



## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office for Administration and Finance

# Supplier Diversity Office

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**Submitted by: Bonnie Borch-Rote, Language Access Coordinator**

## Supplier Diversity Office of Massachusetts Language Access Plan

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### I. Introduction

The Supplier Diversity Office (SDO) has developed and prepared this Language Access Plan (LAP) outlining ongoing efforts taken to provide language services to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) constituents.

This plan also defines the actions our office is taking to ensure meaningful access to programs, services, activities, and materials for all LEP constituents.

The SDO will review and update this LAP as needed to ensure continued responsiveness to community needs.

The SDO serves a diverse population of various races, ethnicities, ages and linguistic origins. An LEP person is someone who cannot speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that allows them to interact effectively with SDO staff. A constituent maintains the right to self-identify as LEP.

### II. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to ensure meaningful access to services, programs, activities, and materials for all LEP constituents.

The SDO is committed to making services available to LEP persons as part of its mission. Based on this commitment, the SDO makes every attempt to assist LEP constituents in accessing our services.

This LAP does not create new services; rather it strives to eliminate barriers for LEP constituents accessing existing services and ensure that all staff can assist LEP constituents in accessing those resources. SDO will provide quality language assistance to LEP constituents in a fair and timely manner, ensuring meaningful access to the agency's services.

This LAP centralizes language access materials for staff and outlines the regular trainings for new hires to ensure that all staff can access the materials and services listed in the sections below.

The objectives of these Language Access Guidelines are to:

- a. Improve access to and quality of state services, programs and activities for non-English speakers and LEP persons;
- b. Reduce any disparities, barriers and delays in the provision of services/programs to eligible LEP speakers; and
- c. Streamline training and resources for staff to increase effectiveness in serving LEP constituents and ensure public satisfaction.

### **III. Policy**

It is the SDO policy to provide meaningful access to programs and services to persons who are limited in English proficiency.

### **IV. Applicability**

This policy applies to all offices and staff within the SDO.

### **V. Role**

The SDO's goals are to increase opportunities for certified diverse businesses and Small Business Purchasing Program (SBPP) participants through annual state agency spending benchmarks and include bid evaluation criteria within the state goods and services bid process. The SDO also provides public access to the certified business lists on the SDO web pages and distributes business opportunities, events and notices to SDO participants. The SDO also offers pre-certification public-facing workshops to educate potential businesses on the qualifications of a certified business and post-certification workshops to educate on how to access and maximize bidding and contracting opportunities.

### **VI. Language Access Plan**

This LAP shall be fully implemented, subject to the availability of requisite fiscal resources. It represents the agency's commitment to ensuring that all residents of Massachusetts can readily access information and resources from the SDO.

For staff, this plan centralizes resources, training, and the agency's multilingual content and publications, while outlining the minimum standard of access to the agency for LEP constituents.

- a. **Language Access Coordinator:** Bonnie Borch-Rote, [bonnie.borch-rote@mass.gov](mailto:bonnie.borch-rote@mass.gov) (Tel. 857-408-0583).

- b. **Language Resources**

- i. **Translating Publications**

The SDO is committed to maintaining all its widely applicable publications in the five most spoken languages in the Commonwealth: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Chinese (Simplified or Traditional). When reaching out to specific communities in the Commonwealth, SDO staff should ensure that these publications will be accessible in the languages prevalent in each community. Longer and more specific publications should be translated when there are accessibility concerns for the intended audience.

Paying for Translating Materials:

To pay for the translation of materials, contact Pat Ghannam, Senior Financial & Operations Analyst, and Maryellen Osborne, Chief Financial & Chief Operating Officer at either [pat.ghannam2@mass.gov](mailto:pat.ghannam2@mass.gov) (Tel. 617-872-4008) or [maryellen.osborne4@mass.gov](mailto:maryellen.osborne4@mass.gov). (Tel. 857-286-8004).

## ii. Written Translation Guidelines

When translating a document, staff must follow these steps:

1. Choose which language(s) are needed for translation. Keep in mind that broadly applicable flyers should be translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and Chinese (Simplified or Traditional).
2. E-mail a Word document version of the publication to be translated to the translation company and request a quote.
3. Use American Translation Partners (contact Scott Crystal at 508-823-8892 extension 8288 or email: [request@atptranslations.com](mailto:request@atptranslations.com)) or any other state vendors on the [PRF75 Statewide Contract](#).
4. Contact Pat Ghannam, Senior Financial & Operations Analyst, and Maryellen Osborne, Chief Financial & Chief Operating Officer to help assist with obtaining the translation ([pat.ghannam2@mass.gov](mailto:pat.ghannam2@mass.gov) (Tel. 617-872-4008) or [maryellen.osborne4@mass.gov](mailto:maryellen.osborne4@mass.gov). (Tel. 857-286-8004).

## iii. In-Person Interpreting

When requesting an interpreter for an in-person event, follow these steps:

1. Reach out to Pat Ghannam, Senior Financial & Operations Analyst, and Maryellen Osborne, Chief Financial & Chief Operating Officer to let them know you will need an in-person translator.
2. Obtain at least 3 quotes from any of the vendors on this [list](#) (vendor list starts on page 11). Simply e-mail the vendors (using BCC so they can't see the recipient list) with the specifics of your request. For example:

*The SDO is seeking quotes for in-person Spanish/English interpreter services. The engagement is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ and will take place at \_\_\_\_\_. The services requested are for a minimum of 1 hour. Would you be interested in such an engagement, and if so, could you provide a quote for the 1 hour plus 15-minute increment price, no later than \_\_\_\_\_? The maximum time needed for this engagement will not exceed 4 hours. Thank you for your consideration of this request.*

3. Work with Pat and Maryellen to pick one of the quotes from the vendors contacted and set up the timeline for working with them.

