



## GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES

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An organizations ability to provide effective and appropriate language access services will depend on a combination of interpretation and bilingual staff for oral/verbal communication as well as translation for written information. In addition to providing the language access services outlined above organizations should establish and maintain policies and procedures to ensure conformity and equitable access across the organization.

Every agency and situation is different and in order to best serve the needs of diverse communities and families, organization should have established services (contracts) with qualified and professional language services providers (LSPs) for interpretation, and translation. It is good practice to establish a network of vendors in order to meet all language needs that may arise and train staff accordingly. Some LSPs can provide both interpretation and translation. It is important to note the significant difference in the roles and capabilities among professional linguists and bilingual staff. Likewise, qualifications and skillsets between interpreters and translators differ, not all interpreter may be qualified to translate and not all translators may be qualified to interpret. Similarly, bilingualism alone does not constitute the necessary training, qualifications, and skills to interpreter or translate.

Policies and procedures are critical to ensuring culturally and linguistically diverse families voice and choice are heard and incorporated in an equitable manner by providing a qualified array of language services. Bilingual staff members are a key part of providing language access to diverse families and can also provide a critical cultural link. Ensuring these staff have the right skills and organizational support should be clearly defined in policies and procedures that equitably outline the bilingual staff members roles, qualifications, and responsibilities; in addition to appropriate compensation for the additional workload and any qualifications or training needed to safely and effectively serve culturally and linguistically diverse families.

Policies and Procedures Guidelines	Reference
<p>Organizations should establish policies and procedures to ensure staff, at all levels, know of their responsibilities in providing language services and how to access those services to provide meaningful access to culturally and linguistically diverse families. The policies and procedure should include information and criteria for LSPs such as language utilization data, and procedures for training staff on how to access those services on an ongoing basis. Definitions for bilingual staff member’s roles, responsibilities, qualifications, training, workload and compensation should also be clearly outlined in the policies and procedures.</p> <p>Bilingual staff can play a key role in providing meaningful access and can increase an organization’s capacity to better serve families if done in an equitable and sustainable manner. Ensuring that bilingual staff are qualified and knowledge, as well as possess the skills, capacity, and ability to perform interpretation and translation tasks are essential to reducing risk and improving outcomes for the bilingual staff, the organization and ultimately the families served. Equally important is ensuring that bilingual staff are supported and that roles are not be combined with any other duties where conflict of interest, impartiality or role integrity come into question. For example, asking a bilingual staff member to act as an interpreter and a family advocate at the same time would compromise role integrity by combining duties in addition to making it nearly impossible to carry out either role faithfully or fully. A bilingual family advocate can engage in direct communication (not interpretation) with a limited English proficient (LEP) family but should not be asked to act as an interpreter on behalf of other staff members or during group meetings; since this would require the bilingual staff member to act as both an interpreter and family advocate at the same time. Asking a bilingual staff member to perform any role in conjunction with interpretation violates the interpreters code of ethics and it compromises the ability of the bilingual staff person to perform his or her role to fidelity and with impartiality.</p>	<p><a href="#">A Blueprint for Advancing and Sustaining CLAS Policy and Practice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs</a></p> <p><a href="#">Guidelines for Working Effectively with Interpreters in Mental Health Settings</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving the Quality of Mental Health Interpreting in Victoria</a></p> <p><a href="#">A National Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care</a></p>

Interpretation Guidelines	Reference
<p>Interpretation is verbal communication between three or more individuals, typically the English-speaking provider, the non-English speaking/LEP patient and the interpreter facilitating the communication. Verbal language access can be provided via over-the-phone interpretation (OPI), through video remote interpretation (VRI) and through on-site interpreters.</p> <p>Organization should establish access with interpretation vendors for onsite interpretation and OPI services for communicating with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. An OPI provider is the most basic and cost-effective way for an organization to have the capacity to respond to the language needs of their community. This gives the organization and its staff the capacity to respond to language needs, 24/7, 365 days a year, and is an important part of ensuring federal compliance. The number of languages supported varies across vendors but is generally over 200.</p> <p>Communication with a phone interpreter is not ideal for all situation, so in addition to having OPI services, having access to an on-site interpreters is more effective for certain encounters, such as group meetings. Organization should establish services with a few local on-site language service provider and schedule interpreters in advance for group meetings or lengthily encounters; when having an onsite interpreter is either more cost effective or conducive to the situation. For rural communities where access to on-site interpreters is a difficult, VRI may be a meaningful compromise between OPI and on-site interpreters. VRI could provide the access to a broader range of languages as well as provide the benefit of sight for nonverbal cues exchanged and better flow during meetings between families and providers.</p>	<p><a href="#">A Blueprint for Advancing and Sustaining CLAS Policy and Practice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs</a></p> <p><a href="#">Guidelines for Working Effectively with Interpreters in Mental Health Settings</a></p> <p><a href="#">Improving the Quality of Mental Health Interpreting in Victoria</a></p>

Translation Guidelines	Reference
<p>Translation refers to written communication, translating words from one language into another. When the message is adapted to culturally resonate with a specific community or audience then it's referred to as transcreation or localization and is a more meaningful way to approach translation. Organizations should establish services with professional translation vendors to assist with written language materials that are culturally appropriate and meaningful to the community. Providing all agency materials in all languages is not a realistic, cost-effective or a sustainable long-term practice. Translation can be a great investment for any organization if done with forethought and planning to ensure the best return on investment and to leverage translation memory for future use. Below are a few things to keep in mind when considering translation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the materials to be translated the information the LEP community needs?</li> <li>• Is translation the most cost-effective way to communicate with the community or individuals?</li> <li>• Has your organization allocated adequate time and funding to pay for professional translation?</li> <li>• Have the materials been reviewed for translatability and cultural appropriateness (transcreation/localization)?</li> <li>• Does the vendor have capabilities to store and leverage translation memory for future translation projects?</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">A Blueprint for Advancing and Sustaining CLAS Policy and Practice</a></p> <p><a href="#">Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs</a></p>



## REFERENCES

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