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Agency Mission and Background

By focusing on three key pillars – good jobs, stronger businesses, and a fairer economy – SBS is committed to ensuring economic security for all New Yorkers by providing a wide range of services that help businesses, jobseekers, and neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs.

TO HELP BUSINESSES:

To help New York City's small business owners compete and thrive, SBS provides free resources through a network of NYC Business Solutions Centers and Industrial Business Providers, located across the five boroughs. Free business services include business courses, financing assistance, recruitment services, pro-bono legal advising, help navigating government and more.

Through NYC Business Acceleration, SBS helps businesses open or expand more easily and faster, operate more smoothly, and recover from disasters. Business Acceleration provides a variety of services to help businesses navigate government rules and regulations, permits, licensing, and inspections. Services include free one-on-one client management, plan reviews, consultations with inspectors, and inspections from City agencies including the Department of Buildings, Fire Department, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Department of Environmental Protection.

Building off of these efforts, the City has launched Small Business First – an interagency initiative to reduce the regulatory burden on small businesses by streamlining processes to make it easier for businesses to interact with the City, and increasing compliance through better and more accessible information and resources available in multiple languages.

SBS also administers the City's Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) program, and offers certification for Locally Based Enterprises (LBE) and Emerging Business Enterprises (EBE). SBS provides one-on-one assistance through the certification process, workshops, and capacity building services like connections to financing, bonding, contract opportunities, mentors, teaming opportunities, and more to help M/WBEs succeed. SBS also operates an NYC Procurement Technical Assistance Center to provide a wide range of services including classes, seminars and individual counseling to help businesses successfully compete for government contracts.

TO HELP JOBSEEKERS:

SBS runs New York City's adult workforce development programs, which connect employers to a skilled workforce and provide training and placement services to the City's adult workforce. A network of Workforce1 Career Centers are located throughout the five boroughs and provide jobseekers with a full array of employment services including career advisement, job search counseling, skills training, and job placement.

SBS is working with our partners in government to deliver on the commitments laid out in Mayor de Blasio's Career Pathways report in order to train New Yorkers for good-paying jobs and help them secure job placements in fast-growing fields. SBS operates Industry Partnerships in six key sectors that provide real-time feedback on employer needs, and supports the implementation of HireNYC, the City's targeted

hiring program to help New Yorkers access training and jobs through the City's purchases and investments.

TO HELP NEIGHBORHOODS:

Through the Neighborhood Development Division, SBS supports local economic development corporations, including New York City's network of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), to keep commercial districts clean and safe, market those districts to consumers, visitors and new businesses, and invest in capital improvements to open opportunities for other economic development initiatives to succeed. SBS offers grants, technical assistance, and capacity building assistance to support these community-based organizations.

Agency Language Access Goals

SBS' goal is to obtain the highest possible quality of customer service, adhering to the spirit and the letter of EO 120, with the highest degree of operational flexibility and the lowest possible ongoing cost of operations. Given SBS' presence in neighborhoods across the city and the proportion of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons in New York City, we must ensure that they can access our services despite language barriers. We will have successfully implemented our plan when providing LEP supports alongside English language offerings will be the new operating normal at SBS. We plan to measure and evaluate our progress to ensure that we are successful, as described in subsequent sections of this Language Access Plan.

Over the course of the year, SBS looks to achieve the following Language Access goals:

- Increasing outreach to build stronger businesses as part of the Immigrant Business Initiative and through Small Business First.
- Continue to provide agency and field staff with clear processes for requesting telephonic/in-person interpretation and document translation.
- Identify and train bilingual/multilingual communications ambassadors: As multicultural media requests increase and as the immigrant outreach grows, we will need to identify volunteers across SBS who are familiar with all of the agency's services and beyond when necessary. These individuals will be called upon to speak in their dominant languages on behalf of the agency when the Press Office is contacted.
- Update and expand our cultural competency training to all employees.
- Update directional signage at all walk-in centers in English and Spanish. This will include a pictograph for languages not covered.

Limited English Population Needs Assessment

Current Needs

After evaluating the customer requests from across the agency, we have determined the top ten languages most requested within our customer base are as follows:

- Bengali
- Polish
- Russian
- Cantonese-Chinese
- French
- Mandarin-Chinese
- Spanish

- Haitian-Creole
- Korean
- Arabic

Executing the Department of Justice Four Factor Analysis

Department of Justice Factor 1:

The number of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service area

In anticipation of implementing our original Language Access Plan, SBS completed an analysis of the linguistic profile of LEP persons in the community districts in which SBS' central office and brick-and-mortar locations are located to determine the number and proportion of LEP individuals in those areas, as well as their preferred languages. We currently leverage data from the American Community Survey to inform our decisions: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/census/popacs.shtml>.

Department of Justice Factor 2:

The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program

SBS has LEP language support request tracking already in place at all Workforce1 Career Centers. We have concluded that there are additional languages besides the City's top six LEP languages that were requested over the course of the quarter. We have also learned that there is a regular influx of LEP speakers into all of our walk-in facilities, which would likely only increase with the implementation of LEP supports, multiple-language web content, and service descriptions.

Department of Justice Factor 3:

The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program

SBS has created Language Access Plan "Snapshots" for each of the Program Divisions and services outlined in the Agency Mission and Background section, with service-specific analysis as to LEP supports available, linguistic profile analyses performed, Essential Public Documents inventoried, etc. The Language Access Plan "Snapshots" allowed us to rank agency's services according to priority level for implementation of the Language Access Plan. SBS' Language Access Plan was built from these service-specific analyses, so that we can implement it in a targeted and effective way, understanding the baseline we have to work with and the service structure and constraints for each of the agency's services.

