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SECTION 1: Overview & Context

Department Mission

The Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) creates quality jobs, helps small businesses and high-road employers start and grow, and builds vibrant local communities and spaces. Language access is intricately connected to DEO's mission in several ways:

- 1. Quality Jobs:** Ensuring language access means that job opportunities are accessible to individuals regardless of their language preferences. By providing language assistance in job application processes, training programs, and workplace communications, DEO can help individuals secure quality employment opportunities.
- 2. Support for Small Businesses:** Language access facilitates communication between DEO and small businesses, especially those owned by individuals whose primary language may not be English. This support can include translating business resources, facilitating access to government programs and services, and assisting with compliance requirements, all of which contribute to the growth and sustainability of small businesses.
- 3. High-Road Employers:** High-road employers prioritize fair wages, good working conditions, and opportunities for advancement. Language access ensures that all employees, regardless

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of their linguistic background, can fully understand their rights, benefits, and responsibilities within the workplace. This creates a more inclusive and equitable work environment, aligning with the principles of high-road employment practices.

- 4. Vibrant Local Communities:** Language access contributes to the creation of vibrant and inclusive local communities by breaking down language barriers and fostering communication among residents from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This inclusivity promotes community engagement, participation in local events, and access to essential services, all of which are vital for building strong and cohesive communities.
- 5. Spaces for Growth:** Language access creates spaces where individuals feel welcomed, valued, and empowered to contribute to their fullest potential. Whether it's through language-specific outreach programs, multilingual support services, or culturally responsive initiatives, DEO can create environments where all individuals can thrive, thus fostering economic and social growth within communities.

In summary, language access plays a crucial role in advancing DEO's mission by promoting equity, inclusion, and economic opportunity for all individuals and businesses in LA County.

Department Priority Languages

DEO's Priority Languages includes English, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

DEO's priority languages were based on key client populations to ensure they receive accessible services in their primary languages. These will be constantly monitored and updated to ensure we are able to service our communities.

SECTION 2: Department Language Access Plan (DLAP)

General Policy Statement

DEO is committed to ensuring equitable access to its programs, services, and resources for all individuals, including speakers of Languages Other Than English (LOTE). We recognize the importance of providing language access to facilitate meaningful engagement and participation in our initiatives, regardless of linguistic background. Through our language access policies and practices, we strive to remove barriers and promote inclusivity, thereby fostering diverse and vibrant communities where all individuals can thrive.

Scope of Policy

This General Policy Statement applies to all stakeholders involved in DEO's programs, services, and operations, including but not limited to:

- 1. Recipients/Clients:** Individuals and communities receiving DEO's programs and services are

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also served under this policy to ensure they have equitable access to information and resources in their preferred languages.

2. **Employees:** This includes all staff members, from frontline workers to management and administrative personnel, who are responsible for implementing DEO's initiatives and interacting with stakeholders.
3. **Contractors:** Any external entities or individuals contracted by DEO to provide goods or services must also adhere to this policy statement when engaging with stakeholders or conducting activities on behalf of DEO.
4. **Volunteers:** Individuals who volunteer their time and services to support DEO's mission are expected to uphold the principles outlined in this policy statement when interacting with stakeholders or representing DEO in any capacity.
5. **Partners and Collaborators:** DEO collaborates with various organizations, agencies, and community partners to achieve its mission. This policy statement extends to these external partners, requiring them to align their practices with DEO's commitment to language access.

This General Policy Statement applies to anyone involved in DEO's endeavors, whether they are employees, contractors, volunteers, or partners, to ensure consistent adherence to the principles of language access across all aspects of DEO's operations.

SECTION 3: Key Terms & Definitions

To establish clarity and ensure mutual understanding, the following key terms and concepts are defined within this DLAP.

