

Language Access Plan



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California Department of Aging

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Introduction

As part of ensuring meaningful access to programs and services, the California Health and Human Services (CalHHS) Agency adopted a Language Access Policy on May 22, 2023, which requires each CalHHS department or office to develop a Language Access Plan. The goal of this work is to ensure that CalHHS and its departments and offices provide meaningful access to information on programs, benefits, and services to people with limited English proficiency (LEP) and ensure that language is not a barrier to accessing vital health and social services.

In accordance with the CalHHS policy, this document is the California Department of Aging's (CDA) Language Access Plan (LAP). In developing this Plan, CDA has reviewed its programs and services for the public, the ways it communicates with members of the public and the people served by the department, and how it currently provides information on its programs and services in languages other than English. According to a CDA data table (2023), it is projected that over 450,000 seniors (aged 60 years and over) are non-English speaking.¹

CDA remains steadfast in its commitment to serving current and potential program participants who have LEP. This Plan covers CDA's existing systems and services as well as addressing those that will be implemented in the future utilizing its own resources and those available via other CalHHS partners.

Department Programs and Services

CDA's mission is to promote the independence and well-being of older adults, adults with disabilities, and their families through:

- Access to information and services to improve the quality of their lives;
- Opportunities for community involvement;
- Support for family members providing care;
- Protect vulnerable older adults who reside in licensed facilities; and
- Collaboration with other state and local agencies.

The CDA administers the programs and services listed Table 1 to the public and its target service population of older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers and residents in long-term care facilities throughout the State. These services are primarily provided locally by the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), Medi-Cal Community Based Adult Services (CBAS) centers, or other contracted agencies. The one exception is the program of the Office of Long-Term Care Patient Representative which is operated by CDA in partnership with two other local entities.

¹ 2023 California Department of Aging (CDA) Population Demographic Projections by County and PSA for Intrastate Funding Formula (IFF). Data source is the American Community Survey (2015-2019).

Table 1: CDA Programs

Program Name	Program Description
Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)	Offers a wide array of services to older adults and people with disabilities although not all AAAs provide ADRC services.
CalFresh Expansion (Seniors Eat Well)	Provides much needed monthly food assistance to California seniors and offers economic benefit to local communities.
CalFresh Healthy Living (Nutrition & Exercise)	Provides evidence-based nutrition and physical education activities for older adults aged 60 and older.
Caregiver Resource Centers (CRCs)	Offers legal, counseling, education, and respite support by serving families and caregivers of those with Alzheimer’s Disease, stroke, Parkinson’s Disease, and other disorders.
Community-based Adult Services (CBAS)	Provides community-based health programs to older adults and adults with chronic medical, cognitive, or behavioral health conditions and/or other disabilities that place them at risk of needing institutional care.
Family Caregiver Services	Addresses the unique needs of family members who provide care to a relative. Available services may include respite care, training, counseling, and more.
Food and Nutrition	Serves healthy meals in a group setting or at a nutritional site. The Home-Delivered Meals Program provides nutritious meals, nutrition education, and nutrition risk screening.
Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) – Medicare Counseling	Provides free, confidential one-on-one counseling, education, and assistance to individuals and their families on Medicare, Long-Term Care insurance, other health insurance related issues and planning for Long-Term Care needs.
Health Promotion: Evidence-based Programs	Provides Health Promotion programs focused on fall prevention, support for caregivers, and managing chronic health conditions in a variety of settings.
Home & Community Based Supportive Services	Enables older adults to access resources that support healthy living and promote independence. Some of the services include but are not limited to, information and assistance, CalFresh Healthy Living, transportation, and care management.
Legal Services	Assists older adults and adults with disabilities with a variety of legal programs concerning housing, consumer fraud, elder abuse, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicare, Medi-Cal, age discrimination, pensions, nursing homes, protective services, conservatorships, etc.
Long-Term Care Ombudsman	Assist residents in long-term care facilities with issues related to day-to-day care, health, safety, and personal preferences.