Department of Justice Factor 4:

Resources available to the Agency

- SBS Staff Foreign Language Skill Locator tool – internal database, searchable and accessible via SBS' intranet, that contains foreign language skills and proficiency levels of SBS staff
- Walk-in facilities' staff existing foreign language skills
- Signage and "I Speak" cards
- City-wide Volunteer Language Bank
- Vendor contracts for phone interpretation, in-person interpretation, and document translation

Prioritization Based on Four Factor Analysis

Below is the ranking of SBS Divisions, Units, and services in order of priority for Language Access Plan implementation:

- Workforce1 Career Centers
- NYC Business Solutions Centers
- M/WBE, LBE, and EBE Certification & Related Services Unit

- NYC Procurement Technical Assistance Center
- Neighborhood Development Division

These programs and services are ordered according to how public-facing it is, and therefore, how accessible it is to individuals; the amount of interaction agency or contracted service providers have with customers that are individuals rather than customers that are organizations (whether local economic development organizations or businesses), as well as the life-cycle stage and approximate size of business of a potential business customer.

It is SBS' highest priority to augment the existing LEP supports in the Workforce1 Career Centers in order to adhere fully to the policy objectives described in EO 120. The Centers, managed by SBS' Workforce Development Division, interact with the highest volume of individuals. These customers are seeking jobs or job-related services such as training and career-advisement, workshops, and job search-related supports.

Enhancing our LEP supports at the NYC Business Solutions Centers is the next highest priority because the NYC Business Solutions Centers are second in the volume of individuals accessing SBS services and in the amount of one-on-one support and interactions customers require. NYC Business Solutions assist entrepreneurs starting businesses, customers who often need more intensive support than established businesses and have fewer resources that they can draw upon internally.

M/WBE, LBE and EBE Certification & Related Services provide access and support for business that aim to bid for and obtain City contracts; therefore it is essential that access to this program be available to LEP individuals. The additional programs and services listed serve increasingly larger and/or well-established businesses rather than individuals; or their services have, as an objective, improvements in customer-produced output that are English-only in nature; in this case, capitalizing on City, State and Federal Government contracting opportunities, which require that proposals be submitted in English.

The Neighborhood Development Division is the next priority because it serves local economic development corporations and community-based organizations, rather than individuals.

Implementation Logistics

Milestone or Activity	Divisions/Units Impacted	% Completed	Target Completion Month & Date	Target Completion Quarter
Identify essential documents	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing
Description/Notes: This includes the creation of an agency-wide one-pager. As an agency, we have to define what an essential document is, but we also have to plan for being able to handle the resulting requests from having these documents translated into the tier one languages: Spanish, Korean, simplified and traditional Chinese, French-Haitian Creole, Russian, and Bengali.				
Translate essential documents	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	ongoing	ongoing	ongoing
Description/Notes: Once the agency identifies all of its essential documents, each division will be responsible for submitting them for approval and translation.				
Update the content on agency Intranet	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	100%	March 31	Q1 - 2015

Description/Notes: SBS will include language access information on the agency's intranet				
Post all available business information in multiple languages to the citywide Language Access Gateway	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	30%	December 31	Q4 - 2015
Description/Notes: This goal depends on the updates to the agency intranet for Language Access and the essential documents translations. As documents become available, they should be sent for upload on the Language Access Gateway.				
Identify and train bilingual/multilingual communications ambassadors	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	0%	December 31	Q4 - 2015
Description/Notes: As multicultural media requests increase and as the immigrant outreach grows, we will need to identify volunteers across SBS who are familiar with all of the agency's services and beyond when necessary. These individuals will be called upon to speak in their dominant languages on behalf of the agency when SBS' Press Office is contacted.				
Update signage at walk-in centers to be bilingual, English and Spanish where appropriate	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	0%	March 31	Q1 - 2016
Description/Notes: Our walk-in centers lack proper signage to direct customers to their offices whether lacking an entry in the building directory or a signage arrow.				
Provide Cultural Sensitivity training to frontline staff	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	0%	March 31	Q1 - 2016
Description/Notes: At the NYC Business Solutions Centers, Workforce1 Centers, Employment Works Centers, and our Emergency Response Unit, our customers are greeted by the frontline staff made up of receptionists, security guards, and administrative managers. As an agency, we only have one chance to make a good impression. We will work with our City partners to find an appropriate class that will teach the frontline employees how to treat a Limited English-proficient customer, which may include those with limited sight, hearing, and mobility.				
Provide Cultural Competency training to SBS Agency staff	BDD, NDD, DEFO, WDD, DBA	0%	March 31	Q1 - 2016
Description/Notes: Working with our EEO unit, all SBS employees should receive cultural competency training. This would go beyond cultural sensitivity training and focus on the ethnic and lingual breakdown of NYC. The class should answer questions such as what's the difference between simplified and traditional Chinese, why Castilian Spanish and Latin American Spanish are distinct, why French is not sufficient to communicate with someone who may only speak French Creole, etc.				

Provision of Language Access Services

- Signage at Public Service Locations
 - SBS is currently in the process of closing and opening new centers across the five boroughs. During this transition, programs have been reminded to ensure proper signage at all locations.
- Interpretation Services

- Staff: SBS has been requesting that our contracted vendors recruit bilingual staff at the walk-in centers to meet the needs of the community in which they serve.
- Phone Interpretation Vendor: Voiance is the current phone interpretation provider when a staff member is not available.
- In-Person Interpretation Vendor: When we have community meetings, press events, and other larger scale in-person situations, we rely on both bilingual staff and an in-person interpreter provided by our vendor, Geneva Worldwide.
- Translation of Written Material
 - Essential Public Documents: This is an ongoing need as our services evolve to meet the needs of the market and community.
 - Marketing Materials/Notice of Services Provided: This is an ongoing need as our services evolve to meet the needs of the market and community.

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