

# Enhancing Language Access in Rural Communities

The Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence is a national resource center on domestic violence, sexual violence, trafficking, and other forms of gender-based violence in Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities.

The Interpretation Technical Assistance & Resource Center (ITARC) works to improve systems responses to LEP victims by providing technical assistance and training on the development and implementation of language accessible services.

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# Objectives:

- Define **meaningful language access as a critical service for victims/survivors of crime.**
- Identify the **benefits, and potential drawbacks,** of additional language access devices.
- Identify **promising practices and strategies to enhance language access** in rural communities.



**Use of Language and Terminology**



**Dialogue & Conversation**



**Dynamic Learning Space**



**Content Advisory**



**What is language access?**

**Who are individuals with limited English proficiency or LEP?**

**Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing Individuals?**

**What is the difference between interpretation and translation?**



- 350+ (Globally: 7000 languages spoken)
- 250,000 – 500,000 (or 1%) people of all ages in the US use ASL to communicate as their native language.



# **Providing Meaningful Language Access to Victims of Crime**



**How do barriers  
to language access  
impact a crime  
victim's rights?**





# Language Access Issues in Rural Communities

- What are some unique language access issues for survivors in rural communities?
- What's it like to access interpreters and translators?
- What could make language access easier?

# What is Meaningful Access?

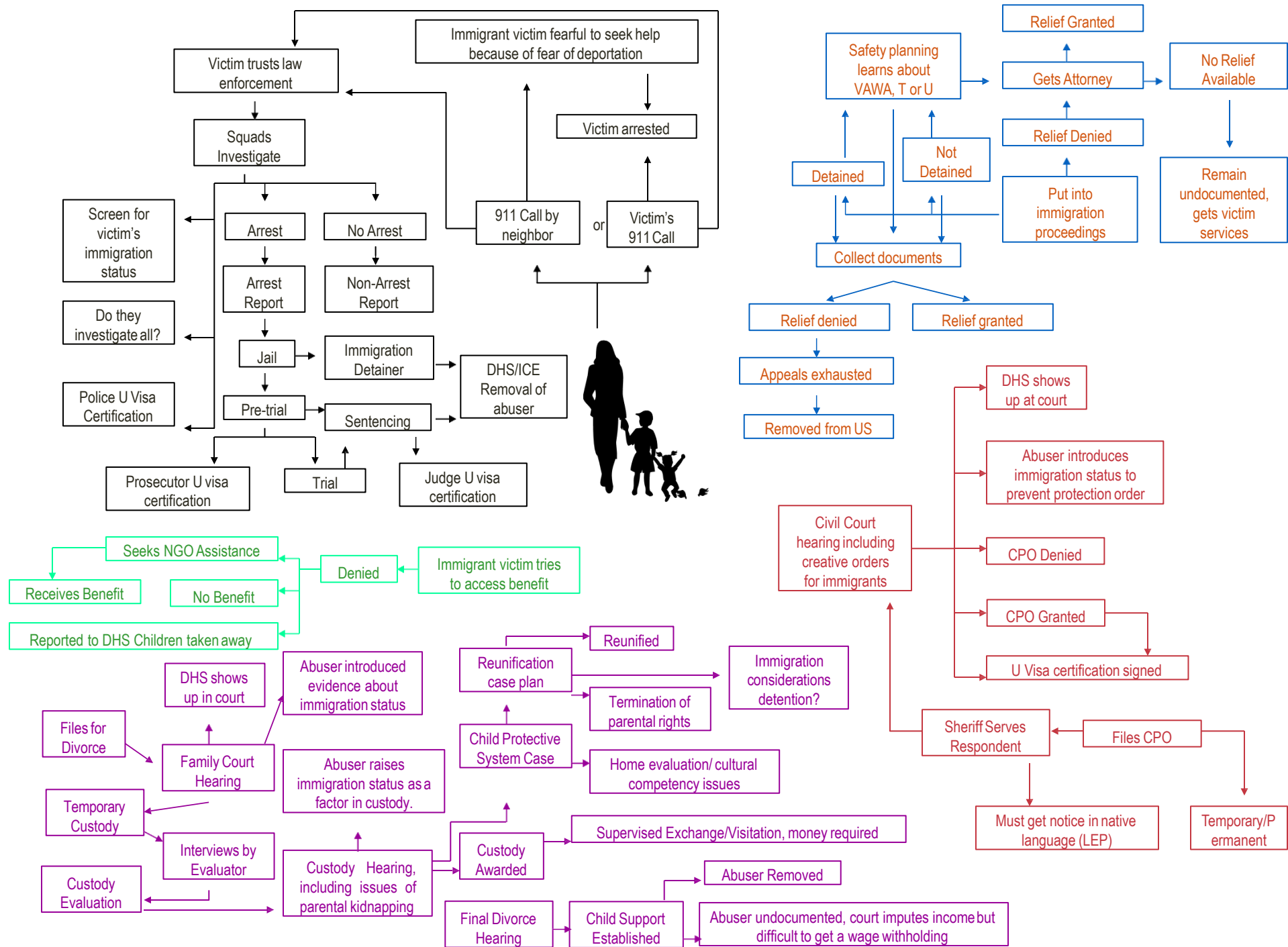
- “Meaningful access” is defined in the US Department of Justice’s own Language Access Plan as:
  - accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the LEP individual.
  - access that is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior as compared to programs or activities provided to English-proficient individuals.

