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Countywide Language Access Departmental Language Access Plan

Department of Youth Development

Effective Dates: 7/1/2025

DYD DLAP contact: dstevenson@dyd.lacounty.gov

Department Mission

The mission of the Department of Youth Development is to support the development of young people in Los Angeles County by coordinating and building capacity for a wide range of youth development services, opportunities, supports, and other care-first efforts with a goal of equitably reducing youth justice system involvement.

Department Priority Languages

Our data shows that our program participants are primarily young people between the ages of 12-26 years old that live in communities across Los Angeles County and speak English as their primary language. Our department priority languages include:

- Spanish, Armenian; Khmer/Cambodian; Farsi; Korean; Russian; Tagalog; Vietnamese

DEPARTMENT’S LANGUAGE ACCESS POLICY

General Policy Statement

- Our department is currently developing a Departmental Language Access Plan (DLAP) that will ensure information for access to language assistance services to speakers of Languages Other Than English (“LOTE speakers”). The policy will be put in place once the plan is established. Currently, members of the public can receive language assistance from DYD in the following ways: print and digital materials; at community engagement events; through interactions with our staff and our contracted providers who offer direct services

Scope of Policy

- The DLAP will serve as a central resource of information for DYD personnel, contractors, customers, and the public to ensure equitable, timely, and quality language assistance services for persons with LOTE.

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Interpretation: Rendering spoken or signed language into another language while maintaining the meaning and tone of the language.

Language Access: The provision of free language assistance to LOTE speakers in their preferred language, including through interpretation and translation services, to help enable reasonable access to and an opportunity to fully participate in the services, resources, and programs administered by the County.

Language Access Complaint: Common scenarios include but are not limited to the availability of language services not communicated to the public, when language services were not provided when requested, and when the quality of language services did not meet the needs of the LOTE speaker.

Non-English (NE) or Limited English Proficient (LEP): Refers to persons whose preferred language is non-English, do not speak English and/or have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English, and interpretation or translation services must be used to effectively communicate program information and requirements. Sign language is subject to this definition.

Preferred Language: The primary language in which an individual prefers to read, write, and speak.

Sight Translation: Refers to reading a text out loud in a different language (i.e., oral interpretation of a document) without changing the meaning based on a visual review of the original text document.

Speaker of a Language Other Than English ("LOTE"): Also known as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or English Language Learner (ELL), this designation refers to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who do not read, write, or speak English.

Translation: Rendering written communication into another language while preserving meaning.

Vital Documents: Documents that affect enrollment, continued participation, or termination from a County program, benefit, or service.

PROCEDURES

Points of Contact	Level of Language Assistance Required	Available Language Assistance Resources	Procedures for Accessing Language Assistance Resources
Initial inquiry for Youth Development	Webpage translation.	Qualified LA County Vendor or use of interpretation	Electronic record keeping of online inquiry and preferred language

Services (online)		technology.	selected by potential clients. Utilize interpretation technology.
Community Based Organizations	Promotional material printed in different languages.	Qualified LA County Vendor or use of interpretation technology and/or sub-contracted agreements to provide services.	Electronic record keeping of online inquiry and preferred language selected by potential clients. OR Schedule qualified bilingual vendor to assist with service delivery.
Community Outreach at Public Events	Promotional material printed in different languages. In person translation services.	Interpretation technology for translating documents for printing and onsite at event for bilingual assistance.	Schedule qualified bilingual staff or vendor for onsite translations services. Utilize interpretation technology.
DYD hosted Public Events	Interpretation services for translating activities and services. Translated printed materials.	Qualified bilingual staff or LA County Vendor for translating documents for printing and onsite at event for bilingual assistance.	Provide area for event registration form to select preferred language. Schedule qualified bilingual staff or vendor for onsite translations services.
Community Outreach on public school campuses	Interpretation services for translating activities and services. Translated printed materials based off school language demographic.	Qualified bilingual staff or LA County Vendor for translating documents for printing and onsite at event for bilingual assistance.	Advance screening of school preferred language demographic before outreach event date. Schedule qualified bilingual staff or vendor for onsite translations services.
Youth and Family Engagement in DYD's Continuum of Services	Materials and translation.	Interpretation support to service providers and partners.	Advance screening of school preferred language and schedule qualified bilingual vendor to assist with service delivery.