Program Name	Program Description
Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP)	Provides both social and health care management services to assist individuals to remain in their own homes and communities.
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Provides job training to low-income, unemployed adults aged 55 and over.
The Office of the Long-Term Care Patient Representative	Provides trained representatives for specific long-term care residents who may need medical treatment but lack the capacity to make health care decisions and have no legal surrogate authorized to make decisions on their behalf.

Language Access Requirements

In planning for how to provide meaningful language access moving forward, CDA reviewed the following four factors² for each of our programs:

1. Number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or service;
2. Frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with the program;
3. Nature and importance of the program, activity, or service; and
4. Resources available to our department and costs of language services.

CDA also considered the specific requirements in the CalHHS Language Access Policy, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC2000d); Affordable Care Act 1557 regulations; the California Government Code Section 11135, and the California Health and Safety Code Section 1418.8 (m) (1)-(3).

Please note that this plan does not address CDA’s process for conducting or reporting on the biennial language survey required under the Dymally Alatorre Bilingual Services Act.

CDA is in alignment with CalHHS’s top five threshold languages of Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tagalog.

Providing Notice to People with LEP and Identifying Language Preference

² In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Four Factor Analysis provides a framework for assessing and ensuring meaningful access to programs and activities by LEP persons.

CDA provides interpretation and translation language services at no charge to individuals with LEP through its contracted services with qualified and certified interpreters available to assist in multiple languages, including American Sign Language (ASL).

CDA notifies the public about available language assistance services that are free of charge using the following tools:

“I Speak” cards or posters will be placed at public reception desks.

The availability of free language assistance services is noted on all public meeting and forum announcements issued by CDA.

The listing of Equity@aging.ca.gov will be added to the CDA website as the primary contact point for the public to request free translation and interpretation services.

CDA’s statewide toll-free California Aging and Adult Information Line (CAAIL) (1-800-510-2020) currently has three language options – English, Spanish, and Chinese (Mandarin). CDA will evaluate this information line to further explore options for adding other languages and connecting to telephone interpretation services.

CDA is committed to improving its current measures to ensure that individuals who have LEP can fully access information about its programs and services. To gain further insight and feedback on its LAP and its accompanying reports, CDA will share information with and gather input/feedback from some of its existing consumer advisory committees, such as the Equity Advisory Committee on Aging and Disability, through other forums composed of individuals from diverse backgrounds, and via other communication venues with individuals who have LEP.

Language Services

Direct In-Language Communication

At present, there are no certified bilingual staff at CDA. This option may be further explored as a possible means to augment the contracted interpretation services currently available. Current and/or prospective CDA staff could be surveyed to identify those who may qualify to be formally tested for a bilingual certificate, in accordance with the CalHR Human Resources Manual (Section 1003).

In the interim, CDA staff can access telephone interpretation services as described in the section below.

Interpretation

To assist members of the public, consumers, and program participants who have LEP, CDA has a contractor to assist with telephone interpretation services via a 3-way call. These interpreter services will connect CDA staff with assistance from certified bilingual/multi-lingual interpreters covering a range of different languages, including ASL. These interpreters are well qualified and have been certified by professional entities such as the National Interpreting Certification program.

CDA has also contracted interpretation services that are available to assist staff in working with members of the public who have LEP or who need ASL interpretation for a meeting, webinar, or any other type of public event. To access these interpretation services that are offered in multiple languages, CDA staff currently contacts the Communications Office to place a request. CDA will be expanding its staff training to ensure greater awareness of the availability of these interpretation/translation services as well as how these interpretation services can be more effectively used.

Translation

The public can make requests for translations via Equity@aging.ca.gov. These translation services are available to the public at no cost.

Vital Documents

Table 2 below contains a list of the Vital Documents that were identified by CDA staff from its various programs. These vital documents represent a range of different types of forms or notices that are used for outreach promoting the availability of services and the enrollment process or when dealing with denials, appeals, complaints, and other related matters. CDA currently offers to translate these documents upon request at no charge and is working to translate all identified vital documents into the five threshold languages utilizing contracted translation vendors.

