



Language Access Plans

Tuesday, October 2, 2012
Houston, Texas

I. *Introductory Issues*

- A. Does your state have a committee or group that oversees the development and maintenance of a language access plan?
- B. Did you develop your plan to cover statewide needs, or was it developed at a local/district level?
- C. Does your plan provide language access to all parties in all case types?
 - a. If not, what limitations exist?
 - b. Does your state have a plan in place to lift any limitations?

II. *State Self-Assessment*

Four-Factor Analysis

In order to develop a *Language Access Plan*, the agency should first conduct a four-factor analysis, studying the following areas:

- A. **Demography:** Have you conducted an assessment of the number or proportion of LEP persons from a particular language group served or encountered in your state?
 - a. What resources did you use to conduct this research (Bureau of the Census, Department of Education, contacting community-based groups, etc.)?
 - b. What five languages were identified as the highest population groups in your state?
- B. **Frequency of Contact:** Have you developed a process for surveying, collecting, and/or recording primary language data for individuals that come into contact with your courts?
 - a. What method of data collection do you use?
 - b. Where does this data reside?
 - c. Who can access this data?
 - d. How often is this data reviewed and updated?
 - e. What five languages were identified as the highest need for services in your courts?
- C. **Importance:** Have you determined the importance of the activities in your courts and the possible consequences of the contact to the LEP individuals in your plan development?
 - a. Did this determination shape your plan in any way?
 - b. Have you determined the impact of delays in the provision of services?

- D. **Resources:** Have you identified the resources needed to provide meaningful access for LEP persons?
- a. Have you identified the points of contact where a LEP person interacts with your courts?
 - b. Is language assistance available at those points?
 - c. What types of language services available to staff in your courts?
 - d. How does court staff obtain language services?
 - e. How does court staff respond to communications from LEP persons (phone, in writing, in person)?
 - f. Have you identified any limitations in resources (dollars and personnel) that also limit the provision of language assistance services in your courts?

III. *Development of a Language Access Plan*

A *Language Access Plan* begins with developing goals that are gleaned from the four-factor analysis, and then moves into the planning stages to accomplish these goals.

A. **Goals:**

- a. How did you determine the goals for your *Language Access Plan*?
- b. How did you incorporate budget considerations in the determination of the goals of your plan?

B. **Plan Development:** After identifying the LEP persons to be served in your courts, and determining the measures to provide language assistance, how did you address the following areas of the *Language Access Plan*?

- a. Training staff about LEP policies and procedures?
- b. Providing resources for your court to learn more about LEP individuals or to equip them in assisting LEP individuals?
- c. Training staff in how to work effectively with in-person and telephone interpreters?
- d. Training judges in how to work effectively with interpreters?
- e. Establishing protocol when bilingual employees can be used and how to establish their competency?
- f. Determining when qualified in-person interpreters should be used?
- g. Determining when telephonic interpreter services can be used?
- h. How the competencies of interpreter services are ensured?
- i. How written translation services are provided?
- j. How the competencies of translators are ensured?
- k. Providing resources on your court system's public website?
- l. Providing notice of services to LEP individuals? (The following examples were provided by the DOJ)
 - Posting signs in intake areas and other entry points
 - Stating in outreach documents (brochures, booklets, outreach and recruitment information) in appropriate languages that language services are available

- Working with community-based organizations to inform LEP persons of the language assistance available
- Using a telephone voice mail menu in the most common languages encountered.
- Including notices in local newspapers in languages other than English
- Providing notices in non-English language radio and television stations about the availability of language assistance services
- Presentations and/or notices at school and religious organizations

C. Plan Monitoring and Updating:

- a. Have you developed a process for updating and modifying your *Language Access Plan* on a regular and ongoing basis?
- b. Have you developed a tool for collecting data on beneficiary satisfaction with interpreter services?
- c. Do you have a grievance process in place and accessible to the public?
- d. Do you have a process by which you obtain feedback from the community?
- e. Have you shared your plan with other stakeholders in an effort to increase language access through joint efforts?