



Department of Human Resources

Language Accessibility Plan

Areas of Compliance for Language Access Plan

In accordance with Assembly Bill 266 of the 82nd Session of the Nevada Legislature (AB 266), Washoe County will build a multi-year plan which includes a roadmap to gain full compliance with the legislation. Below is a summary of the compliance areas that are part of the plan:

Compliance Summary

- **Public Notices in Multiple Languages:** The governing body of a city with a population of 25,000 or more located in a county with a population of 100,000 or more must ensure that any public notice issued by the planning commission of the county is available on the county's website in every language in which voting materials are required to be prepared according to federal and state law. *"Public notice" means any notice or other written matter that the planning commission of the county is required to send by mail to a person or post in a public manner, including, without limitation, by posting on an Internet website.*
- **Certified Translations:** The county must make a good faith effort to find certified translators to translate the information required in public notices.
- **Designate Staff:** The Board of County commissioners in a county with a population of 100,000 or more must designate one or more employees to be responsible for developing and biennially revising a language access plan for the county.
- **Language Access Plan:** The language access plan must assess the existing needs of residents with limited English proficiency and the degree to which the county is meeting those needs, outline compliance with language access laws and regulations, provide an inventory of language services and current training and resources for staff, identify areas of improvement, and include recommendations to expand language services to improve overall access to county services.
- **Data tracking/statistics:** If there is insufficient information available to develop or update the language access plan in accordance with the AB 266 requirements, procedures shall be developed to obtain that information and include the information in any revision to the language access plan. Departments will be required to track the language requests received within each department. In accordance with LAP development, once established, departments will follow the specified procedures to catalogue the request, format, and solution provided to citizens requesting language services.
 - Departments will report the data quarterly to the Language Access Coordinator. Data must be reported by the third Friday of each quarter-end month (October, January, April, July).
- **Submission of Language Access Plan:** By August 1 of each even numbered year, the county must submit their language access plan to the Nevada Office for New Americans.
- **Public Input:** The Board of County Commissioners shall solicit public input concerning the language access plan.
- **Funding:** The Board of County Commissioners shall include any funding necessary to carry out a language access plan, including any additional funding necessary to meet the needs of residents who are persons with limited English proficiency served by the county in the proposed budget for the county.
- **Ongoing compliance:** Washoe County will conduct an annual review of language accessibility and its service population. A report will be submitted to the State of Nevada, Office of New Americans, Language Access Coordinator by August 1 of even numbered years.



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Language Accessibility Plan

Language Accessibility Compliance & Roadmap

Phase 1 (FY24)

Area of Compliance	Status
1. Needs Assessment: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the language services and processes currently being offered in Washoe County departments for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals and identify the gaps that will need to be addressed as part of a Language Access Plan (LAP) and for compliance with Assembly Bill 266.	DONE (FY24)
2. Language Services Inventory: Identify and document the language services available or to be provided, including translation, interpretation, bilingual staff, language hotlines, and other resources. Add additional fields in SAP to begin tracking preferred and additional languages spoken by employees. Establish process and procedures for county staff to help other departments with translation and interpretation needs.	Aug '23-March '24
3. Budget Allocation: Allocate appropriate financial and staff resources to support the implementation and maintenance of language access services.	To be submitted with FY25 budget process
4. Language Access Coordinator: Designate staff responsible for overseeing and implementing the language access plan for Washoe County. The plan will be monitored through ONA's LAP Coordinator.	DONE (FY24)
5. Complaint Mechanism: Establish a process for receiving, investigating, and resolving language access-related complaints from LEP individuals by utilizing the existing Title VI process.	DONE (FY24)
6. Community Engagement & Outreach: Initial community survey to solicit public input into the process and development of the LAP.	Jan-June '24
7. Technology Pilot: Pilot the use of AI technology within departments as a language access tool and resource for staff and citizens.	Jan-June '24
8. Public Notice Translation: Develop a process by which public notices and meeting agendas issued by the Washoe County planning commission become available on the county's website in every language in which voting materials are required.	Jan-June '24
9. Vital Document Identification: Develop procedures for designating certain information and documents as vital, to be translated in Phase 2.	Jan-June '24
10. Department Signage: Determine the most critical signage needs in departments and begin implementation where appropriate.	Jan-June '24



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Phase 2 (FY25)

Area of Compliance

11. **Staff Training:** Develop and implement training programs for government employees to effectively communicate, provide language access services to LEP individuals and develop cultural competency.
12. **Outreach and Public Awareness:** Develop and implement strategies to inform LEP communities about available language access services and their rights to access government programs and services.
13. **Translation of Vital Documents:** Translate the essential information and vital documents identified in Phase 1 into preferred languages of residents.
14. **Interpretation Services:** Determine the appropriate modes of interpretation (e.g., in-person, telephone, video) for different situations and ensure access to certified interpreters when needed.
15. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Foster partnerships with community organizations, language service providers, and other stakeholders to enhance language access.
16. **Data Collection:** Create a system for collecting data and developing electronic records of residents served by the county who have limited English proficiency.

