



DCYF LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

DCYF does not discriminate and provides equal access to its programs and services for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, veteran or military status, status as a breastfeeding mother, and the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability or use of a dog guide or service animal. If you would like free copies of this publication in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations at 1-800-723-4831 or email communications@dcyf.wa.gov.

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Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

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Nondiscrimination

DCYF does not discriminate on the basis of any class protected under state or federal law, including race, creed/religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, use of a dog guide or service animal, military or veteran status, immigration or citizenship status, or status as a breastfeeding parent. If you need this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact us.

Introduction and Purpose

The Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) has the mission to protect Washington's children and strengthen families so they flourish, by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, child care and early education services. In partnership, DCYF contracts with non-profit and other community organizations to provide services to children, youth, and families. DCYF commits to provide meaningful, timely, high-quality, and equitable language access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP)¹ so that all persons, no matter what they speak as a preferred language, receive equitable access to all DCYF programs and services.

DCYF has created language services and programming for populations with LEP, and is committed to continue to reflect an inclusive culture of equitable access through the creation of this Language Access Plan (LAP or Plan). The LAP outlines the procedures, processes, and best practices to promote language-based inclusion and enhance DCYF's ability to service families with LEP. This Plan is DCYF's roadmap to promote effective communication between DCYF and all persons with whom it interacts and is based on legal requirements and values of equity and inclusion. Clear communication is essential to build the relationships that support DCYF's work and mission.

This Plan contains goals and strategies to ensure language access and sets out implementation targets. The guidelines found in this Plan meet the legal obligations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, and RCW 49.60. In addition, DCYF is committed to providing effective communication to persons who are Deaf or hard of hearing, and to persons who have a disability as defined by state or federal law.

Contact

This Plan was created by the DCYF Service Access and Civil Rights Program's Language Access Services, which is part of DCYF Administrative Services, with input from staff and community partners. You can contact Language Access Services by emailing dcyf.languageaccess@dcyf.wa.gov.

¹ DCYF Language Access Services understands that the term Limited English Proficiency is not without controversy and can be construed as a negative phrase utilized by an English-language centered culture. However, this is the phrase currently used by the federal government, and as a federally funded agency, we are using this term for consistency. We are open to finding a more inclusive phrase that describes persons who speak a preferred language that is not English.

Plan Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles

DCYF values are: inclusion, respect, integrity, compassion, and transparency. Language access is at the core of these values. In addition, DCYF is committed to providing equal services, program access, and information to all persons no matter their race, color, creed/religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, disability status, use of a dog guide or service animal, citizenship or immigration status, or pregnancy or breastfeeding status. With this in mind, DCYF's vision is to identify the language needs of families and clients, and to create linguistically and culturally appropriate communication methods that are consistently used to ensure all people who engage with DCYF:

- Have access to all benefits, services, and information;
- Are treated with respect and compassion;
- Come away with a clear understanding of any interaction they have with DCYF.

The LAP is intended to be a living document that strives to establish language access best practices and will be an ongoing project. This document is DCYF's first version of its Plan. DCYF will review this Plan regularly and it will evolve through review and feedback, and as needs and technology change.

Scope

The LAP will apply to all divisions, programs, units, and departments within DCYF, in all offices, regions, and areas of Washington state, to create consistency throughout the agency. This Plan recognizes that some programs or divisions may have different needs and serve different customers, so the details and requirements of the Plan may impact some areas of the agency differently. This Plan provides a framework, underlying requirements, and timelines for all programs and divisions; nuanced implementation of specific sections of the plan can be flexible as divisions, departments, and programs work with guidance from Language Access Services.

The use of sign language is addressed in this Plan, as well as through DCYF's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Section 504 program (see Administrative Policy 6.03). All other reasonable modification issues are addressed through the ADA program.

This Plan anticipates making recommendations related to Department of Enterprise Services (DES) statewide contracts for interpretation and translation services; however making changes to contract language is beyond the scope of this Plan. Making changes to Collective Bargaining Agreements is also beyond the scope of this Plan; this Plan anticipates making recommendations for changes when appropriate to improve language services.

Implementation of this Plan is dependent on available resources, which are subject to change. DCYF will attempt to obtain all necessary resources for the implementation of this Plan when available resources are not adequate.

History and Current State of Language Access

Governor Inslee signed House Bill 1661 on July 6, 2017, creating the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, a new cabinet-level agency focused on the well-being of children. DCYF was created to be a comprehensive agency and in 2018 DCYF began overseeing services previously offered through the state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Department of Early Learning. In July 2019, DCYF also began administering programs offered by the Juvenile Rehabilitation division and the Office of Juvenile Justice previously within DSHS. The creation of DCYF merged different agencies with multiple approaches and methods around providing language services, resulting in the various programs and divisions within DCYF having their own policies, practices, and priorities related to language access. Achieving consistency throughout the agency in language access processes, practices and delivery that meet the requirements of state and federal law is an essential part of this plan.

Washington is a culturally and linguistically diverse state. DCYF's Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability (OIAA) reviewed information from both the 2020 Census/American Community Survey and Washington Office of Financial Management (2016) estimates and shared the following summary conclusions:

- 7.6% or 535,524 of Washington's total population five years of age and over have limited English proficiency. This means the Census Bureau is counting them as speaking a language other than English and speaking English less than "very well" (this is the standard population and definition used for language access), and
- 15 of Washington's 39 counties have 5% or more population with Limited English Proficiency (11 of these are rural, Spanish-predominant counties and four of these are urban counties with complex language profiles).

Due to DCYF's diversity of programs and services, DCYF staff have the potential to interact with individuals who are LEP at multiple points within the organization. Some examples include programs and staff that provide direct services to families, e.g., Child Welfare Services, Licensing Division, Juvenile Rehabilitation, Child Care Subsidy Program, etc. Other DCYF divisions oversee programs and contracts that provide services to populations that are LEP, and they also have needs around providing information in multiple languages. Additional areas where communities who are LEP are likely to interact with DCYF include, but are not limited to our offices, phones, website, public meetings, social media, DCYF forms and publications, trainings, etc.

LAP Strategic Objectives and Action Steps

1. Expand the Language Access Services Program and create an implementation schedule with objectives, goals, action items and target dates to track the progress and successes of each part of the Plan.

- a) DCYF's Language Access Services Program is growing; in late 2023 the team added a Language Access Compliance Manager, and in early 2024 added four Language Access Coordinators. In mid-2024 the

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team will add a person to work on data and Internet issues, and two additional Language Access Coordinators. These team members will expand the reach of Language Access Services across the agency, provide guidance and support to staff, and will conduct training and outreach.

The Plan will cover specific topic areas (numbered below) essential for equitable language access and legal compliance. For each subject covered in this Plan, there will be objectives and goals for one, two, and five years. DCYF staff and community partner input and review will be gathered to evaluate and review the Plan and its sections on a consistent basis.

Language Access Services, using this Plan, seeks to create an agency-wide cultural shift when thinking about and working with families and customers with LEP, and to encourage positive change across the agency related to language access issues. This work will involve each division (i.e. Licensing, Child Welfare, Early Learning, Juvenile Rehabilitation, and Partnership, Prevention and Services) and the Language Access Services team will create partnerships with programs throughout the agency, such as the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, Tribal Relations, Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability, Community Engagement, and Government Relations, as well as build relationships with DCYF staff, community partners, and community members.

The Plan will create an overarching framework for language access to ensure consistent and integrated training, processes, definitions, terms, and formats across all programs and divisions within DCYF.

b) Action Steps

i) First Year Goals

- Hiring and onboarding of first phase of new Language Access Services staff – December 2023 and January 2024
- Staff and community partners provide input on the draft LAP – early 2024
- Review staff and community partner input and incorporate into Plan – May and June 2024
- Final Language Access Plan – July 2024
- Hiring and onboarding of second phase of new Language Access Services staff – July and August 2024

ii) Second Year Goals

- First review and update of Plan

2. Clearly Identify Leadership and Staff Roles in Language Access

a) DCYF Leadership

DCYF leadership shall model appropriate and inclusive language access practices, will message the importance of language access throughout the agency, and shall ensure appropriate funding for Language Access Services.

