consistent with the meaning of the English as required by (ORS 251.170(4)(a)).
- ✓ The Elections Division will add a disclaimer that the filer provided the translation.
- ✓ Translations must be submitted via ORESTAR in PDF file format. Instructions are available in the ORESTAR User's Manual: Voters' Pamphlet Filing at www.oregonvotes.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How can I find a professional translator?

- ✓ First, hire a translator, not an interpreter. Translation is the process of transferring written text accurately from one language into another. An interpreter is a person who processes a spoken message in one language and renders it into another spoken language. The skill sets for these tasks are distinct.
- ✓ Find qualified professionals via professional translation associations' web pages such as the Oregon Society of Translator and Interpreters [membership directory](#) or the American Translator Association's [member directory](#).
- ✓ Conduct an internet search for professional freelance translators or translation agencies.
- ✓ Hire the most qualified translator without concern for geography. The nature of translation work and the ability to exchange files electronically allows filers to work with credentialed translators located anywhere in the world.

Q. What should I know when hiring a translator?

- ✓ After interviewing to confirm a translator's credentials and experience, be prepared to discuss pricing, deadlines, and file transfer methods. The ATA's [Client Assistance](#) web pages offer resources for consumers working with translators.
- ✓ Professional translators work in peer teams to translate, edit, and proofread, sometimes with 3rd party reviewers. The filer is responsible for ensuring that translations are consistent in meaning with the original version ([ORS 251.170\(4\)\(a\)](#)). All submitted translations will include a disclaimer that the filer provided the translation.

Q. How can I ensure my translations are compliant with statutory requirements?

- ✓ Hire a professional with credentials and experience and work in teams of translators, editors, and proofreaders.
- ✓ Provide your translator with the Secretary of State's [translated Elections Glossaries](#), available in 18 languages.
- ✓ Provide your translator with the Secretary of State's [Translation Style Guide](#).

Q. What are translated [Elections Glossaries](#) and [Style Guides](#)?

These are translator resources which establish translation standards for elections information in the state, regardless of who translated materials. There may be acceptable style differences, but voters benefit from having translations which express U.S. elections terminology in a uniform way through the use of Secretary of State resources.

Q. Can a bilingual friend prepare my translated statement?

This practice is not recommended. Knowing a second language is a valuable skill, but it does not guarantee subject matter expertise or the translation skills set to translate complex voters' pamphlet information, potentially resulting in errors or changed meaning.

Q. Can I use artificial intelligence (AI) to do translations?

- ✓ This practice is not recommended. Translation technology lacks human editing to ensure accuracy in complex documents. The absence of contextual information and human editing may lead to unintentional, offensive, or embarrassing errors.
- ✓ More information about machine translation is available on the American Translators Association's [Client Assistance](#) web pages.
- ✓ Some examples of errors as a result of machine translation:
 - "Operations are funded through a property tax base and local option levy" becomes "Surgeries are funded through a property tax base and local option levy."
 - "Rural fire protection district" becomes "Arson fire district."

Help

If you have any questions about the material covered in this guide or need further help, please contact:

Elections Division
255 Capitol St. NE, Suite 126
Salem, OR 97310

 **503 986 1518**
fax 503 373 7414

 elections.sos@sos.oregon.gov
 www.oregonvotes.gov

 **1 866 673 8683**
se habla español

Translations
tac.info@sos.oregon.gov

TTY 1 800 735 2900
for the hearing impaired