Phase 3 (FY26+)

Area of Compliance

17. **Bilingual Staffing:** Assess the need for bilingual staff and develop a plan to recruit, hire, and train staff who can communicate effectively with LEP individuals.
18. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Implement mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of language access services and periodically evaluate the language access plan for improvements.
19. **Continuous Improvement:** Develop strategies to address identified gaps and continuously improve language access services based on feedback, evaluation results, and changing community needs.
20. **Reporting:** Determine reporting requirements, including submitting the language access plan and related data to relevant oversight bodies as required by law.
21. **Law and Regulation Compliance:** Outline the compliance of the county with existing federal and state laws and regulations and any requirements associated with funding received by the county.



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Language Accessibility Plan – Initiative Roadmap

FY24-26+ Initiative Roadmap

Area of Compliance	FY24 Initiatives	FY24	FY25	FY26+
Needs Assessment	Department Input Sessions: Meet with representatives from each department to gather the information needed to assess the degree to which the county is currently offering language services to residents with Limited English Proficiency.	X		
	Community Engagement & Outreach: Initial community survey to solicit public input into the process & development of the LAP.	X		
Language Services Inventory	Language Services Inventory Report: Identify and document the language services available or to be provided, including translation, interpretation, bilingual staff, language hotlines, and other resources.	X		
	Staff Language Inventory: Add additional fields in SAP to start tracking preferred and additional languages spoken by employees and work with departments to update employee records.	X		
	Cross-Departmental Support: Establish process and procedures for county staff to help other departments with translation and interpretation needs.	X		
Written Translation	Public Notice Translation: Develop a process by which public notices issued by the planning commission become available on the county's website in every language in which voting materials are required.	X		
	Vital Document Identification: Develop procedures for designating certain information and documents as vital, to be translated in Phase 2.	X	X	
	Public Facility Signage: Identify high use public facilities and those in predominantly Spanish speaking neighborhoods (e.g. Regional Parks & Libraries, Admin Complex) to be top priority during translation in Phase 2.	X	X	X
	Staff Language Inventory Analysis: Analyze the information gathered from SAP on preferred and additional languages read and written by staff.			X
Interpretation Services	Wordly.AI: Pilot Wordly.ai across several county departments to see if it could be an effective live interpretation tool for departments. Collect feedback on its effectiveness.	X		
	Department Signage: Implement signage in departments with oral language services available to inform residents of those services, including adding "I Speak" cards and posters for language selection across all departments.	X	X	
	Staff Language Inventory Analysis: Analyze the information gathered from SAP on preferred and additional languages spoken by staff.			X
	Standardized Interpretation Process: Develop and adopt a standard approach for departments to deploy interpretation services.		X	X
	Comprehensive Bilingual Resources: Enhance in-house bilingual resources by broadening language capabilities, especially in languages frequently encountered in the community.			X
Budget Allocation	Budget Allocation: Identify the financial and staff resources needed to support the implementation and maintenance of language access services, and request budget allocation in the FY25 budget cycle.	X		
Complaint Mechanism	Complaint Mechanism: Formal process for receiving, investigating, and resolving language access-related complaints from LEP individuals. This falls under Title VI and will follow the established Title VI process.	X		





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Language Accessibility Plan – Initiative Roadmap

Area of Compliance	FY24 Initiatives	FY24	FY25	FY26+
Staff Training	Regular Training and Skill Development: (1) Staff will be trained in Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, AB 266 and the County’s Language Access Plan; (2) Identify and invest in regular training and skill development for staff to maintain and improve their language proficiency; and (3) Identify and deploy Cultural Competency Training to all employees. Training will be required biennially for existing staff and built into the onboarding process for new employees and occur biennially thereafter.		X	X
	Standardized Language Proficiency: Implement standardized language proficiency testing and certification processes to ensure consistent and accurate assessment of staff language skills across all departments. Adjust bi-lingual pay policy in accordance with new certification requirements.		X	X
	Bi-lingual pay: Assess current bi-lingual pay structure and modify in alignment with certification practices.		X	
Outreach & Public Awareness	Expanded Community Outreach: Expand participation in community outreach events, job fairs, and educational initiatives to strengthen connections with local communities		X	X
	Public Facility Signage: Implement signage in public facilities, beginning with the highest use public facilities and those in predominantly Spanish speaking neighborhoods that were identified in Phase 1.		X	X
Vital Document Translation	Vital Document Identification and Translation: Standardize the criteria for identifying, tools for translating, and quality assurance verification for vital documents for Assessor, Clerk, Recorder, Community Services (all divisions), District Attorney’s Office, Sheriff’s Office, Treasurer, at a minimum.		X	X
Data Collection & Analysis	Data Collection: Create standardized procedures for collecting the preferred language and literacy level of residents served across the county. Possibly edit vital documents to include demographic data and/or create an additional system for state or federal forms that cannot be edited.		X	
	Electronic Records: Establish a centralized collection and reporting mechanism across the organization and by service/program area (Excel, Accela, HSA case management software).		X	
	Identify Needs: Analyze the data collected to identify program areas with unmet needs, such as areas with high need for vital documents in a language other than English or Spanish.		X	
Bilingual Staff	To be determined based upon current staffing levels and analysis of preferred language needs in program service areas.			X
Monitoring & Evaluation	To be determined based upon evaluation and analysis of the FY24 and FY25 roll-out, implementation of LAP and initial reporting structures.			X
Continuous Improvement	TBD			X
Reporting	Submit biennial plan to Nevada’s Office for New Americans, Language Access Plan Coordinator by August 1, 2026.			X
Law & Regulation Compliance	Ensure language access plan stays current with federal, state and local/regional trends and law revisions.			X