b) Language Access Services Staff

Language Access Services staff shall: be responsible for implementation of this Plan throughout the agency; make positive connections with DCYF divisions and programs to promote language access and receive input on language access issues; assist staff to obtain appropriate and timely interpretation and translation services; provide training and technical assistance to staff; and conduct outreach within and outside of DCYF.

c) All DCYF Staff

DCYF staff is responsible for identifying LEP, Deaf, and hard of hearing families and individuals with whom they work during the first contact or interaction with these individuals and shall document the need for such services in the appropriate case file or data base. Staff shall then obtain language services for these individuals, including spoken language interpreters, translation of documents, and/or sign language interpreters. If staff have questions or trouble fulfilling a request, they should contact Language Access Services staff for spoken language assistance and the ADA Coordinator for sign language assistance. Staff should also make every effort to provide culturally appropriate communication for all individuals regardless of education level, reading and writing ability, or language spoken.

d) Dual Language/Multilingual Employees

DCYF will gather data on numbers of dual language/multilingual staff and how those staff are being utilized. DCYF will identify more efficient ways to use dual language staff, be consistent across programs and divisions with the expectations for dual language staff, expand use of bilingual and multilingual staff members, including exploring the use of staff who are not certified but who have conversational language skills, and determine how to appropriately compensate those staff members. To increase the availability of dual language staff, DCYF will clearly communicate the method that staff can use to become certified as dual language and will support learning a second language and the testing and certification of dual language employees.

e) Action Steps

i) First Year Goals

- Language Access Services staff will collaborate with DCYF Leadership and Communications staff on messaging related to everyone’s right to language services
- Language Access Services staff will regularly attend agency regional and divisional meetings to speak about language access
- Assign language access roles and tasks to specific Language Access Services staff
- Work with Human Resources staff, identify and create/update a resource of dual language and multilingual staff, including language and dialect spoken, and identify bilingual and multilingual staff members who are not certified but have conversational language skills
- Communicate process for dual language testing to staff, and clearly provide this information on DCYF Intranet
- Determine a point of contact for language access within each division and program

ii) Second Year Goals

- Determine multiple and more efficient ways to utilize dual language/multilingual staff, including bilingual and multilingual staff members who are not certified and who have conversational language skills; investigate pros and cons of language-specific caseloads for dual language staff; determine feasibility of a pool of dual language staff for use throughout the agency on an as-needed basis
- Evaluate need, recruitment, and hiring of dual language/multilingual staff (including American Sign Language [ASL] certified staff), and reimbursement by DCYF to employees for learning a second language and becoming certified as a dual language employee
- Language Access Services staff and Human Resources will review ways to encourage supervisors to make sure that their staff is providing language services to those who need it
- DCYF leadership at all levels will attend language access training

iii) Five Year Goals

- Begin utilizing additional dual language and multilingual staff for more tasks and in more efficient ways throughout the agency
- DCYF leadership will support language access by ensuring that needed staff and services are fully funded through Legislative decision packages
- Discuss with Human Resources the feasibility of lowering caseload production requirements when an interpreter is needed for a case

3. Improve Language Access Policies and Processes

- a) Update language access policies and processes to provide clear directives to staff on language services

Administrative Policy 6.02 Access to Services for Clients and Caregivers who are Limited English Proficient is DCYF’s policy related to language access. The sunset review date for this policy is October 31, 2025, and the policy should be reviewed and updated prior to that date. Language Access Services staff should expand and improve interaction with staff on language issues, and DCYF needs to ensure the identification and recording of a client’s primary preferred language(s) for oral, written, and sign language in case files, case management systems and other databases, and if the system does not provide for recording of this information, develop that field.

i) Action Steps

• First Year Goals

- Determine which case files, management systems and databases have a field for preferred spoken language, a field for preferred written language, and a field for sign language
- Create a robust Language Access Intranet site on the [Inside DCYF intranet page](#) that is informative, easy to navigate, and includes clear, concise guidance on how to access interpreter and translation services

