

Annual Report on Implementation of Language Access

New York City Law Department

11/21/2020



This annual report provides an update on the agency's implementation of its Language Access Implementation Plan, as required by Local Law 30 (2017). The report covers activity during calendar year 2019.

This report also addresses updates for agencies covered by Local Law 73 (2003).

Section 1: Agency Information

Agency name **New York City Law Department**

Name of the agency's Language Access Coordinator (LAC) and all office titles held by this individual. **Sosimo Fabian, J.D. Ph.D,
Chief EEO & Diversity Officer
Chief, Special Litigation Unit**

Link to the agency's Language Access Implementation Plan (LAIP) posted on the agency's website. **<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/law/downloads/pdf/Language%20Access%20Plan.pdf>**

Year the LAIP was last updated **2019**

Section 2: Agency language access policy and goals

Describe your agency's language access policy and how it is communicated to staff.

The Law Department's Language Access Policy aims to provide access to language services in a manner which individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to the Law Department's direct public services. For the most part, the Law Department delivers services to the public indirectly. Members of the public who interact with the Law Department are mostly litigants, represented by counsel who can advocate for their client's language service needs. For unrepresented litigants, the Law Department acts to ensure that they also have fair access to language services by working with the litigants and court administration staff to ensure that appropriate language services are provided. The Family Court Division is the agency's most outward provider of direct services. The Family Court Division conducts outreach to victims in delinquency cases to ensure that they are offered necessary services and personal protection. The division also communicates with members of the public to advocate for dispositions for young offenders in a manner consistent with public safety. At onboarding, and periodically throughout their employment, Law Department staff who interact with the public are trained or instructed on how to access appropriate contracted language service providers. Most frequently, our staff utilize live interpretation and telephonic interpretation services.

Section 3: Provision of language services

(Refer to Administrative Code §23-1102 a.; §23-1102 b. (2, 5, 6, 7, 11); §23-1102 c.)

1.- Subcategory: Translation

(§23-1102 a.(1))

Describe the progress that the agency has made in translating its most commonly distributed documents into the 10 designated languages.

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The Family Court Division has translated all of its standard documents. They are available for access on a shared directory and physical copies are available. During calendar year 2019, the division sent approximately 5 documents to be translated from English to Spanish. For other divisions, periodic instruction regarding how to access document translation services is provided.

2 - Subcategory: Telephonic Interpretation

(§23-1102 a.(2) and §23-1102 c.)

Describe the progress the agency has made providing telephonic interpretation during the previous calendar year.

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The agency continues to provide telephonic interpretation services upon request. The agency continues in its commitment to work seamlessly with litigants and the public to provide language services. To that end the Law Department continues to provide both in person and telephonic language access as needed.

3 - Subcategory: In-Person Interpretation

(§23-1102 a.(2))

Describe the progress the agency has made providing in-person interpretation during the previous calendar year.

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The agency continues to provide in-person interpretation language services to litigants. Employees

communicating with members of the public who require live interpretation services are able to arrange for services in advance. Staff can ascertain prior to interacting with litigants, witnesses and/or victims whether live interpretation services are needed and arrange for interpretation with the contracted provider. During the last fiscal year , the agency provided in-person interpretation services on approximately 1200 occasions, in 38 languages. The agency continues its commitment to work seamlessly with litigants and their respective attorneys to provide language services upon request.

4 - Subcategory: Posting of multilingual signage about the availability of free interpretation services
(§23-1102 a.(3))

Describe the progress the agency has made posting multilingual signage about free language services. Identify any relevant goals from the agency’s most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

Multilingual signage regarding free language services is posted in all Family Court Division offices citywide. Signage is posted in publicly visible office areas. The agency will develop a protocol to check for the presence and visibility of signage regarding free interpretation services in the Family Court Division offices. During the last fiscal year, I visited all Law Department occupied office space to ensure that signage in required language was appropriately posted..

5 - Subcategory: Emergency Preparedness and Language Access
(§23-1102 b.(5))

Describe the agency’s progress to ensure that language access services are provided during an emergency response. Identify any relevant goals from the agency’s most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

In the event of an emergency, the agency is equipped to provide information on the Law Department’s internet site. The site offers translation resources in 104 languages.

6 - Subcategory: Language Access Considerations in Agency Communications
(§23-1102 b.(6))

Describe your agency’s progress toward making other types of agency communications (such as emergency notifications, public hearings and events, press releases, website content, social media, and other communications to the public) accessible to individuals and/or communities with Limited

English Proficiency (LEP).

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The Law Department's website content continues to be accessible in multiple languages via the translation capability. Website content is accessible in 104 languages.

7 - Subcategory: Plain Language
(§23-1102 b.(7))

Describe the agency's progress in ensuring that communications with the public are in plain language. Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

Supervisors continue to conduct plain language reviews of source language for documents prior to translation.

