

Tip Sheet

Developing a Language Access Plan for Your Agency

Guidelines

If your organization receives federal funds, either directly or indirectly, your agency is required to provide meaningful access to limited-English proficient individuals (this does not mean hiring staff for every conceivable language spoken by your clients).

1. Designate a language access coordinator within your organization.
2. Familiarize yourself with Title VI, Executive Order 13166, and your state language access laws.
3. Use the DOJ's four-factor assessment to determine what you are responsible for under Title VI:
 - a. Number or proportion of persons with Limited English proficiency (LEP) in the eligible service population.
 - b. Frequency with which these LEP persons come into contact with your program.
 - c. Importance of the benefit or service.
 - d. The resources available.
4. Identify the languages that will be included in the agency's language access plan and how the agency will provide interpretation services to LEP clients.
5. Develop an outreach plan to notify LEP persons that services are available.
6. Integrate your agency's language access policies and procedures into the agency's regular policies and procedures manual.
7. Implement and train staff about language access advocacy and agency protocols on:
 - a. Responding to LEP callers and in-person contacts.
 - b. Providing LEP clients with tools (such as "I speak..." cards) that assist them in asserting their right to language access in the courts and other public agencies.
 - c. Responding to requests that bilingual advocates interpret by attempting to decline and disclosing their conflict of interest on record.
 - d. Working with interpreters, including basic knowledge about interpretation: types, modes, code of ethics, qualifications and roles.
 - e. Identifying and responding to poor, incorrect or biased interpretation.
 - f. Federal laws: Title VI and Executive Order 13166.
 - g. State laws on language access.

8. Evaluate plan's effectiveness regularly to ensure it meets the needs of LEP persons.
9. Monitor demographic changes and immigration/refugee resettlement patterns to identify new LEP populations your agency will need to serve.

Resources

1. Interpretation Technical Assistance & Resource Center

ITARC provides technical assistance and training on: language access planning; interpretation best practices and skills building; and meeting the needs of culturally diverse victims/survivors with limited English proficiency.

<http://apiidv.org/organizing/interpretation.php>

2. Limited English Proficiency: A Federal Interagency Website

A clearinghouse that provides information, tools and technical assistance on language access for federal agencies, recipients of federal funds, users of federal y funded services, and stakeholders.

www.lep.gov

3. Federal Agency LEP Guidance for Recipients

Federal agency guidance to recipients of federal financial assistance explaining recipient's obligation to provide meaningful language access to their programs and services.

www.lep.gov/guidance/guidance_index.html

4. Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs

Guidance and tools developed by the Federal Coordination and Compliance Section, Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, on creating and implementing a language access plan.

5. American Bar Association's Commission on Domestic Violence

Materials on integrating interpretation in civil representation of domestic and sexual violence victims.

www.abanet.org/domviol/institute/integration_of_interpreters.html

6. Legal Services Corporation

Guidance to LSC programs on training, procedures and policies.

www.lsc.gov



*Asian Pacific Institute on
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Resource Center*

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