# Tools to Provide Meaningful Access

BILINGUAL STAFF	INTERPRETING	TRANSLATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fluent in English and native Language</li><li>• Not a conduit or neutral party</li><li>• No government standard, but recommends assessment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spoken language from one language to another</li><li>• Training</li><li>• Neutral party</li><li>• Fluency in English and Native language</li><li>• Conduit to communicate</li><li>• In-person</li><li>• Telephonic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written text converted from one language to another</li><li>• No DOJ standard for Translation</li><li>• Vital documents</li></ul>



# **Utilizing Technology to Expand Language Access**



# The Goal: a Seamless Advocacy Experience

Is the technology you use creating barriers to access or breaking them down?

Are individuals able to access information easily and efficiently in the language they prefer, or are they faced with a frustrating experience due to complicated processes?

Is language access provided in a way that is victim-centered?

(McMahon, 2023)

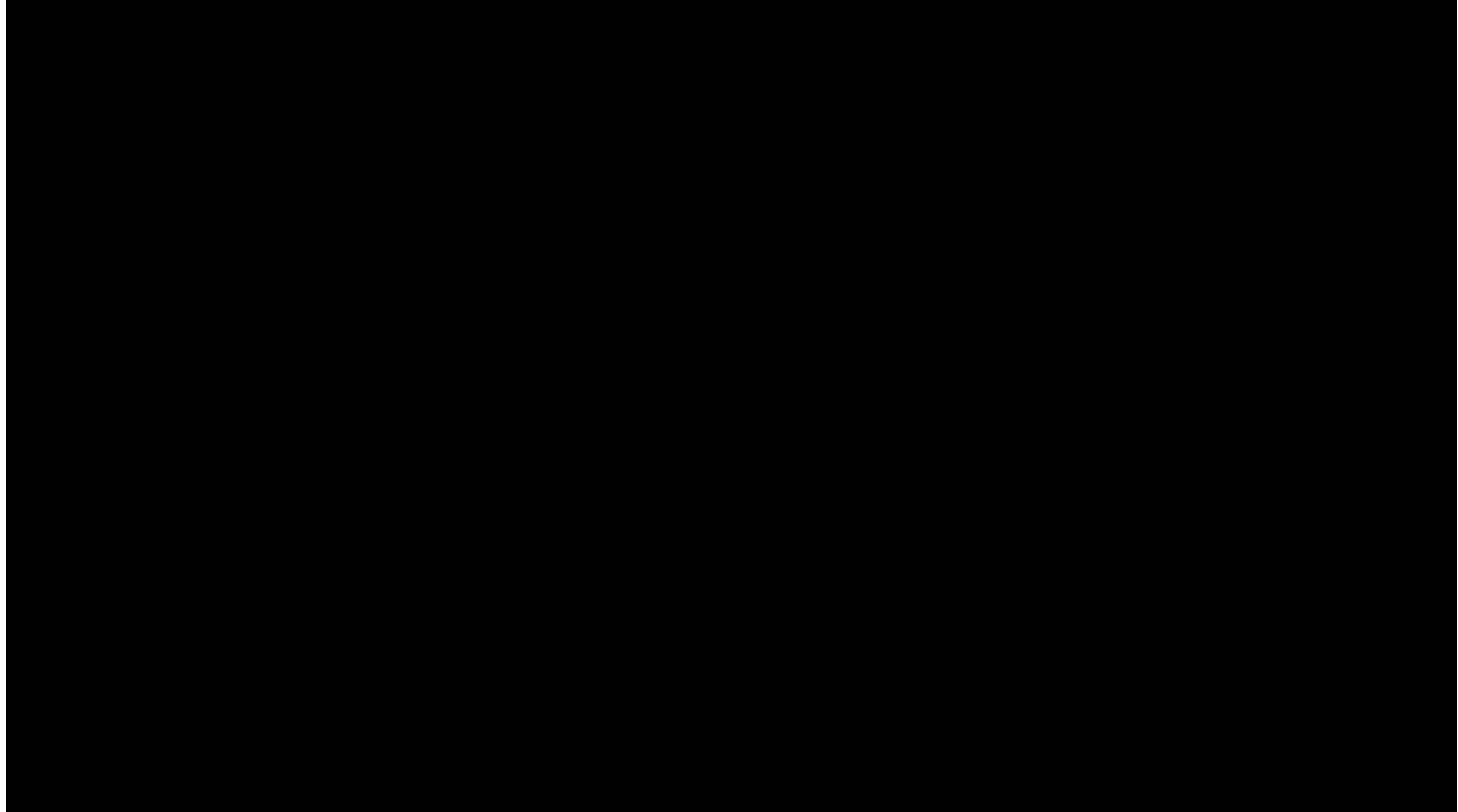
# Integrate the Best Interpreting Solutions

