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Probate and Family Court Introduces Bilingual Short Form Financial Statement

In response to the high percentage of bilingual, self-represented litigants in many of its 14 divisions, the Probate and Family Court has introduced Spanish and Portuguese versions of its Short Form Financial Statement (CJD-301s), one of the most widely used Probate and Family Court forms.

The Court partnered with the Trial Court's Access to Justice Initiative and the Office of Court Interpreter Services to develop this more accessible form. Spanish and Portuguese together represent 86 percent of the interpretation needs of court users across Massachusetts. The Forms Task Force of the Access to Justice Initiative will continue to prioritize additional court forms for translation, and identify other opportunities to make forms more accessible to the public.

The Short Form Financial Statement (CJD-301s) is used by plaintiffs, defendants or petitioners in cases such as divorce, child support, paternity, modification and contempt, when annual income is less than \$75,000.

The revised financial statement includes English text and translated text on the same form. All information entered on the form by court users must be completed in English in order for the form to be accepted by the Court, as detailed in the separate instructions provided to enable completion of the form.

The forms are posted on the Internet at the address below and must be printed with black ink on pink paper, pursuant to Uniform Probate Court Practice XXXIII. The online version is currently available in a "print only" format, while a "fillable" version is being developed for posting in the near future.

Link to revised Short Form Financial Statement (CJD-301s):

<http://www.mass.gov/courts/courtsandjudges/courts/probateandfamilycourt/forms.html>

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