

Procedures for Determining the Need for Language Assistance

The procedures detailed below provide staff guidance ensuring Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals have meaningful access to City programs and services. These procedures were developed in support of the City's language access policy ([CW-033](#)). Staff can also reference the [Language Access Quick Guidance](#) document to access the same material found within this document.

If staff have further questions regarding Language Access assistance, please contact Angel Taherazer at ataherazer@seatacwa.gov.

Use these procedures for the following:

1. At point of first contact with LEP individual
2. To prepare for public meetings and events
3. At Public meetings
4. To identify vital documents
5. To create outreach for public projects
6. To schedule interpretation & translation services
7. To budget for language services

Links to these resources can also be found on the Language Access and Non-Discrimination Resource page of the City Website.

At point of first contact with LEP individual

- Generally, the City should use its own resources to assist LEP individuals before utilizing an individual's family members; including children, neighbors, friends, and acquaintances to provide language assistance services
- Staff will make reasonable efforts to assess the need of language assistance. Staff can determine language assistance needs in several ways, including:
 - Self-identification by the LEP individual
 - Inquiring as to the primary language of the individual if they have self-identified as needing language assistance services.
 - Using a Language Identification guide
 - Found on page 3-4 of [Language Line Instructions](#).
 - If necessary, staff should notify the individual that language assistance may be available upon request.
 - Over-the-phone interpretation services can be set up using the [Language Line Instructions](#).
 - If the above options are not feasible, over-the-phone Video Remote Interpretation (VRI) services can be set up at by following this [link of VRI Services](#).
 - Guidance for accessing VRI services can be found within the [Video Remote Interpretation Instructions](#).
 - [Goggle Translate](#)
- If translation services are needed for generalized information, staff can use the following resources on their phones or computers:
 - [Goggle Translate](#)

- [Instructions for Google Translate](#)

DO NOT USE PHONE TRANSLATIONS TO COMMUNICATE IMPORTANT INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTATION!

A qualified interpreter should be used to provide service to LEP individuals when communicating important information, especially those documents that communicate matters of liability.

Phone translations are approximations and misinterpretations are possible.

To prepare for public meetings and Events

- Public meetings are any time a public body gathers for the purpose of conducting public business.
- Free, demand-based interpretation for public meetings will be advertised in notices prior to any public meeting. LEP individuals will be asked to give at least 2 business days' notice for accommodations to allow adequate time for scheduling interpreters for the requested meeting. However, if staff know that language accommodations will be needed, they should work to set language services up at least 7 days in advance.
 - Staff can use language found within the [Template Notices of Language Accommodations](#) to notify the public of their right to request language services.
 - If a LEP individual arrives to a public meeting without providing notice to the City, staff will make their best effort to provide access to language assistance (**See: At point of First Contact with LEP individual**). However, due to limited notice, service may not be available in such cases.
 - If a City department is planning a community meeting where they expect community members from a LEP population to attend, staff will secure appropriate language services in advance of the meeting (**See: To schedule interpretation & translation services**). For these meetings, staff should advertise availability of language services in multilingual outreach materials.
- If the language requested is not available through a local language service, City staff will work with the requesting individual to determine what options are available.

At public meetings

- City staff will provide access to the City's Title VI Public Engagement Form at all public meetings.
 - This form will be accessible in the following formats:
 - [Online Title VI Public Engagement Form](#)
 - [Online Title VI Public Engagement Form Spanish](#)
 - [Online Title VI Public Engagement Form Vietnamese](#)
 - [Online Title VI Public Engagement Form Amharic](#)
 - [Online Title VI Public Engagement Form Somali](#)

 - [Hard-copy Title VI Public Engagement Form](#)
 - [Hard-copy Title VI Public Engagement Form Spanish](#)
 - [Hard-copy Title VI Public Engagement Form Vietnamese](#)
 - [Hard-copy Title VI Public Engagement Form Amharic](#)
 - [Hard-copy Title VI Public Engagement Form Somali](#)

- Access to these forms must be available to any public participant. Staff will provide both online and hard-copy formats at all public meeting.
- Hard-copy forms will be submitted to Brion Humenay, City Manager’s Office for record keeping.

To identify vital documents

- Vital documents are any paper or electronic written materials that contains information that is critical for accessing the City’s program or activities or as required by law.
- Per the City’s Language Access Policy (CW-033), each department is responsible for establishing a process to identify vital documents.
 - These processes and the vital documents that have been identified can be found within the [SeaTac Vital Document Processes](#)
 - If staff believe that a document could contain vital information, staff should work with their department to run the document through these established processes.

To create outreach for public projects

- For any project where outreach information is deemed vital, staff will work to translate these materials into the City’s top languages.
 - This may include outreach materials that explain the time and location of public meetings/events, or materials that may explain the project plan in a particular location.
 - Staff can find language service providers that have been previously used by the City within the [City Vendor List for Language Services](#) document.
- When conducting public outreach surveys, staff should include the questions found within the [Title VI Public Engagement Surveys](#) as part of the survey. Be sure to note that answering those questions is optional for respondents.

To schedule interpretation & translation services

How to request interpretation or translation services

- The City will use a variety of interpretation and translation services, including:
 - Professional interpretation and translation through contract services with local language service organizations.
 - [City Vendor List for Language Services](#)
 - Professional telephone interpreters
 - [Language Line Instructions](#)
 - Video Remote Interpretation
 - [Request VRI Services](#)
 - [VRI Instructions](#)
- City staff should allow as much time as possible in advance of needed language services to secure interpretation and translation services. **Best practice is to schedule interpreters 1-2 weeks ahead of an event.**

Budgeting for language services

- If translation or interpretation services will be provided as part of outreach or a meeting for a plan or project, those services will be budgeted against that project or plan.

- If ad hoc translation or interpretation services are requested, this service will be billed against the individual department's budget in which that service was provided. This includes over-the-phone language services.