- On-site Interpreting (OSI)
- Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)
- Over-the-Phone Interpreting (OPI)
- Remote Simultaneous Interpreting (RSI)

# Video Relay Service (VRS)



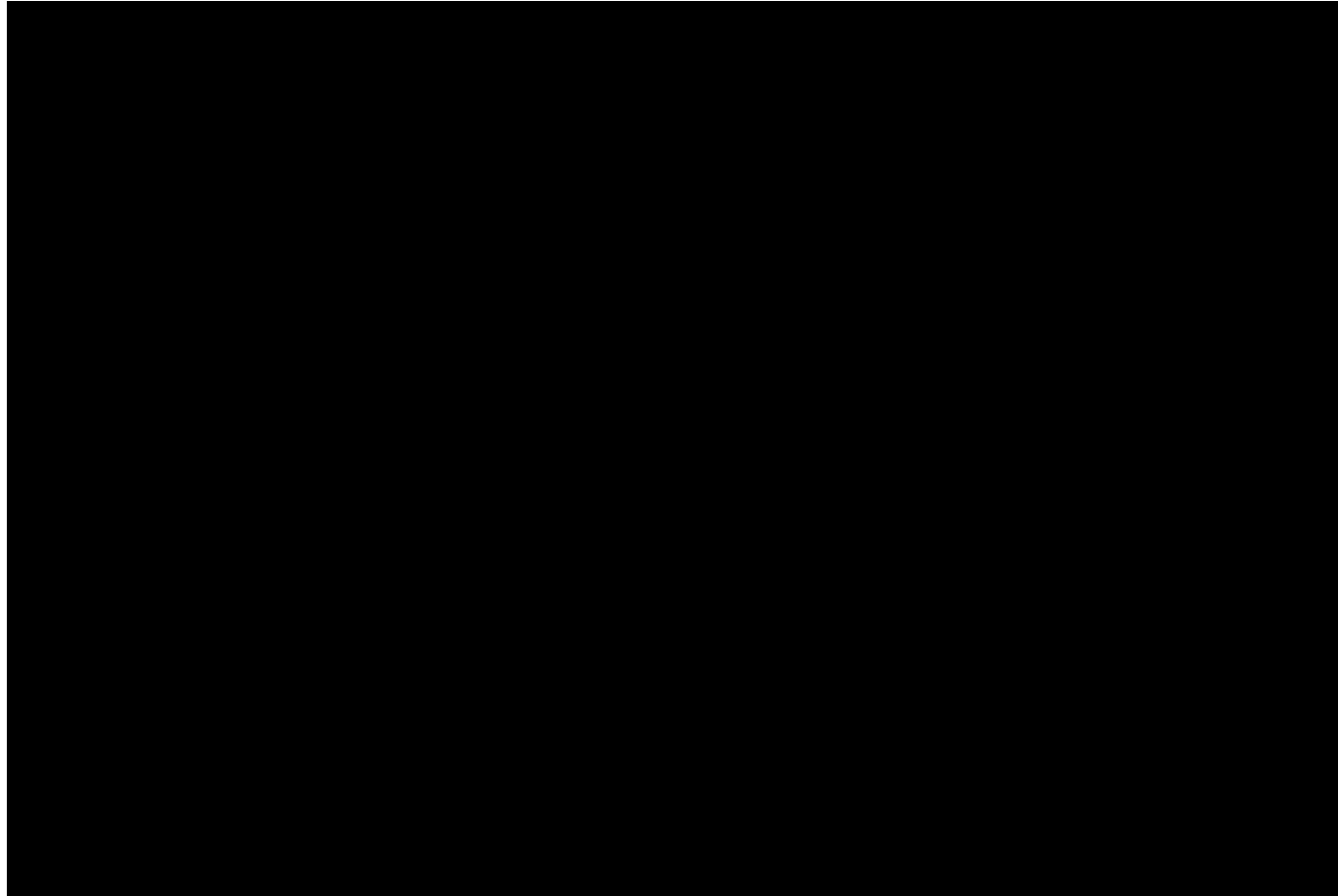
