



SUBJECT: Language Access Policy		COORDINATOR: Civil Rights & EEO Programs	
NUMBER OF PAGES: 4	DATE ESTABLISHED: 6/2024	REVISION DATE:	REFERENCE NUMBER:

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) is committed to providing its programs and services free from discrimination, including on the basis of national origin and limited English proficiency. Cal OES is committed to ensuring that all persons, who are non-English speaking, or Limited English Proficient (LEP), are provided timely and meaningful access to available programs, activities, and services, in compliance with state and federal civil rights laws and regulations.

- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Executive Order 13166
- Dymally-Alatorre Multilingual Services Act (Dymally-Alatorre Act)
- California Government Code section 11135

All employees are responsible for ensuring that the public is treated with dignity and respect, identifying the language needs of our customers, and utilizing available bilingual resources to assist those customers, when needed, free of charge. All programs shall deliver services in ways that recognize individual differences and are sensitive to cultural differences. Effective communication with customers who are non-English speaking shall be achieved through bilingual staff, translated written materials, and contracted interpreter/translation services.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Bilingual Person**

A person who is proficient in both the English language and the non-English language to be used. A non-English language can include alternative formats for English language such as American Sign Language (ASL) or Braille.

### **Certified Bilingual Employee**

A Cal OES staff member who is certified to provide bilingual services to customers.

**Contracted Telephone-Based Interpretation Services**

A contract between a private vendor and a state agency to provide interpretation services via the telephone for a rate according to a contractual agreement.

**Interpretation**

The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.

**Limited-English Proficient (LEP) Person**

A person whose primary language is not English and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. This includes people who communicate with a sign language such as American Sign Language (ASL) or read in an alternative format such as Braille.

**Non-English-Speaking Person**

A person who either does not speak English, or who is unable to effectively communicate in English, because it is not their native language.

**Primary Language**

The language that a person identifies as the language in which they prefer to communicate.

**Program Beneficiary**

An individual or entity who is eligible for and/or receives a program service or benefit (e.g., program participants, customers, clients, consumers, members of the public, etc.).

**Public Contact Position**

A position designated by Cal OES, whose duty statement specifies that they will meet, contact, and deal with the public through the performance of the agency's functions. Public contacts include in-person, emails, faxes, letters, telephone, social media, and Teletypewriters/Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TTY/TTD).

**Subrecipient**

An individual, organization, entity, agency, or local jurisdiction that receives state or federal grant funding through Cal OES.

**Translation**

The written transfer of a message from one language to another.

**TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES**

Cal OES serves as the state's leadership hub during all major emergencies and disasters, to support the diverse communities across the state. Therefore, Cal OES will take reasonable steps to:



- Provide accessible services in the LEP individual's non-English native or preferred language.
- Provide accessible services on an equal basis to people with disabilities in accessible formats.
- Incorporate language access into outreach activities when necessary to provide meaningful access. Language access strategies will be determined in part based on the target audience.

Cal OES's certified bilingual staff are recruited for and appointed into designated bilingual positions that are approved through the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Office. The designated bilingual position, not the employee, must be in a work setting where bilingual skills are required to meet the needs of the public in either:

- A direct public contact position.
- A position utilized to perform interpretation, translation, or specialized bilingual activities for the department and its customers.

Cal OES will train its public contact employees on their obligations to provide meaningful access to information and services for LEP persons.

Cal OES may utilize contracted vendors for telephonic interpretation, in-person interpretation, or translation of written materials as needed.

Cal OES will conduct a language needs survey every two years in even numbered years and will update its Language Access Policy in the following odd-numbered year in accordance with The Dymally-Alatorre Act. This periodic review, will ensure that a bilingual service plan is in place and adequate bilingual services are being provided to customers based on the most current population being served by Cal OES.

LEP or non-English-speaking persons may contact their program representative or the Cal OES EEO Office to obtain information in an alternate format or language.

### **LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINTS**

The Cal OES Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity Programs (EEO Office) is responsible for Cal OES's language assistance coordination. EEO staff will investigate and help resolve language access complaints filed by the public.

All language access complaints, and/or questions about the Bilingual Services Program or Policy, should be directed to the Cal OES EEO Office, by email to [eeo@caloes.ca.gov](mailto:eeo@caloes.ca.gov) or by mail to:


California Governor's Office of Emergency Services  
Equal Employment Opportunity Office  
3650 Schriever Avenue  
Mather, CA 95655

## POLICY DISSEMINATION

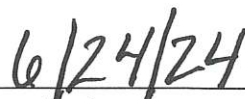
A copy of this policy shall be made available to Cal OES program beneficiaries and Subrecipients through inclusion in program materials, posting on the Cal OES website, and providing a copy of the policy upon request.

Cal OES Grants Management will issue a memo to Subrecipients explaining the policy for program beneficiaries (referred to as Subrecipients) with links to the Cal OES website where Subrecipients can read the policy in their entirety. This policy will be made available on the Grants Management homepage, which is the main landing page for Subrecipients that receive DHS and DOJ funding. In addition, Grants Management will incorporate information about this policy in our Standard Assurances, which must be signed by Subrecipients prior to executing their Grant Subaward agreement. By signing the Grant Subaward agreement, the Subrecipient agrees to comply with all applicable federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination and providing language access.

Approved:



Lisa Mangat, Chief Deputy Director  
California Governor's Office of Emergency Services



Date