Essential Website Content

CDA will identify and post its “essential public website content,” which at a minimum will consist of information covering the basic elements of its various programs and services, about how to access its free translation and interpretation services, and addressing other pertinent information. CDA’s essential public website content will be translated into the five threshold languages and posted on its website to ensure that members of the public who have LEP are able to fully access critical information in their preferred language.

ASL Video Content

The plan is to also add an ASL video clip describing the department and its programs along with the availability of free sign language interpretation services.

Written Communication

When CDA receives written communication in any language other than English, a staff member will work with its contractor to have the document translated by a certified translator. After composing the written response in English, the response will be translated by the translation service. And as needed, the staff member may also work with the translator to communicate via a three-way call to verbally address the concerns raised by the author of the written communication.

Training Staff

This section includes information on how CDA staff are trained to provide language access services to the public.

Training Plan

Public Facing Employees

Language access training will be provided to all current public-facing employees no later than December 1, 2024, and at least annually thereafter. New staff hired into public contact positions will receive language access training within their first three months of employment.

The topics of the more intensive training for Public Facing Employees will include, at a minimum, CalHHS language access policy; background on the federal requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other pertinent federal/state laws or regulations; California demographics pertinent to the LEP population; how to identify an individual's language preference; processes and procedures for providing language assistance services; and how to work effectively with interpreters (in person, telephone, video, as applicable). Ongoing technical assistance will also be a critical part of this training program. Levels of training and follow-up will differ depending on how often staff are in contact with the public. Annual assessments and review will be conducted.

Initially the training may be conducted as a group session for all current CDA public-facing employees and then subsequently as individual training for new hires assigned to a public-facing position. The training will be coordinated by the CDA Human Resources Branch (HRB) in conjunction with the Office of Equity.

Non-Public Facing Employees

This section describes the process for training CDA employees who are not in public contact positions.

The training for Non-Public Facing employees will be offered to all CDA staff but will be required of program leadership, employees involved in the development of public-facing documents or other materials or updating/maintaining department websites, and others whose work may indirectly impact the public. The training for Non-Public Facing Employees will also cover the CalHHS language access policy; background on the federal requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other pertinent federal/state laws or regulations; California demographics pertinent to the LEP population; different means for identifying an individual's language preference; the processes and procedures at CDA for providing language assistance services; and ways to work effectively with interpreters (in person, telephone, video, as applicable). In addition, there may also be a focus on the types of translations and accompanying guidelines to help translators maintain consistency and accuracy throughout the translation process.

The training will be coordinated by CDA's HRB in conjunction with the Office of Equity. Various training topics may be addressed during the standing monthly CDA Office Hours sessions. Other training formats may also be offered. The training will begin no later than December 1, 2024.

Monitoring and Updating LAP

This section describes how the CDA will monitor language access services and update this Language Access Plan at least every two years. This information will ensure that the CDA is compliant with the CalHHS Language Access Policy and that its processes and procedures deliver meaningful language access to members of the public and recipients of services.

CDA will create a monitoring program or process to ensure the implementation of details included in the LAP. This process will entail:

- Assessing employee awareness of the LAP;
- Assessing the effectiveness of the training of Public-Facing Employees and Non-Public-Facing Employees;
- Assessing employee knowledge on how to access translation and interpretation assistance services;
- Identifying additional training needs;
- Identifying the amount and type of language services (interpreter services, translations) provided;
- Tracking cost of providing language access services;
- Assessing the effectiveness, timeliness, and quality of interpretation and translation services;
- Tracking new and updated translated Vital Documents;
- Monitoring complaints and resolutions;
- Soliciting and reviewing feedback on the language access services with community partners and stakeholders; and/or
- Analyzing and reviewing data pertinent to LEP needs and services.