Term	Definition
Cultural Competency	The ability of DEO staff and stakeholders to effectively communicate and interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, including understanding and respecting cultural norms, values, and communication styles.
Language Access	The provision of language assistance services to ensure meaningful access to DEO's programs, services, and resources for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or who are speakers of Languages Other Than English (LOTE).
Language Access Complaint	Common scenarios include but are not limited to the availability of language services not communicated to the public, when language services were not provided when requested, and when the quality of language services did not meet the needs of the LOTE speaker.
Language Assistance Services	Services provided to LOTE individuals to facilitate communication and access to DEO's programs, services, and resources. This may include interpretation (oral or signed languages) and translation (written) services).

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Preferred Language	The primary language in which an individual prefers to read, write, and speak.
Qualified Interpreter	An individual who possesses the necessary language skills, proficiency, and knowledge to interpret spoken communication accurately and effectively between English and the LOTE spoken by the individual.
Speaker of a Language Other Than English (LOTE)	Also known as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or English Language Learner (ELL), this designation refers to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who do not read, write or speak English
Translation	The process of converting written text or documents from one language (e.g., English) into another language (e.g., Spanish) while maintaining accuracy, clarity, and cultural sensitivity.

By establishing a common vocabulary around language access, DEO aims to promote consistency, clarity, and effectiveness in its efforts to ensure equitable access to services and resources for individuals who are speakers of languages other than English.

SECTION 4: Procedures

DEO employs a systematic approach to identify a LOTE speaker's preferred language. This includes:

- 1. Bilingual Staff and Interpretation Services:** Bilingual staff members and contracted interpretation services are available to assist in communicating in some languages, and if there is not someone on-site, an on-call Video Remote interpreter will be engaged to assist in any of the County's threshold languages.
- 2. Digital Tools:** Our online platforms and apps include language preference settings, allowing clients to select their preferred language for digital interactions and communications.
- 3. Sharing DLAP with Staff:** Once the DLAP is finalized it will be shared with all current employees, so they are aware of DEO's language access policies and procedures and priority languages. New staff will be presented with a copy of the DLAP during orientation.

By implementing these procedures, DEO ensures that LOTE speakers receive the necessary support to access programs and services in their preferred language.

Vital documents

DEO, newly launched in July 2022, recognizes the critical importance, and commits to ensuring that LOTE individuals have access to essential documents that are necessary for enrolling, remaining enrolled, and maintaining continued access to County programs, services, or benefits

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whether in person or digitally. Most documents utilized and required by DEO are mandated via state and federal regulations as determined by our partners with the United States Department of Labor and the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD). DEO also has ongoing meetings with its AJCC operators to provide critical updates and share information. DEO uses these calls to share information relating to language access and services. These essential documents encompass a range of materials, such as:

- Application/intake forms
- Detailed explanations of eligibility criteria
- Comprehensive program guidelines
- Digital and print updates regarding any changes to all programs and services

As DEO continues to cement itself as the leading voice of workforce and economic development in LA County, we are making a commitment to making all vitals documents available in DEO's identified priority languages – thus removing language barriers, promoting inclusivity, and enabling LOTE speakers to fully understand, engage with, and benefit from County initiatives. This commitment underscores DEO's dedication to equitable access and the empowerment of diverse communities within the County.

SECTION 5: Notification of Language Assistance

Information about available language assistance resources is publicized in meeting agendas, information guides and various channels to ensure individuals who are speakers of LOTE are aware of their rights to language access. DEO will have prominently displayed notices in multiple languages at DEO offices, on the DEO website, and on printed materials such as brochures, forms, and informational documents. Additionally, DEO utilizes multilingual staff members, interpretation services, and translated materials to communicate the availability of language assistance services during interactions with LOTE individuals. DEO also provides information about language assistance services through community outreach efforts, social media platforms, and partnerships with community-based organizations serving linguistically diverse populations. Through these comprehensive notification methods, DEO aims to ensure that all individuals have equal access to its programs, services, and resources, regardless of language preference.

