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MAURA T. HEALEY
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By Her Excellency

MAURA T. HEALEY
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 615

PROMOTING ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INFORMATION
BY IDENTIFYING AND MINIMIZING LANGUAGE ACCESS BARRIERS

WHEREAS, the Healey-Driscoll Administration is dedicated to ensuring that all persons have equitable access to government benefits and services;

WHEREAS, Massachusetts residents speak a wide diversity of languages, with one in four Massachusetts residents speaking a language other than English at home;

WHEREAS, language can pose a barrier to accessing important benefits and services, understanding and exercising important rights, and understanding information provided by state programs and activities;

WHEREAS, in many instances the law, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other laws, requires that adequate language access be provided, and the Healey-Driscoll Administration is committed to complying with those requirements; and

WHEREAS, executive department agencies have promoted, and must continue to promote, equitable access to government services and information by identifying and addressing language barriers in their programs and operations.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Maura T. Healey, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution, Part 2, c. 2, § I, Art. I, do hereby order as follows:

Section 1. It shall be the policy of the executive department to make programs, services, and information accessible for individuals with limited English proficiency.

Section 2. Within 30 days of this Order, each executive department agency shall designate, and identify to the Governor's Office of Access and Opportunity, a Language Access Coordinator. Such Coordinator shall assist the agency head in complying with the agency's responsibilities under this Order.

For purposes of this Executive Order, the term "executive department agencies" includes any executive office of the Commonwealth, as defined by section 2 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, and any agency, bureau, department, office, or division of the Commonwealth within or reporting to such executive office.

Section 3. Within 120 days of this Order, each executive department agency shall develop, and submit to the Governor's Office of Access and Opportunity, a Language Access Plan.

(a) Such plans shall address but not be limited to the following topics:

- i. The agency's assessment of the degree to which its programs and services serve individuals with limited English proficiency;
- ii. The agency's assessment of the languages spoken by individuals with limited English proficiency who are served by the agency;
- iii. The agency's current policies and practices with regard to the translation of agency documents and the provision of translation services;
- iv. The degree to which the agency's current staff are capable of delivering services in languages other than English and serving as interpreters;
- v. The agency's identification of specific actions and policy changes, with deadlines and responsible personnel, for reducing language access barriers in its programs and services; such actions and policy changes may include the translation of documents, the provision of translation services, and the hiring of individuals who speak languages spoken by the populations served by the agency; and
- vi. Other topics as may be identified in guidance issued by the Governor's Office of Access and Opportunity.

(b) In developing its Language Access Plan, the agency shall:

- i. Consult sources of data including the most recent data available from the United States Census Bureau;
- ii. Consult with community-based organizations that provide services to the populations served by the agency; and
- iii. Consult prior Language Access Plans developed by the agency, including those developed based on the October 12, 2012 Administrative Bulletin from the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, "Language Access Policy and Implementation Guidelines."

(c) The Governor's Office of Access and Opportunity shall review each Language Access Plan. Each agency shall issue a finalized Language Access Plan within 30 days of receipt of comments from the Governor's Office of Access and Opportunity.

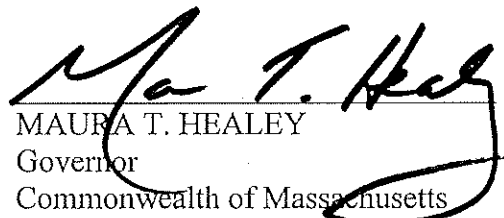
Section 4. Every 2 years after the issuance of its most recent Language Access Plan, each executive department agency shall develop a revised Language Access Plan. Such plan shall follow the provisions of section 3, and shall further assess the agency's progress in implementing actions identified in its prior Language Access Plan.

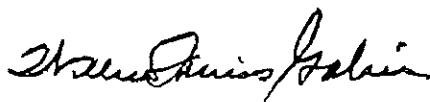
Section 5. Within 45 days of this Order, the Governor's Office of Access and Opportunity shall provide guidance to each Language Access Coordinator on the development of and process for submitting Language Access Plans.

Section 6. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall continue in effect until amended, superseded, or revoked by subsequent Executive Order.



Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston this 13th day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America two hundred and forty-seven.


MAURA T. HEALEY
Governor
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
Secretary of the Commonwealth

GOD SAVE THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS