

Emergency Medical Services Authority



Language Access Plan

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Introduction

As part of ensuring meaningful access to programs and services, the California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) adopted a Language Access Policy on May 22, 2023, which requires each CalHHS department or office's programs to develop a Language Access Plan. The goal of this work is to ensure that CalHHS and its departments and offices provide meaningful access to information, programs, benefits, and services to people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and ensure that language is not a barrier to accessing vital health and social services.

This document is the Emergency Medical Services Authority's (EMSA) Language Access Plan. In developing this Plan, we have reviewed our programs and services for the public, the ways we communicate with members of the public and the people we serve, and how we currently provide information and services in languages other than English.

Department Programs and Services

EMSA is responsible for the equitable coordination, administration, and integration of the statewide emergency medical services system to reduce suffering and save lives throughout California. The EMS Authority's program functions are organized into three divisions: EMS Personnel Standards Division, EMS Systems Planning and Development Division, and Disaster Medical Services Division.

The programs and services we provide to the public or our target service population are:

- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Personnel
 - Public interest in EMS education and career development
 - Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)/ electronic Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (ePOLST)
- Paramedic Enforcement and Investigations
 - Submission of complaints
- Disaster Medical Services
 - Disaster volunteers, recruitment, and deployment
- Health Information & Data Technologies
 - Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) FAQs
 - POLST education documents
- Legislation and External Affairs (LEA)
 - Rule Making – drafts, public comments

Language Access Requirements

In planning for how to provide meaningful language access moving forward, EMSA reviewed the following four factors for each of our programs:

1. Number or proportion of Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or service;
2. Frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with the program;

3. Nature and importance of the program, activity, or service; and
4. Resources available to our department and costs of language services.

We have also considered the specific requirements in the CalHHS Language Access Policy and any other program-specific laws or requirements. EMSA's program-specific laws/requirements include:

Statutes and regulations (relevant to the programs listed above)

- Health and Safety (H&S) Code section 1797.117
- H&S Code 1797. 170 - 1797.175
- H&S Code 1797.184
- California Code of Regulations (CCR) 100171
- CCR 100344
- CCR 100394

Please note that this plan does not address EMSA's process for conducting or reporting on the biennial language survey required under the Dymally Alatorre Bilingual Services Act.

Providing Notice to People with LEP and Identifying Language Preference

This section includes how EMSA will notify the public about available language access services. Below is a checklist of tools EMSA may use to notify the public of these services.

- "I Speak" cards or posters at public reception desks
- Translated notices in public waiting areas in the following languages:
 - **[insert languages, based on available data, that will be used]**
- Translated taglines on English language forms
- Translated taglines on department program websites
- Other: **[describe other procedures]**

EMSA will identify the language preference when interacting with public individuals requiring interpretation or translation when multiple encounters are needed to provide the requested service or submission of forms or other documents. EMSA will maintain a communications log to track the interactions and language preference.

Language Services

This section includes the actions EMSA will take to provide information and services in languages other than English.

Direct In-Language Communication

Direct In-language Communication includes monolingual communication in a language other than English between a multilingual staff and an LEP individual. This type of communication is considered appropriate when engagement is by a qualified multilingual EMSA employee or contracted vendor.

EMSA discourages employees who have not been trained and properly certified to provide direct in-language communication with LEP individuals. This restriction is to avoid the possibility of communicating incorrect information leading to potentially negative consequences for the Department and/or the individual with LEP.

Interpretation (Bridging the language barrier between two other parties)

EMSA will utilize contracted support for interpretation services at no cost to the LEP individual. The services will be provided on an on-demand basis.

EMSA may, if available, utilize bilingual staff to provide interpretation for members of the public seeking EMSA services. EMSA bilingual staff must be certified and meet all requirements per CalHR. If applicable, EMSA will maintain a roster of certified staff that are eligible to provide interpretation services.

Only certified bilingual staff are permitted to communicate with the public in languages other than English. EMSA will not conduct Language proficiency testing for bilingual staff desiring to provide translation and interpretation services. Staff may complete testing requirements, per CalHR, and certification through another State Agency. Certified staff will be retested periodically to ensure compliance. Certified staff may receive a pay differential if 10% of work time is spent in the usage of the non-English language.

The EMSA in-person, telephonic, or other remote spoken and sign language interpretation resources available to the public and the process/procedures for staff to access them are as follows:

- Contracted on-demand verbal interpretation
- Contracted on-demand sign language interpretation

Per [CalHR Human Resources Manual, Section 1003 – Proficiency Testing Limitations](#), “Language proficiency alone (fluency, reading, and writing testing) does not qualify an employee to translate written materials or to serve as a formal interpreter.”