Content Advisory



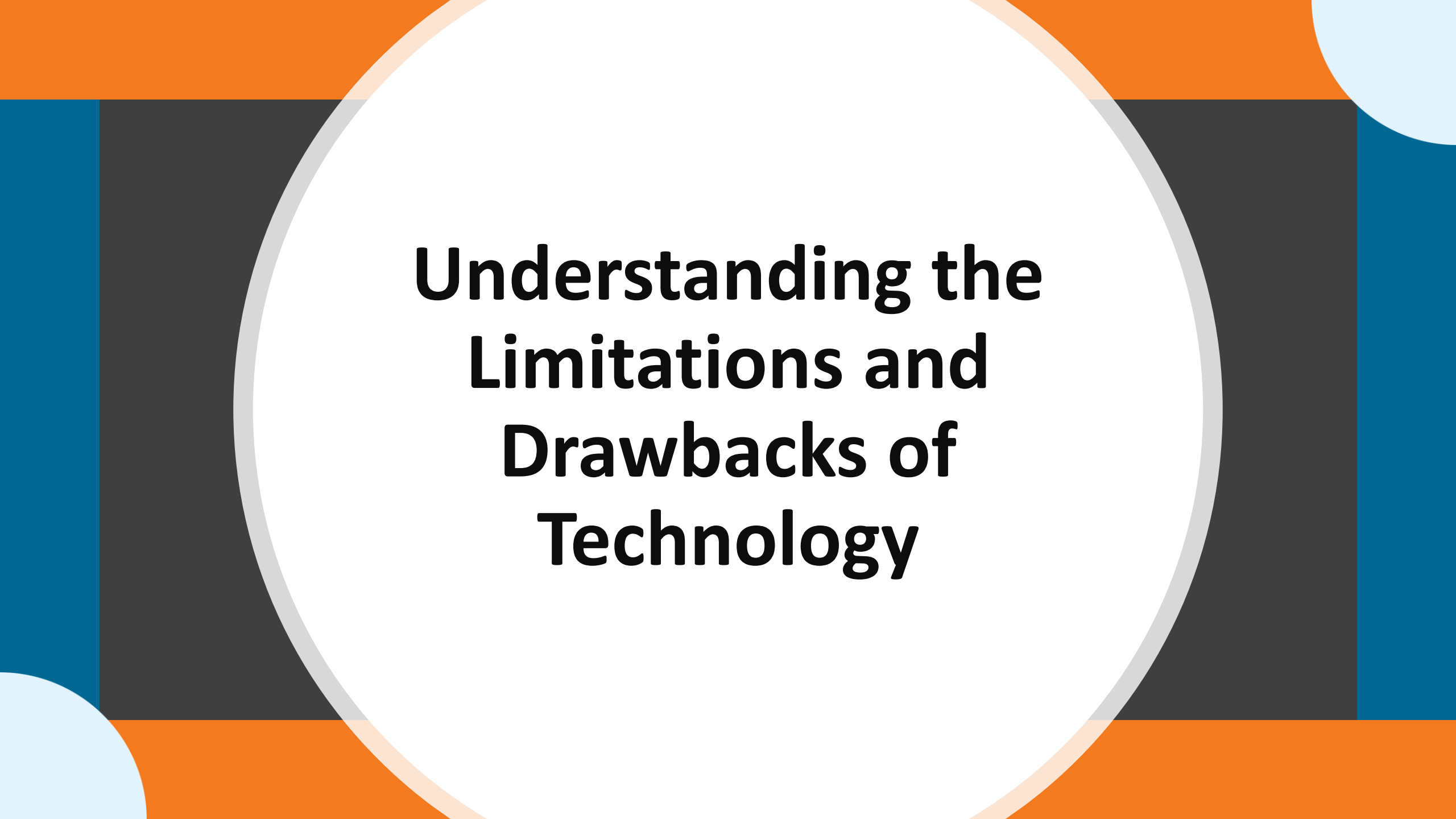
Translating Justice Achieving Language Access for Crime Victims Module 6: Providing a Bridge Between Languages: Translation, Technology, and Other Assistive Language Needs.