SECTION 6: Monitoring Language Assistance Effectiveness

Ensuring Standards for Language Service Providers

DEO has utilized language services for its policy making capability including the Workforce Development Board and its supporting activities as well as operationally through its AJCCs. DEO leverages existing Countywide Master Agreements for language service providers who can be available by phone or remote video, and in-person situations such as AJCC walk-in clientele. DEO ensures that both internal and external language service providers meet our standards and needs through the following methods:

1. **Selection Process:** Bilingual staff undergo a thorough selection process that includes language proficiency testing and certification. External vendors are selected based on their

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demonstrated experience and qualifications in providing high-quality language services.

2. **Compliance with Standards:** All language service providers are required to comply with national and state standards for language access, including confidentiality and accuracy in translation and interpretation.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Metrics and Effectiveness of DLAP

Beginning in FY 2025-26, DEO will collect annual metrics to track the effectiveness of the language assistance provided through:

1. **Service Usage Data:** We will identify and analyze data on the usage of language services which will be identified and reported.
2. **Feedback Mechanisms:** We maintain open channels for clients and staff to provide feedback on language services, which are reviewed and used for continuous improvement. DEO staff will solicit feedback from clients who use our language service provider once they are onboard.

As our department expands, we will continue to explore means of measuring satisfaction through surveys and other methods of collecting community feedback to further enhance the quality of language assistance services. By constantly evaluating and reporting these metrics annually, this will allow us to monitor progress, make necessary adjustments, and continuously improve our services. DEO is committed to our DLAP and data collection efforts that are both impactful and responsive to community needs.

DEO Bilingual Staff

As of June 30, 2025, there are 5 bilingual staff members certified in LOTE. Staff members achieve certification through a standardized County testing process that assesses their proficiency in both written and oral or signed communication.

Contracted Language Services Providers

Currently, DEO utilizes county vendors for language services on a case-by-case basis. Historically, DEO has worked with The Sign Language Company for sign language services, and Translation 4 All Inc. for translation and interpretation services across all languages. Moving forward, DEO will use ISDs On-Demand Interpretation and Translation Services (ODITS) Master Agreement.

Complaint Process

DEO is committed to providing linguistic and culturally appropriate services to all County residents. If there is a complaint, there are multiple ways to file a complaint including:

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1. Submitting a Complaint Form (See Attachment I) and emailing the form directly to the DEO at jdegonia@opportunity.lacounty.gov .
2. Complaints may also be filed directly with the Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA) by calling the OIA's Language Access Manager at (213) 948-2956 who will document and route the complaint to the DEO.

Within ten (10) business days from receipt of a direct language access complaint or notice from the OIA of a language access complaint, complainants will receive an email from jdegonia@opportunity.lacounty.gov acknowledging receipt of the complaint. The DEO's language access liaison will field complaints and conduct initial reviews. If the complaint requires further investigation, it will be handled by a designated team within the DEO. This team will gather relevant information, interview necessary parties, and assess the situation to determine appropriate actions. The DEO will aim to resolve the complaint and offer a resolution within ninety (90) days of receiving the complaint, per the Countywide Language Access Policy. Complainants will be informed via email of the outcome and any corrective measures taken to address the issue.

SECTION 7: Training

DEO is committed to ensuring all staff understand their language access duties and has made the plan available on the website.

DEO will share the DLAP with new staff during employee orientations and provide ongoing staff training. The training will ensure that all employees understand their language access responsibilities, are aware of department procedures and know the available resources.

DEO has ongoing meetings where representatives from each of the AJCCs participate and hear service updates. Annually, at one of the regular meetings, staff will include on the agenda a discussion and presentation relating to language services and access. This presentation will include the same information referenced above, including DEO's process to track and rectify the complaints to ensure DEO and its AJCCs are uniform in procedure and operations.

SECTION 8: Community Outreach & Engagement

DEO actively incorporates the participation of key linguistic communities into its work through various strategies aimed at engaging and collaborating with diverse language groups. DEO recognizes the importance of involving community members who are speakers of LOTE in the development, implementation, and evaluation of its programs, services, and initiatives. To achieve this, DEO employs culturally and linguistically competent outreach strategies, including targeted community events and outreach materials that are available in our priority languages. DEO also partners with community-based organizations including Los Angeles Latino Chamber of Commerce and its AJCC operators.

