



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER
POLICIES, PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES**

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Policy No.:
Supersedes: --
Revision No.: -
Revision Date:

SUBJECT: Auditor-Controller Language Access Policy

PURPOSE:

This Department Language Access Plan directs the Department of the Auditor-Controller (A-C or Department) to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful language assistance to Limited English Proficient and Languages Other Than English (LOTE) speakers to access information and services provided by the A-C. The A-C will also offer free translation services in Languages Other Than English through a contracted vendor when needed.

The A-C's Language Access Policy applies to all A-C employees, interns, and any contractors hired by the A-C who are responsible for interacting with the public as part of their scope of work.

REFERENCES

- A. [Board of Supervisors Policy 3.033 - Countywide Language Access Policy, effective 4/23/2024](#)
- B. [County Code 6.10.140 Bilingual Pay](#)

DEFINITIONS

Certified Bilingual Employee: A-C employee who qualifies for Bilingual pay per County Code 6.10.140 as approved by the department head when the specific assignment of the employee requires fluency in both English and at least one foreign language, and knowledge of and sensitivity toward the culture and needs of the foreign-language group clientele to which the department is providing information or a service.

Client: A person who receives information or services from the A-C.

Cultural Competence: The ability to be able to understand and appreciate the values, attitudes, and beliefs of different cultural backgrounds.

Cultural Responsiveness: The ability to consider and respond to cultural differences (i.e., values, attitudes, and beliefs different from one's own).

Department Language Access Plan (DLAP): The A-C Language Access Policy that provides direction and guidelines to provide meaningful language and LOTE access to information and services provided by the A-C.

Departmental Language Access Liaison (DLAL): A-C Executive Office will be designated as the DLAL and will be the primary contact for any questions regarding the DLAP and promote consistent, department-wide compliance with Board policies, federal and State laws, and A-C administrative

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policies pertaining to language services provided to LOTE clients, and clients who are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened, Deaf Plus, speech disabled, blind, or have limited vision.

Interpretation: The transfer of oral communication from one language to another while maintaining the meaning and tone of the language.

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 client.

Language Access Liaison: A-C staff member(s) assigned by the A-C Executive Management to oversee the provision of language access services for clients, and clients who are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened, Deaf Plus, speech disabled, blind, or have limited vision.

Language Services: Language assistance provided by a certified bilingual employee or through a certified contracted interpreter or translator to provide meaningful access to A-C information or services for a LOTE client.

Limited English Proficient (LEP): Individuals who are not fluent in English, have the limited ability to read, speak, or write in English, and often use another language as their primary means of communicating.

Speaker of a Language Other Than English (LOTE)/LOTE clients: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and do not read, write, or speak English.

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

Translation: The transfer of a written communication from one language to another while preserving the meaning.

POLICY:

A. Identifying Preferred Languages

- a. The A-C's interactions with LOTE clients are primarily in English and Spanish. To meet the needs of the LOTE clients, the A-C will utilize Spanish certified bilingual employees available via phone or in person for translation services.
- b. The A-C will contract with Internal Services Department (ISD) through their master agreement for language translation services as needed. As the main contractor, ISD, will be responsible for ensuring the quality of services provided under their master agreement.
- c. The A-C will maintain a log to collect data regarding the client's preferred language when we have contact with a LOTE client. Common points of contact include: Public service counters, telephone interactions, or community outreach.

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B. Communicating with LOTE Clients

A-C staff will take reasonable steps to provide LOTE clients with meaningful access to information, programs, and services by offering language services through one or more of the following methods:

- a. Information posted in public spaces and on the A-C website alerting viewers to the availability of communication assistance free of charge;
- b. Direct provision of services by certified or authorized bilingual employees;
- c. Access to interpreter services provided by certified or authorized contracted interpreters;
- d. Written translation services provided by qualified contractors; and
- e. Ensure that we protect Personally Identifiable Information and Protected Health Information.

A-C will utilize signage at our public service counters informing the public of free language assistance availability upon request. The messages may be translated into Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Korean, Tagalog (Pilipino), Armenian, and Farsi (Persian).

C. A-C Division Responsibilities

- a. Designate a DLAL to represent their Division to ensure compliance with the Department Language Access Policy;
- b. The Division will complete a log to collect data regarding the clients' preferred language when we have contact with a LOTE client. Common points of contact include: Public service counters, telephone interactions, or community outreach.
- c. Ensure compliance with the objectives in the Board Policy Countywide Language Access Policy including but not limited to:
 - i. Empower the County's workforce to consistently deliver linguistically and culturally responsive service;
 - ii. Integrate language access, equity, and inclusion in every aspect of County work; and
 - iii. Support the County in having a flexible and efficient administrative, technological, and physical infrastructure to help meet the linguistic needs of County residents.
- d. Division must follow the DLAP to assist LOTE clients with verbal and written communication, and must take reasonable steps to ensure LOTE clients have meaningful and timely access to services or benefits.
- e. Division will identify LOTE clients as early as possible during initial contact;
- f. Division will identify and record the primary or preferred language of the individual and if applicable the party with whom staff will communicate regarding their services;
- g. Division will inform individuals of their right to language services, at no cost to them, when language services are necessary to access; and
- h. Division will arrange for appropriate and effective language services.
- i. Oral Communication – When communicating with a LOTE client orally, staff determines the most appropriate method for oral communication.
 - i. Through a certified bilingual employee;
 - ii. With the assistance of an interpreter:
 1. in person;

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2. over the phone interpreting; or
3. video remote interpreting.

Note: Staff may consult with their Division Language Access Liaison or the Department Language Access Liaison for assistance and guidance on how to arrange interpreter services.

- j. Written communication – When communicating with a LOTE client in writing, staff determines the most appropriate method for translating or transcribing (i.e., Braille, Large Print, or other alternate format) written communication.

Note: Staff may consult with their Division Language Access Liaison or Department Language Access Liaison for assistance in determining the most appropriate method of written communication and for specific instructions on how to check for existing translations and how to request new translations.

D. Division Language Access Liaison Responsibilities

- a. Assist in monitoring and coordinating identification of language service needs and strategies for their Division clients and to work with the Department Language Access Liaison in providing access to appropriate language services;
- b. Assist in training and guidance to staff and leadership within their Division, regarding interpreter and translation service contracts, and policies and procedures;
- c. Participate in regular self-evaluation and review of the language access plan;
- d. Participate in establishing protocols for quality, timely, cost-effective, language services with appropriate levels of confidentiality; and
- e. Assist in language access related data collection and reporting.

E. Departmental Language Access Liaison (DLAL)

- a. The A-C Executive Office will be designated as the Department Language Access Liaison;
- b. DLAL will be responsible for oversight, implementation, and the performance of the DLAP;
- c. DLAL will be designated as the training coordinator and provide language access policy training to the Language Access Liaisons and staff; and
- d. The A-C Executive Office will be responsible to manage the email address: A-CLanguageAccess@auditor.lacounty.gov.

F. Language Access Training

- a. The A-C will distribute this policy to all staff within 90 days of the Department's Language Access Plan being published. This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years to ensure it is still appropriate;
- b. All new staff members will be provided a copy of the Department's Language Access Plan in their orientation packet during onboarding;
- c. The A-C will provide annual training to public-facing staff of the Department's Language Access Plan. All public-facing staff who regularly interact with the public will be trained on

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- how to access the Department's language assistance resources. Trainings (in other topics like cultural competency) will also be made available to staff; and
- d. All departmental staff who provide customer service to the public are regularly trained regarding the procedures to access on-demand translation services when needed.

G. Complaint Process

The Department is committed to providing culturally sensitive LOTE services to all County residents. If a resident's linguistic needs are not being met, they can submit a Language Access Complaint using the Countywide Language Access Complaint Form. This form can be accessed on the A-C's website and at A-C public counters. The A-C will review the complaint and offer a resolution within 90 days of receiving the complaint per the Countywide Language Access Policy.

06/25/2025

Oscar Valdez, Auditor-Controller

Date Approved