# Telephonic interpreting



Translating Justice Achieving Language Access for Crime Victims Module 6: Providing a Bridge Between Languages: Translation, Technology, and Other Assistive Language Needs.



# **Understanding the Limitations and Drawbacks of Technology**



# Limitations and Drawbacks

## Video Remote Interpreting:

Does not work for all Deaf consumers – due to:

- visual limitations
- cognitive difficulties or impairments
- communication idiosyncrasies that VRI interpreters are not familiar with
- Many rural/remote areas are not adequately equipped with high-speed, broadband infrastructure for VRI service provision to Deaf and LEP consumers
- Technology can go wrong!

Translating Justice Achieving Language Access for Crime Victims Module 6: Providing a Bridge Between Languages: Translation, Technology, and Other Assistive Language Needs.



# Limitations and Drawbacks

## VRS:

- Regulated by the Federal Communications Commission
- FCC limits the use of the free service to phone calls
- Requires all Deaf and hearing participants to be in separate locations
- Not intended to replace in-person interpreting services



# Limitations and Drawbacks

## **CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) or Speech-to-Text Captioning**

- Pool of providers is limited
- Need teleconferencing access
- May need information in advance; requires more planning



# Limitations and Drawbacks

## Telephonic interpreting

- Quality control
- Potential for “talking over”
- Lack of consistency – no relationship-building
- Can feel impersonal – phone = barrier