Within DEO is the Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board which will be undertaking its Local Area Plan and working with regional partners for the Los Angeles Basin Regional Plan.

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Any feedback from stakeholder meetings associated with public comments from those plans can be incorporated into the Language Access Plan. Additionally, DEO utilizes multilingual materials, such as translated brochures, websites, and social media content, to disseminate information and resources in languages relevant to the communities it serves. By actively involving key linguistic communities in its work, DEO strives to foster trust, build relationships, and enhance the relevance and effectiveness of its programs and services for all individuals.

LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINT FORM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Hilda L. Solis

Holly J. Mitchell

Lindsey P. Horvath

Janice Hahn

Kathryn Barger

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Kelly LoBianco
Director

Jessica Kim
Chief Deputy

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Administrative Deputy

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*Assistant Director, Business
and Economic Development*

Kate Vacanti
Assistant Director, Workforce

Krystin HENCE
*Assistant Director, Capital
Development*

GET IN TOUCH

510 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020
opportunity.lacounty.gov
deo@opportunity.lacounty.gov
844-777-2059

America's Job Centers:

(888) 226-6300

Office of Small Business:

(844) 432-4900



Thank you for helping us improve our Language Access services! We are committed to ensuring everyone can use our services in different languages. Your feedback helps us serve you better. Please use this form to tell us about your concern(s) and how we can improve.

Why Use This Form?

Please complete and submit this Form if we did not provide you the language help you needed, such as assistance with interpreting and/or translating services.

What Happens Next?

1. Once we receive your Form, our department will review and respond to your complaint.
2. Follow-up: If you do not get an acknowledgement from us, within 10 business days, please contact us at deo@opportunity.lacounty.gov.
3. Our Department will let you know how we addressed your complaint as soon as possible, but no later than **90 business days** from the date we receive your complaint.

How to Fill Out This Form

1. Check the issue: Is your complaint about language help, such as assistance with interpreting and/or translating services?
2. Complete the Form: Fill in all the details so we understand.
3. Send us the form: Select the best option for you:
 - a. Email: jdegonia@opportunity.lacounty.gov
 - b. Mail: Print and send to:

Department of Economic Opportunity
c/o DEO Language Access
510 S. Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90020

If you have questions or need help, contact us via email at jdegonia@opportunity.lacounty.gov.

ONLY USE THIS FORM FOR LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINTS

Is your complaint about not getting help in a language other than English, like needing an interpreter or a bad translation?

Yes

No

If you selected “No,” this is not a language access complaint. Please contact us at (844) 777-2059 or deo@opportunity.lacounty.gov for other concerns. If you select “Yes,” continue to the next section.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Today’s Date:

First Name:

Last Name:

E-mail Address:

Phone Number:

Street Address:

City:

Zip Code:

How do you want us to contact you?

E-mail

Phone

Mail

What language do you prefer for **reading** and **writing**?

What language do you prefer for **speaking** or **signing**?

ABOUT YOUR COMPLAINT

What language did you need help with?

Where did the issue happen?

In person (at a County office)

Street Address:

City:

Zip Code:

Over the phone

Date of call:

Time of call:

Online

Website or social media account:

What went wrong? (Check all that apply)

- I didn't know I could ask for an interpreter or translation help.
 - Information about County programs or services was not available in my language.
 - The written translation was hard to understand.
 - No County staff spoke my language to help me.
 - The interpreter did not translate correctly.
 - Other (please describe):
-

Tell us more about your complaint.

How do you want your language access complaint resolved?

Did Someone Help You Fill Out This Form?

If yes, please provide their details.

Name:

Organization/Department:

Phone Number:

E-mail Address:

ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

You may submit this Form without providing your name. However, if you choose to remain anonymous, we will not be able to contact you for more details or update you on the outcome.

Please note: Complaints may be made public under California Law.