Identifying Preferred Languages

To effectively address the needs of LOTE speakers, our department will implement a culturally responsive and systematic approach to identify preferred languages for communication and provide training to staff to handle these interactions appropriately. In addition, the department will work with its contractors and/or community-based organizations to ensure clients are receiving

translation services from the DYD community partners.

- **Consistent Inquiry:** During every encounter, regardless of perceived English proficiency, staff will consistently ask each individual two key questions:
 - "What is your preferred language for written communication?"
 - "What is your preferred language for spoken communication?"
- **Avoiding Assumptions:** Staff will be trained to avoid making assumptions about an individual's language needs based on their perceived spoken English proficiency. Every individual will be asked about their language preferences to ensure inclusivity and accuracy.
- **Documentation:** Responses to the language preference questions will be carefully documented. This documentation will be used to inform demographic analysis, plan language assistance services, and allocate resources effectively.

DYD staff will leverage County vendor services and our community-based partner agencies to offer appropriate and meaningful language support for less commonly spoken languages.

Vital documents

- 1) Consent forms.
- 2) Complaint forms.
- 3) Notices of rights.
- 4) Applications to participate in programs or activities or to receive benefits or services.
- 5) Instructions on how to complete applications.
- 6) Signs and posters.

Notification of Language Assistance

The Department was recently established on July 1, 2022, and has yet to develop a system that notifies clients of the availability of language assistance services. Our department is currently developing a plan to ensure the information regarding access to language services will be disseminated to the public and clients. The following methods of notification that will be used are as follows:

- DYD will explore options to incorporate website videos that will provide closed captioning in the viewers' selected language.
- DYD will explore options to incorporate Electronic Bulletin boards and posters in its public-facing office that will promote the availability of language access services.

- DYD will display posters in its public-facing office that will be printed in one or more priority languages.
- DYD will display material during public events.

Monitoring Language Assistance Effectiveness

Evaluation of Language Assistance

As a newly established Department, we plan to develop a policy for certifying our bilingual staff and qualifying outside language service providers to perform services for the Department. Certification for department bilingual staff may include required formal training. The beginning stages of the Department Language Access Plan will consist of ongoing monitoring of requested preference language and in-person language assistance inquiries. The Department is committed to adapting to our client and community linguistic needs.

Complaint Process

Our department is dedicated to ensuring language accessibility for all clients. We will create and execute a comprehensive procedure to address language access complaints and foster continuous improvement.

Accessible Webpage

- Development: An accessible link will be added to the DYD webpage to guide clients to the Language Access Complaint Form.
- Inclusion: This webpage link will be featured in all programmatic printed materials and prominently displayed on our department's website.

Public Events

- Promotion: During all DYD-hosted public events, we will display the link to the Language Access Complaint Form to ensure attendees are aware of where to submit complaints.

Submission and Monitoring

- Submission: Complaints submitted through the provided link will be directed to a designated department inbox.
- Monitoring: Assigned staff will regularly monitor this inbox to ensure prompt attention to all complaints.

Response and Resolution

- Initial Response: Designated staff will respond to complaints within three (3) business days, acknowledging receipt, followed by outlining the steps to resolution.

- Ongoing Communication: Staff will maintain communication with the complainant throughout the resolution process until the issue is resolved.

Plan Adjustment

- Review and Update: Language Access Complaints will be reviewed to identify any necessary adjustments to our current Language Access Plan to better serve our clients' needs.

Implementation Summary

1. Develop and launch a link on the DYD webpage to access the Language Access complaint Form.
2. Promote the complaint form webpage and/or link on applicable materials.
3. Reference the link at DYD-hosted public events.
4. Monitor the complaint submissions through a designated inbox.
5. Respond within three (3) business days and maintain communication until resolution.
6. Adjust the Language Access Plan based on feasibility, feedback, and complaints received.

This structured approach will ensure that all language access complaints are addressed promptly and effectively, promoting continuous improvement in our services.

Training

Our department will develop and implement a Bilingual Staff Training procedure that outlines required certifications and ongoing skills-based training. The procedure and accompanying training will aim to enhance the effectiveness of bilingual staff through targeted training, regular re-certification, and potential formal certification, ensuring high-quality language assistance within the Department.

Community Outreach & Engagement

We are committed to working with community-based organizations, the public, and the organizations we contract with to identify unmet language needs, improve our multilingual strategies for better language access, and create effective outreach initiatives and content. We will update our Department Language Access Plan accordingly based on our findings.