Required qualifications for bi-lingual staff:

- EMSA currently does not have certified bi-lingual staff.
- Future requests from staff to provide bi-lingual services must comply with the following:

- Complete a Language Proficiency Examination to ensure CalHR compliance and receive the appropriate certification. EMSA does not offer the exams but may utilize contracted services to provide the examinations.
- Be approved by the supervisor to participate in the program.

Translation (Translating written materials on behalf of the Department)

EMSA prioritizes the translation of vital documents to ensure effective and equitable access to information for LEP individuals. Classification of a document as “vital” depends upon the importance of the information or service involved, and the consequence to the individual with LEP if the information in question is not provided accurately and timely.

Programs within EMSA have the discretion to determine what documents are considered vital and to develop the criteria for prioritizing languages for translation. Types of EMSA vital documents include forms and instructions for completing the forms, educational materials, public outreach materials, and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

EMSA will adhere to the following:

- Vital documents will be at least translated into the five primary languages identified in the CalHHS policy (Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean);
- Provide on-demand translations using contracted services when needed; and
- Provide a Google translate widget on the EMSA website.
- The EMSA Office of Information Technology will oversee website development including translation of vital documents, ASL videos, and updates.

The process for responding to written communications from persons with LEP in languages other than English includes:

- The Program receiving the written communication will notify EMSA Administration of the documents requiring translation.
- Administration will utilize the contracted language access provider to provide the service.
- Certified bi-lingual staff, if available, will be requested to provide the translation.
- All responses will be reviewed by management.

Training Staff

This section includes information on how the EMSA staff are trained to provide language access services to the public.

Training Plan

Public Facing Employees

Language access training will be provided to all current public-facing employees no later than December 1, 2024, and at least annually thereafter. New staff hired into public contact positions will receive language access training within their first 6 months of employment.

Training topics for public-facing employees include:

- CalHHS language access policy;
- Identifying an individual's language preference;
- Processes and procedures for providing language assistance services to LEP individuals;
- How to work effectively with interpreters (in person, telephone, and video, as applicable);
- Process for requesting documents for translation; and
- Tracking utilization of language access services.

Levels of training may differ depending on how often staff is in contact with the public.

All appropriate policies will be reviewed by employees initially upon employment with EMSA and annually thereafter. All training will be developed in the Learning Management System and added to the list of mandatory courses.

Non-Public Facing Employees

This section describes the EMSA plan for training employees who are not in public contact positions.

Non-public facing employees include program leadership, employees involved in the development of public-facing documents or other materials, and staff responsible for updating and maintaining department websites.

Non-public facing training includes:

- CalHHS Policy review
- Language access awareness
- Supporting public-facing employees

Training will be developed in the EMSA Learning Management System and added to the annual list of mandatory training.

Monitoring and Updating LAP

EMSA will monitor language access services and update this Language Access Plan at least every two years. This information will ensure that EMSA is compliant with the CalHHS Language Access Policy and address processes and procedures being used to deliver meaningful language access to members of the public and recipients of services.

EMSA will create a monitoring program or process to ensure the implementation of details included in the Language Access Plan. This process will entail:

- ☒ Assessing training effectiveness
- ☒ Identification of training needs
- ☒ Assessing employee awareness of language access policies and procedures
- ☒ Assessing effectiveness of interpretation and translation services
- ☒ Check-in with community partners and stakeholders
- ☒ Tracking costs of providing language access services
- ☒ Data collection
 - Identifying amount and type of language services (interpreter services, sight translations) available to consumers by program

Every two years, CalHHS will generate and update the list of minimum threshold languages for the translation of vital documents and essential web content. Consistent with CalHHS Policy, EMSA's Language Access Plan will be reviewed, revised if necessary, and resubmitted to CalHHS every two years. Revisions will address any changes in the Title VI four-factor analysis; whether existing policies and procedures are meeting the needs of LEP individuals; whether staff is sufficiently trained; and whether identified resources for assistance are up-to-date, available, accessible, and viable.

Reevaluations will incorporate, as appropriate, new programs, new legal requirements, additional vital documents, and community input on the Language Access Plan.

Complaint Process

Members of the public or recipients of services should direct complaints regarding language access to:

Complaint Process Contact Name: **Craig Johnson, Administration and HR Division Chief**
Phone / Email: **(916) 508-7849 / Craig.Johnson@emsa.ca.gov**

