

COUNTY OF DEL NORTE

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN (LAP)

COMMUNICATION WITH PERSONS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP)

The purpose of the LAP for County of Del Norte is to make clear the expectations of the guidelines for the program under EO 13166, signed on August 11, 2000, directing all federal agencies, including the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to work to ensure that programs receiving federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to LEP persons. The County participates with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funding through the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) which requires compliance with LEP. Pursuant to EO 13166, the meaningful access requirement of the Title VI regulations and the four-factor analysis set forth in the Department of Justice (DOJ) LEP Guidance apply to the programs and activities of federal agencies, including HUD. In addition, EO 13166 requires federal agencies to issue LEP Guidance to assist their federally assisted recipients in providing such meaningful access to their programs. This Guidance must be consistent with the DOJ Guidance. Each federal agency is required to specifically tailor the general standards established in DOJ's Guidance to its federally assisted recipients.

The County Office of Administration will take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate in County services, activities, programs, and other benefits. This "reasonableness" standard is intended to be flexible and fact-dependent; it is also intended to balance the need to ensure meaningful access by LEP persons to critical services while not imposing undue financial burdens on small business, small local governments, or small nonprofit organizations. The County's policy is to ensure meaningful communication with customers, patrons, applicants, and the public. The policy also provides for communication of information contained in vital documents. All interpreters, translators and other aids needed to comply with this policy will be provided to any LEP persons without cost and the public will be made aware of the availability of said assistance.

According to Census.gov, the population for the County of Del Norte, California is 27,495 with a total LEP percentage for Del Norte County being 12.1%. If it is assumed that the population of LEP persons is evenly dispersed, we would assume that the County would see 3,327 LEP persons. Of the 3,327 LEP persons, 7.1% are Spanish speaking, or 236. The County will continue to review the numbers of LEP persons, and the languages represented in the community as well as update and monitor the implementation of this policy, as necessary.

The County acknowledges that the program involves LEP persons on a minimal and infrequent basis. The need for services is not found to be significant in this community since most of the LEP persons are not transient. The nature and importance of the program is relevant to LEP persons and all reasonable efforts on the part of the County will be taken to ensure that LEP persons are made aware of the services at their disposal.

Procedures

1. Identifying LEP Persons and their language.

The County will take reasonable steps to identify the language and communication needs of LEP persons. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card ("I speak cards" found on the LEP.gov website) or posters to determine what language the LEP person speaks. In addition, records that are kept of interactions with LEP persons, the language used will be included in the record.

2. Obtaining a Qualified Interpreter.

- a. County Administration will be responsible for:
 - i. Accessing an accurate and current list showing the name, language, phone number and hours of availability of bilingual staff.
 - ii. Contacting the appropriate bilingual staff member to interpret, in the event that an interpreter is needed, if an employee who speaks the needed language is available and is qualified to interpret.
 - iii. Obtaining an outside interpreter if a bilingual staff or staff interpreter is not available or does not speak the needed language.
 - iv. If no interaction with the public for the project is identified, no translation will be provided.
 - v. The County will use in house staff first to provide translation, if this is not available, electronic translation services may be used (Google translate) to meet this request.
- b. The County may join with City of Crescent City and use resources they have available. A written agreement will be on file at the County Administrative office.
- c. When LEP persons desire, they will be permitted to use, at their own expense, an interpreter of their own choosing in place of the free language services offered by the County. The Interpreter may be a family member or a friend.

3. Providing Notice to LEP Persons.

- a. Even though the number of LEP is under 15% and there are fewer than 4,000 persons, the majority of the LEP persons are Spanish speaking (7.1% of LEP) and the County may translate notices to Spanish. For activities with high resident interaction - i.e. housing rehabilitation or public services, the County may post notices in Spanish to ensure outreach is complete to those residents.
- b. If a significant need is identified for translation of vital documents, County Administration will have access to the list of employees who are available to translate the vital documents into frequently encountered languages to the appropriate department. Original documents being submitted will be in their final, approved form with updated and accurate legal information.

- c. The County will be provide translation of other written materials, if significant need is identified, as well as written notice of the availability of translation, free of charge, for LEP individuals. Commissions and departments are not required to translate minutes from meetings but will provide translated notices and agendas.
- d. The County will set benchmarks for translation of vital documents into additional languages over time.

4. Providing Notice to LEP Persons.

The County of Del Norte will inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance, free of charge, when contact is made with an LEP person.

5. Training Staff.

County Administration will oversee training for its staff that could reasonably come in contact with LEP persons. Staff will be trained in how to identify the language needs of an LEP individual, access and provide the necessary language assistance services, work with interpreters, request document translation, and track the use of language assistance services, all using the procedures outlined above. Bilingual staff members who communicate "in-language" to LEP individuals, or who serve as interpreters or translators, should be assessed, and receive regular training on proper interpreting and translation techniques, ethics, specialized terminology, and other topics as needed.

6. Monitoring Language Needs and Implementation.

On a decennial basis, in conjunction with the national census, County Administration will assess changes in demographics, types of services or other needs that may require reevaluation of this policy and procedures. In addition, the County will regularly assess the efficacy of these procedures. The County will designate an office or official responsible for developing and maintaining accurate record of a program that regularly assesses and takes necessary steps to improve and ensure the quality and accuracy of language assistance services provided to individuals with LEP. Implement methods for measuring improvement in language access in individual programs and take steps to ensure that such information is collected in a manner that increases comparability, accuracy, and consistency across programs. Agencies can determine whether it is appropriate for this element to be implemented by the same office or official responsible for implementing another element.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- 018

RESOLUTION OF THE DEL NORTE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

APPROVING A LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE PLAN

WHEREAS, County of Del Norte is committed to providing meaningful and equitable access to its programs and services, including to those with limited English proficiency (LEP); and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 13166 signed on August 11, 2000 directs all federal agencies to work to ensure that programs receiving federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to LEP persons; and

WHEREAS, the County of Del Norte receives federal funding through various grant programs to provide programs and services to its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors desires to provide equitable access to its programs and services to the entire community and recognizes that access to programs and services may be more challenging for LEP persons.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors adopts the following:

The Del Norte County Board of Supervisors hereby declares its intention to implement the Language Assistance Plan, as attached.

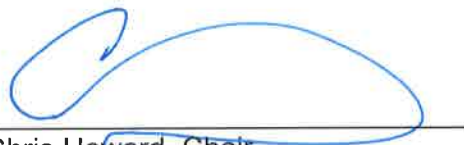
PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE DEL NORTE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS on this 9th day of March, 2021, by the following polled vote:

AYES: Supervisor Short, Starkey, Howard, Hemmingsen, Berkowitz

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None



Chris Howard, Chair
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST


Kylie Goughnour
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors