

The New York City Law Department

LANGUAGE ACCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

I. Name and Title of Language Access Coordinator: **Sosimo Fabian, J.D., Ph.D.**
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II. Agency Mission and Background:

The New York City Law Department's lawyers and support professionals work to pursue justice while providing the City with the highest quality legal representation. The Law Department represents the City, the Mayor, other elected officials, and the City's many agencies in all affirmative and defensive civil litigation as well as in juvenile delinquency proceedings brought in Family Court, and Administrative Code enforcement proceedings brought in Criminal Court.

The Corporation Counsel for the City of New York has a special responsibility for the pursuit of justice, while serving the long-term institutional interests of the City. Justice is demonstrated not only in the manner in which we advocate and counsel clients, but is also demonstrated in how the Law Department's operations are managed. Our external legal work and our internal work environment both must continue to reflect our core values: a commitment to public service, excellence, integrity, diversity and justice. To that end, the Law Department is committed to ensuring that it provides equal access to services and seeks to continuously improve language access for its limited English proficient (LEP) clients.

III. Agency Language Access Policy and Goals:

The overall goal of the Law Department Language Access Plan (LAP) is to provide language access services so that persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to the information provided by the Law Department's direct public services.

Part of this goal is to provide a welcoming environment to LEP persons, including an environment that makes it easy for employees to communicate with members of the LEP community. The Law department will work towards providing seamless communication with LEP persons. The Law Department has the capability of providing interpretive services in many languages. See Exhibit A.

IV. Limited English Proficient Population Assessment:

The Family Court Division of the New York City Law Department is the most likely to provide direct public services. The Family Court Division promotes the well-being and best-interest of the City's children that, for a mirage of reasons, find themselves within the Juvenile Justice System while balancing the need to protect the public. The Division also establishes orders of child support and paternity on behalf of out-of-state custodial parents from City residents, and assists custodial parents who live in the City to file for child support from parents who live

outside the state and the country.

Historically, the five most common languages requested by the Family Court Division were Spanish, Chinese-Mandarin, Bengali, Russian and Arabic. See Exhibit B. Notably, while these are the most popular languages others can be provided.

V. Provision of Language Access Services:

REQUESTING “LIVE” INTERPRETER SERVICES

When a “live” interpreter is required, the attorney handling the matter must send an email to “StenosNYC@law.nyc.gov”.

The email must include the case name, case number (Docket #, if no docket #, then the FCD#), date, time, location, type of service (live interpreter) and language, as well as the name and telephone number of the Assistant Corporation Counsel (ACC) making the request.

1. The email request must be sent to “StenosNYC@law.nyc.gov” no later than 3:00 p.m. one day prior to the requested date for the interpreter.
2. If there is a request for special services, such as an out-of-office location, Sign Language Interpreter, and/or special type of Interpreting language (an unusual language), this should be submitted ASAP because advance notification for special services is needed.
3. The ACC must confirm with the Interpreting Coordinator via e-mail (“StenosNYC@law.nyc.gov”) or by phone ([212-356-3555](tel:212-356-3555)) at the end of the day to make sure each request has been received. Any cancellation should be emailed to “StenosNYC@law.nyc.gov” at least 2 hours before the activity time to avoid payment of a cancellation fee by the Law Dept.

REQUESTING “TELEPHONIC” INTERPRETING SERVICES

When telephonic interpreting is required, the attorney must seek approval to access the services from a supervisor. Once a supervisor has approved, the company the Law Dept. contracts with for these language line services (currently VOIANCE) must be called with the request. The number to call to access these services is currently (866) 998-0338. The attorney should follow the automated instructions once the phone is answered. Callers will be directed to enter the Law Dept.’s account number and then the Law Dept.’s PIN number to access the telephonic interpreting services. The caller will then be told to hold for the next available Client Services Representative. The caller should provide the Client Services Representative with his/her name.

VOIANCE has provided the following instructions for using the “InterpreTalk” system:

- Dial:
- Enter the Law Dept.’s Account number:
- Enter the Law Dept.’s PIN number:

- Give the Client Services Representative your Full Name and make sure that they record it.
- Tell the Client Services Representative what language you need the interpreter to speak.
- Wait on hold momentarily while an interpreter is contacted.
- Listen for the Client Services Representative to return to the line with the interpreter.
- Have the interpreter give you his/her ID number and record this number.
- Give the interpreter a brief introduction of the call.
- Ask the interpreter to dial your LES (Limited English Speaker) at the number you provide.
- Before dialing, you may ask the interpreter to leave a specific voice mail message if the LES does not answer the phone.
- Before the call is connected, remind your interpreter that taking notes during the call is not permitted. If there is an issue, please have the interpreter contact a supervisor at VOIANCE immediately.
- Speak directly to your LES (Limited English Speaker) in the first person - the interpreter will repeat everything that is being said.

REQUESTING THE TRANSLATION OF A DOCUMENT

To have a document translated, an approval from the Division Chief is required. All approvals can be obtained via email. Once approved, the request is forwarded via email to "StenosNYC@law.nyc.gov".

When emailing "StenosNYC@law.nyc.gov" with your approved request, the following information must be provided:

- The document to be translated.
- A word count of the document.
- The date the translation is needed.

INTERACTIVE PROCESS

In determining which service and or language is needed. Law Department staff will engage in an interactive dialogue with the member of the public to assess the language needed to best serve the member of the public. Additionally, the Agency will post in public places multi-language signage reflecting the availability of interpretation services.

VII. Training

The Family Court Division periodically disseminates instructions on how to obtain translation services. All Family Court Managers know the Law Department and City of New York language access policy.

The New York City Law Department has the capability to provide interpretive services through the NYC DCAS Language Service Contract. Annexed as Exhibit A are the languages for which interpretive services are available.

The Law Department will train staff on its language services access policies and procedures by incorporating as part of the annual EEO training provided. The Training will be conducted by the Diversity & EEO Officer, Sosimo Fabian.

Topics to be covered during the training session will be the rationale for language access, the City's demographics, and the agency's language access policies, resources, standard procedures, identifying customer/clients primary language, reporting requests for language services, use of dual handsets, and the use of telephonic interpreters.

As part of the agency on boarding and yearly EEO training cycle, staff members will be made aware of the requirements mandated by Local Law 30. Additionally, instructions will be provided on how to access the telephonic interpreting services. The population trained will be documented by having the attendees sign in and out of the training session.

VIII. Record Keeping

The agency will track language services quarterly and will maintain records of the language services provided.

The agency will conduct a random sampling of staff that has used language services in the quarter to assess the delivery and quality of its language services.

The Language Access coordinator will track any language request made via 311 or any complaints received as well as the training that is done in furtherance of local law 30.

IX. Resource Analysis and Planning:

The agency currently has a contract for interpretive services which fully permits it to comply with Local Law 30.

X. Outreach and Public awareness of Language Access services

The agency will place on its website the availability of its language assistance services. Furthermore, the agency will post signs in conspicuous places informing the public of the interpretive services that are available. Also, the training that will be provided to Law

Department staff will include encouraging that this services be mentioned as part of the interaction with members of the public.

XI. Language Access Complaints

The Language Access Coordinator will monitor all complaints made and will quarterly review all interpretive services requested. The Language Access Coordinator email will be made available and identified as the individual who is responsible for receiving, tracking, and resolving complaints. As part of the quarterly reporting to DCAS any complaints will be reported as well as how they were addressed.

XII. Implementation Plan Logistics

The Language Access Coordinator is Sosimo Fabian, Tel. No. 212-356-7110, email: sfabian@law.nyc.

This Language Access Plan will be implemented by 8/1/2021. It is worth noting that the Law Department has been historically in compliance with these requirements.

The Language Access Coordinator has ensure that all necessary signage are posted in areas where members of the public are able to see it. The Language Access Coordinator will also make sure that the intranet as well as the internet pages for the Law Department that are available to the public contain the pertinent information on how to obtain language access services.