# Limitations and Drawbacks

## DeafBlind Communicator

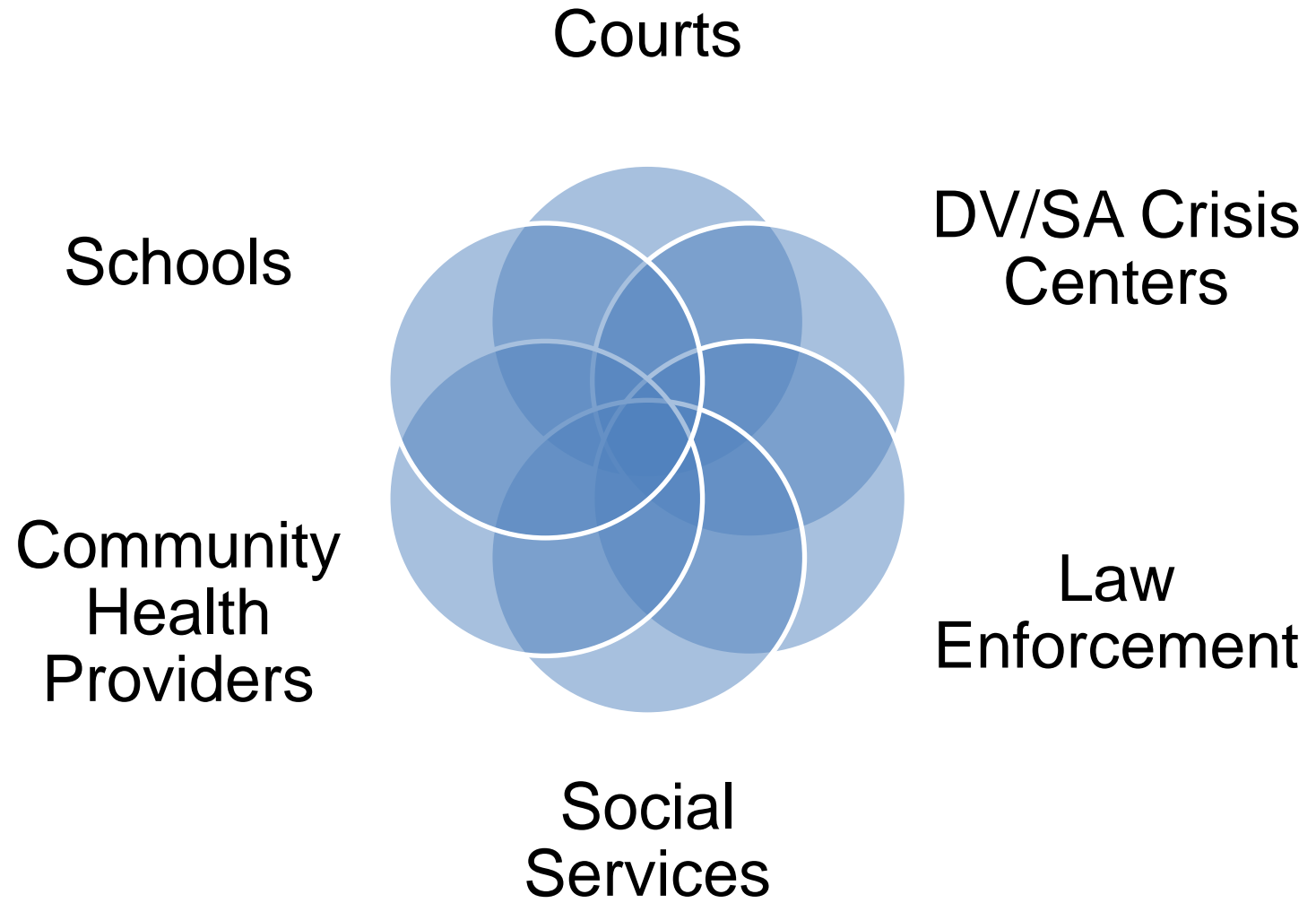
- Unfamiliarity
- Unease



# When Not to Use Technology

- Client comfort
- User of sign language other than ASL
- Intimidation – not a “techie”
- Lack of quality
- Disability
- Privacy concerns – where is the technology placed
- Complexity of the situation
- User of manual communication







# Discussion and thoughts to consider

- What technology do you feel you could use in your agency?
- What are some pitfalls or obstacles to their use that you see in your agency?
- If you have assistive devices, do people in your agency know how to use it?
- Are they maintained?
- Is there training on these devices?



# Preparing for Language Access

Agency Quality Assurance  
Client Evaluation  
Organizational Plan

Translating Justice Achieving Language Access for Crime Victims Module 6: Providing a Bridge Between Languages: Translation, Technology, and Other Assistive Language Needs.

# Staying Victim centered

- Safety
- Empowerment
- Choice
- Trauma-informed
- **Communicative autonomy**



Source Gulf Coast JFCS - Refugee Services, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKV7Tnhn3-c&t=92s>

# The goals are to:



## **Provide Meaningful Access**

Timely and effective!



## **Foster Equity**



## **Encourage Full Participation**

# Why should we care?

- Title VI, Civil Rights Act
- Executive Order 13166
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Violence Against Women Act
- Victims of Crime Act
- Crime Victims' Bill of Rights

# Why provide Meaningful Language Access that is Trauma-Informed?

**More likely to  
seek out services**

**Enhances safety**

**Appreciate and  
feel more  
supported**







# Evaluation QR Code



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