Consistent with CalHHS Policy, the CDA LAP will be reviewed, revised if necessary, and resubmitted to CalHHS every two years. As part of the biennial review process, CalHHS will generate and update the list of minimum threshold languages for the translation of vital documents and essential web content. CDA's revisions will address any changes in its Title VI four-factor analysis; whether existing policies and procedures are adequately meeting the needs of LEP individuals; whether staff is sufficiently trained; and whether identified resources for assistance are up-to-date, available, accessible, and viable.

Reevaluations will incorporate, as appropriate, new programs, new legal requirements, new tools/technologies, additional vital documents, and community input on the Language Access Plan.

Complaint Process

Members of the public or recipients of services should direct complaints regarding language access to Equity@aging.ca.gov

Table 2: Document List

The following is a list of **vital documents identified by** CDA. Included are the five threshold languages required by the CalHHS Language Access Policy. The public can contact Equity@aging.ca.gov to request translations.

LEGEND: IP = In Progress; March '25 = completion anticipated by March 2025; TA = Translation currently available.

Program or Service Name	Form #	Form Name	Spanish	Chinese (traditional)	Chinese (simplified)	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Korean	Additional Languages
Office of the Long-Term Care Patient Representative		Notice of Interdisciplinary Team Review of Proposed Medical Intervention or Treatment	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
		Notice of Interdisciplinary Outcome	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
		Notice of Interdisciplinary Team Review of Emergency Medical Intervention or Treatment	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman	S101	LTC Ombudsman Witnessing of Advance Health Care Directive (AHCD)	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request
	S102	LTC Ombudsman Witness	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request

Program or Service Name	Form #	Form Name	Spanish	Chinese (traditional)	Chinese (simplified)	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Korean	Additional Languages
		Addendum to an AHCD							
	S104	LTC Ombudsman Witnessing of Property Transfer	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request
	S201	Consent to Access and Disclose Confidential Information	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request
	S202	Authorization to Release Information and Testify	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request
	S604	Discharge Notice Guidance	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request
	S900	Grievance About the LTC Ombudsman	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	TA	Upon Request
	SOC	341 NEED a Title for this document	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
Division of Home and Community Living – Older Adult Programs Branch		Caregiver Resource Center Information and Referral Intake Form	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
		Enrollment Application Tool CDA SCSEP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request

Program or Service Name	Form #	Form Name	Spanish	Chinese (traditional)	Chinese (simplified)	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Korean	Additional Languages
		CSA Tool CDA SCSEP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
	9120	Participant Form SCSEP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
	9121	Community Service Assignment Form SCSEP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
	9122	Unsubsidized Employment Form SCSEP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
	9123	Exit Form SCSEP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
		SCSEP Data Validation Third-Party Attestation Omnibus Signature Form	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
		SCSEP Data Validation Self-Attestation	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	IP	Upon Request
		Omnibus Signature Form	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
Division of Home and Community Living – Person Centered Navigation Branch		ADRC Consumer Experience Survey	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request

Program or Service Name	Form #	Form Name	Spanish	Chinese (traditional)	Chinese (simplified)	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Korean	Additional Languages
Division of Home and Community Living – Health at Home Branch	CDA 700	ADHC/CBAS Participation Agreement	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
		ADHC/CBAS Participant Rights	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	MSSP 13	Application for the Multipurpose Senior Services Program	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	16	MSSP Participant Rights	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	3	Notice of Action – Change in MSSP Services	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	2	Termination of MSSP Notice of Action	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	5	MSSP Request for State Hearing	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	4	State Hearing Notice – Your Right to Appeal this Decision	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	7 & 8	MSSP Nondiscrimination Notice and Language	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request

Program or Service Name	Form #	Form Name	Spanish	Chinese (traditional)	Chinese (simplified)	Tagalog	Vietnamese	Korean	Additional Languages
		Assistance Tag Lines							
	13	Application for MSSP Under Institutional Deeming Procedures	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request
	14	De-Institutional Services Request	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	March '25	Upon Request