



Washoe County General Language Accessibility Policy

Accessibility Statement

Washoe County is committed to providing equitable and timely access to our programs and services and acknowledge that language should not be a barrier to accessing governmental programs and services for our residents with limited English proficiency.

Purpose & Authority

In accordance with Nevada Assembly Bill 266 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 2 C.S., 561 et seq. (Act 172 of 2006) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, this policy establishes an effective plan and protocol for Washoe County personnel to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, individuals who have limited English proficiency. Washoe County has established a Language Access coordinator, under the Title VI program in Human Resources. For feedback related to language accessibility at Washoe County, please contact equity@washoecounty.gov.

General Policy Principles

- Ensure equitable and meaningful access to all Washoe County programs, services and activities through effective communication.
- This policy and plan apply to all programs, services, and activities for which the County is responsible through funding and statute.
- Washoe County seeks to reduce barriers by increasing capacity to deliver programs and services to our citizens in their preferred language.
- The County, rather than the limited English proficient (LEP) person, has the responsibility to provide appropriate language services, regardless of the preferred language, and therefore, (1) no staff may suggest or require that an LEP individual provide an interpreter to receive services, and (2) the use of informal interpreters such as family, friends, and other customers is not allowed and minors are prohibited from acting as interpreters.
- The County acknowledges there may be emergency or exigent situations that will require the use of alternative and informal language services or interpreters to address the immediate needs of the LEP individual.
- The County will ensure that all emergency notices made to the public will be available in the languages currently available for voting materials in the County.
- Department staff will be trained on when to recognize those circumstances that may require interpretation and translation services, including those that may require specialized services, and provide those appropriately, even when there are bi-lingual staff available.