8 - Subcategory: Licenses, Permits, and Registrations
(§23-1102 b.(12))

*Note: The deadline for this section of Local Law 30 is June 30, 2020. Provide updates as applicable.

If your agency issues licenses, permits, and registrations, describe its progress toward providing language access when issuing licenses, permits, and registrations.

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The Law Department does not issue any licenses, permits and/or registrations to to the public.

Section 4: Training

(Refer to §23-1102 b.(8))

Describe the agency's progress in developing training on laws and agency policies and protocols on language access, and in training staff.

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The agency's Operations staff in addition to division-designated liasons are available to assist staff with accessing language interpretation services. Family Court Division staff receive training regarding telephonic and in-person interpretation services. Instructions for accessing language services are also included in the agency's LAIP, in select on-boarding training materials and via the Family Court division's internal website page.

Section 5: Record keeping and evaluation

(Refer to §23-1102 b.(3) and §23-1102 b.(4))

Describe the progress your agency has made in record keeping of language services and monitoring the delivery and quality of language services. Include any considerations that may influence the agency's "four-factor analysis."

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The agency continues to track the use of language services on a quarterly basis. Agency staff are asked to report any problems with telephonic or in person interpretation services to designated liasons and/or supervisors for follow-up. The Language Access Coordinator will address any internal or external complaints regarding the provision of language services. In accordance with our goal of conducting a random sampling of staff to assess delivery and quality of language services, this quarter one staff member was asked to provide feedback regarding the delivery and quality of language services during the 2019 calendar year. We endeavor to expand this sample on an ongoing basis to include feedback from additional staff members.

Section 6: Resource analysis and planning

(Refer to §23-1102 b.(11))

Describe the progress your agency has made in managing its language access resources (including staff and contracted services) to facilitate and/or improve language access. Include any considerations that may influence the agency's "four-factor analysis."

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

Divisions who frequently utilize language access resources have designated liasons to facilitate staff requests for interpretation services with contracted providers. Suggested improvements are reported by the staff and the facilitators are able to manage the relevant communications to ensure improved access.

Section 7: Outreach and public awareness of language access services

(Refer to §23-1102 b.(9))

Describe the progress your agency has made in implementing strategies and outreach activities that will create public awareness of your agency's language assistance services. Include any updates regarding public awareness of the 311 Language Access complaint system.

Identify any relevant goals from the agency's most recent LAIP, progress toward those goals, and any related accomplishments.

The nature of the agency's work lends itself to limited direct public engagement. As such, the agency relies primarily on staff to identify and facilitate language assistance for litigants, witnesses or victims whenever appropriate.

Section 8: Language Access complaints

(Refer to §23-301 and §23-1102 b.(10))

1 - Describe how members of the public can submit language access complaints, questions and requests to the agency.

Members of the public may contact Sosimo Fabian, the agency's Language Access Coordinator at (212)356-7110 with any language access complaints, questions, or requests.

2 - How many *language access complaints* did the agency receive via 311 during the previous calendar year? How were they handled?

Not applicable

3 - How many *requests for language access services did the agency receive through 311 during the previous calendar year? How were they handled?**

Not applicable

***NOTE: "Requests for additional language services"** refers to new ways in which the agency can make its services or information available to those who do not read or speak English well – e.g., translating a specific brochure into additional languages, or providing bilingual staff at a particular service facility. It does NOT refer to individual requests for interpretation.

Section 9: Language Access Goals

List your agency's language access goals for Calendar Year 2019.

During calendar year 2020, the agency will deliver additional communications to all staff regarding available language access services. The agency will continue to incorporate its language service access policies and procedures into its on-boarding and regular staff training cycles. The agency will develop a protocol to check for the presence and visibility of signage regarding free interpretation services in the Family Court Division offices.

Addendum: Reporting questions for Local Law 73

(Refer to §8-1007 and §8-1008 d. of the Administrative Code)

***Note:** This section applies only to those agencies covered under Local Law 73: ACS, DHS/HRA, DOHMH.

1 - Record the number of LEP individuals served during Calendar Year 2018, disaggregated by primary language; agency contractor, contractor, or agency office *[HRA only]*; and assistance type required. *[Add rows as needed]*

Language	Agency contractor, contractor or agency office <i>[HRA only]</i>	Type of assistance required (<i>translation; telephonic interpretation; onsite interpretation</i>)	2018 Language Services instances (<i>number</i>)

2 - Record the number of bilingual and interpreter personnel employed by the agency, broken down by language translated or interpreted. *[Add rows as needed]*

Language	Number of staff

3 – How does the agency assess whether primary language determinations are properly recorded?

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4 – How does the agency assess whether documents are translated accurately and disseminated properly?

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