## iv. Correspondence

The generic babel below will be included below the signature line on automatic replies from general email inboxes.

This document contains important information. Please have it translated immediately.	Questo documento contiene informazioni importanti. La preghiamo di tradurlo immediatamente.	ខេត្តសារសេដ្ឋកិច្ច ប័ណ្ណដំបូងសំខាន់ៗ។ រកគុណ្ណាខេត្តសារសេដ្ឋកិច្ចប័ណ្ណដំបូងសំខាន់ៗ។
В данном документе содержится важная информация. Вам необходимо срочно сделать перевод документа.	Este documento contém informações importantes. Por favor, traduzi-lo imediatamente.	ឯកសារនេះមាននូវព័ត៌មានដ៏សំខាន់ ។
Este documento contiene información importante. Por favor, consiga una traducción inmediatamente.	此文件含有重要信息。請立即找人翻譯。	សូមបកប្រែវាជាបន្ទាន់ ។
تحتوي هذه الوثيقة على معلومات هامة. يرجى ترجمتها فوراً.	본 문서에는 중요한 정보가 포함되어 있습니다. 본 문서를 즉시 번역하도록 하십시오.	Ce document contient des informations importantes. Veuillez le faire traduire au plus tôt.
Docikman sa gen enfòmasyon enpòtan. Tanpri fè yon moun tradwi l touswit.	Tài liệu này có chứa thông tin quan trọng. Vui lòng dịch tài liệu này ngay.	

**v. Web Content**

The SDO is committed to creating web content that creates easy access for LEP constituents. Along with using a short and user-friendly URL, the SDO will have translation boxes below all advertising content sent out stating that the material can be translated via web browser. The website will also have a notice that provides instructions for how to translate the webpage via the LEP constituent’s browser. If LEP constituents need further help with translating the webpages, the material can be translated upon request by following the Written Translation Guidelines section above.

**vi. Multilingual Staff at SDO**

The SDO is committed to hiring and retaining multilingual staff for all positions, but especially for public facing staff and on the agency’s hotlines. The SDO has assembled a LAP team that is ready and willing to help staff translate and communicate with LEP constituents that need assistance in languages spoken by the team. Staff should only be used for informal communications - not to translate official documents, or at events, or any formal interviews of constituents. Here is the list of staff who have volunteered for informal translations:

- Marga Celado: Spanish
- Enkeled Doku: Albanese
- Tom Hall: Spanish
- Bill McAvoy: Spanish (written)
- Sam Gebremichael: French
- Nani Assefa: Amharic

**vii. Interpreter Services for Walk-in Constituents**

A [Language Identification Flashcard](#) is posted on our homepage website for easy access when constituents visit the SDO office for walk-in services. The card states “I speak” in 38 languages and can be used to identify the language spoken by LEP constituents accessing services provided by the SDO.

**viii. Hotline & General Phone Lines**

When staff receive phone calls from LEP constituents, they should:

1. Determine the language being spoken by the constituent.
2. Check with our LAP team to see if any agency members can assist with translation.

3. If still needed, coordinate with Pat and Maryellen as described above and use American Translation Partners to assist with over the phone services. Email Scott Crystal at [request@atptranslations.com](mailto:request@atptranslations.com) to begin the translation process.

### Interpretation for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at SDO Events

The SDO must provide interpretation for the deaf and hard of hearing when requested. The organization hosting the event might request that our office provide interpretation when scheduling and confirming the event. When registering attendees for our office presentation/event, you should provide an option for attendees to request American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for the deaf and hard of hearing.

If ASL interpretation is requested, follow the steps below to request an ASL interpreter. Requests should be made at least two weeks or more in advance of the event. If the services are no longer needed or the event is cancelled, you should provide notice to MCDHH at least three days before the scheduled date to avoid fees.

### **Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)**

ASL interpreters should be requested from the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The process for requesting interpretation is laid out [here](#).

Most events will require two ASL interpreters.

It is possible to request interpreters from multiple organizations and you should make time prior to the event for the interpreters to connect.

#### **c. Staff Training**

The Language Access Plan (LAP) will be:

- a. Posted internally for all employees.
- b. Incorporated into the orientation for new employees.
- c. Presented to management so they are fully aware of and understand the LAP, in order to reinforce the plan's importance and ensure its implementation by staff.
- d. Presented to SDO staff having contact with the public, so such staff is trained to work effectively with LEP constituents and telephone interpreters.

### **VII. Monitoring**

The SDO will review and update its LAP at least every two years or more frequently, as needed.

Such reviews will assess:

- a. Whether there have been any significant changes in the composition or language needs of the population served.
- b. Whether the staff knows and understands the LAP documents and is comfortable using the services described within.
- c. Whether additional documents require translation.
- d. Identification of any issues or problems related to serving LEP persons which may have emerged during the past 2 years; and
- e. Identification of any recommended actions to provide more responsive and effective language services (e.g., adding documents to be translated, hiring of new multilingual staff)

who have volunteered for informal translations, creating, or expanding partnerships with community organizations or changing staffing priorities).

Monitoring the effectiveness of a LAP may include:

- a. Analysing current and previous data on language assistance usage, including languages served.
- b. Surveying staff on how often they use language assistance services, if they believe there should be changes to the services provided or providers used, and if they believe that the language assistance services in place are meeting the needs of the LEP communities in their service area.
- c. Monitoring feedback from community-based organizations, legal services, and other stakeholders about the agency's effectiveness and performance in ensuring meaningful access for LEP individuals.

**Questions?** Contact [bonnie.borch-rote@mass.gov](mailto:bonnie.borch-rote@mass.gov) or 857-408-0583.