

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Language Assistance Plan

City of Tucson Community Services Department

Purpose/Legal Authority:

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that clients of the City of Tucson Community Services Department (CSD) have meaningful access to program information and services even though they may be limited in their English language proficiency.

This plan was developed to serve clients of the Community Services Department, prospective clients, their family members, and other interested members of the public who do not speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that allows him/her to interact effectively with CSD staff.

This policy is consistent with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons. It is also consistent with Executive Order 13166 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Definitions of terms:

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – Persons who do are not proficient in reading, writing or speaking English. Beneficiaries of our services may declare themselves to be LEP clients.

Interpretation – Oral language services – The act of listening to something in one language and orally translating it into a different language.

Translation – Written language services – The replacement of written text from one language into an equivalent written text in another language.

Identification of LEP Persons:

The Community Services Department takes into account HUD's Four Factor Analysis to assist in identifying LEP persons. The four factor analysis includes:

1. Demography – Number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service area—the greater the number or proportion of LEP persons in a language group, the more language services needed.
2. Frequency of Contact -- The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program—higher frequency requires more services.

3. Importance -- The nature and importance of a program, activity or services provided by the recipient.
4. Resources and Costs – larger recipients with larger budgets must provide a higher level of language services.

The Community Services Department will also utilize HUD's Safe Harbor guidance when deciding which languages will be translated into vital documents. These Safe Harbors apply only to translation. Oral interpretation services will be provided to clients of all language groups, regardless of the size of the language group.

Provision of Services:

The Community Services Department will utilize bilingual employees or the City's contract interpreters (currently Asturias Language Interpreters) when assisting with oral interpretation and written translation for LEP clients and other interested parties.

To date, our data gathering efforts have led us to determine that Spanish is a commonly spoken language of our client base, so the Community Services Department will provide interpretation and translation services to Spanish speakers. Additionally, notices will be posted in some of the more frequently used languages for our clients (ex. Vietnamese, Russian, Somali, etc.) The notices will offer interpretation services at no cost to the client.

The Community Services Department will utilize a variety of data sources, including Census Data for the City of Tucson and Pima County when determining the level of service to be offered to an LEP person. Other sources might include refugee service organizations and cultural clubs or groups.

The Community Services Department will poll our client base at their annual renewal period in order to gather more accurate data and serve our clients.

Generally, language groups that have 1,000 or more eligible persons in the market area will receive both oral interpretation and written translation of vital documents. For smaller language groups, the Community Services Department will provide oral interpretation as well as a translated written notice of the right to receive an oral interpretation.

Also available is the "I Speak" information, which offers assistance in a variety of languages for those clients who need speak a language other than English. The Community Services Department will use the "I Speak" information as necessary to determine a client's language needs.

Vital Documents:

In addition to various documents already translated, and in order to be compliant with the regulation, Community Services will translate various documents from all programs to include (but not limited to):

Public Housing: Dwelling Lease
Grievance Form & Policy
Eviction, Non-renewal Notices
Admissions & Continued Occupancy Plan
General Release/Privacy Act
Family Self Sufficiency Contract & Addendum
Housekeeping Standards
Drug Use Addendum
Application Form
Reasonable Accommodation Request Form

Section 8: Income Questionnaire
Housing Discrimination Form
General Release
Appointment Letters
Ten Day Letters
Termination Letters
Administrative Plan
General Program Information
Special Program Documents
Brochures

Contracting, Homeownership & Rehab Programs

Outreach Materials
Application Forms
Fact Sheets
Contract Documents
Work Write Up
Lien
Subordination Policy
Lead Based Paint Information

EI Portal Program: Lease
Eligibility Forms
Outreach Materials
Instructions
Safety Notices
Inspection Notices
Eviction Documents

Outreach:

The Community Services Department will work with local refugee service providers, the local school districts, and other appropriate agencies when conducting outreach of services to eligible populations.

Subrecipients:

Since all agencies who receive federal funding must provide this service to LEP persons, then these policies will also be applicable for subrecipient groups that utilize federal funding. This means that the LEP guidelines will be incorporated into subrecipient and contract documents.

Staff Training:

All staff who have contact with clients will be trained on an annual basis regarding their responsibilities to identify, notify, provide and document services for LEP clients or members of the public.

Evaluation:

Senior staff within the Community Services Department will conduct periodic site and/or desktop audits to verify that LEP clients who are in need of interpreter/ translation services are actually receiving them. In addition, reviews that verify the accuracy of the translated materials will take place.

This Language Assistance Plan (LAP) will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the policies are up-to-date and accurate.

Authorized:



Department Director

3/17/09

Date