- Second Year Goals
 - Update DCYF Administrative Policy 6.02 - Access to Services for Clients and Caregivers who are Limited English Proficient (LEP), to incorporate any legislative or regulatory updates, clarify and simplify language, establish sign language as supported language, and make any additional changes to provide clear directives and guidance to all staff for the provision of language services
- Five Year Goals
 - Explore the feasibility of having a Language Access Services team member reach out to DCYF staff whenever staff are assigned to work with a client or provider who may be LEP
 - Resolve the issue of whether WACs and RCWs can be translated and put this guidance into Administrative Policy 6.02. If it is determined that WACs and RCWs can be translated, Language Access Services will assist the divisions that need guidance to complete this. If it is determined that this cannot be done, Language Access Services will assist the divisions to determine simpler methods to convey important information.
 - Develop fields for recording preferred written and oral language or sign language in case files, management systems and data bases, if lacking

b) Identify and work with families with LEP in effective and culturally appropriate ways

DCYF recognizes that for communication to be effective, it must be linguistically and culturally appropriate and adaptive. To recognize someone who may need language support, staff should ask open-ended questions about language preferences at the beginning of the first contact. If there is any question about the person's status as an individual with LEP, inquiries about language support should be continued throughout interactions with the person. Alternate methods of communication, in addition to interpreter and translation services, should be considered when needed. Staff should be respectful of all persons' culture and background and must engage with the person in a way that will ensure that the person is understanding the conversation.

i) Action Steps

- First Year Goals
 - Develop a sample script for staff to use when they first contact a client in order to determine language preferences
 - Connect with IT to determine how many automated phone lines exist within DCYF, which of those have a greeting in Spanish, and what is involved in adding greetings in Spanish.
- Second Year Goals
 - Create a tip sheet on best practices when working with clients and interpreters, including sign language interpreters
 - Create a staff training on best practices to affirm that the client is understanding the conversation and what may be required of them

- Create a tool to determine when a Certified Deaf Interpreter may be needed
- Determine potential alternate formats for communication, such as audio recordings, videos, and illustrations or symbols, and implement these formats to use when needed
- Ensure all DCYF main telephone numbers that are answered with a recorded message, have messages in both English and Spanish
- Five Year Goals
 - Determine what vital communications should be communicated to the Deaf and hard of hearing in videos and create videos in ASL
 - Work with DCYF Communications to ensure that documents, forms, and other communications to the public, clients, and customers are written in plain language
 - To create additional accessibility of DCYF resources, determine what communications and which how-to information should be relayed in videos, and create these videos

c) Interpretation

An interpreter provides information spoken in one language into one (or more) other languages. Interpretation can take place in-person or through a telephonic or video interpreter. This assistance must be provided by qualified interpreters or dual language DCYF staff and ensures meaningful communication and access for individuals who are LEP or Deaf/hard of hearing. Per Washington law (RCW), DCYF is required (whenever possible) to use Language Access Providers (interpreters who are covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement) for our scheduled spoken language interpreter appointments.

i) Action Steps

- First Year Goals
 - Continue to strengthen relationship with the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for communication assistance such as sign language interpreters and assistive communication technology
 - Review the DCYF Intranet to ensure information about how to schedule interpreter appointments is clear and easy to follow, make any revisions as needed; ensure there is guidance on the Intranet site if a staff member has an urgent language need
 - Hold regularly scheduled drop-ins/open houses/mini trainings for staff if there are questions about interpreter services or if someone needs assistance
 - Develop a simple resource guide for staff on what to do if interpreter contracts are unable to provide interpreters for a client's language needs
 - Assign a staff person and work with IT to keep updated on any technological advancements to assist with interpretation, including an assessment of FourCorners Translation's application for video and phone interpreter appointments
- Second Year Goals
 - Assess and explore feasibility of obtaining on-demand and video remote interpreting (VRI) services under the new [Department of Enterprise Services \(DES\) contract](#)

- Develop a best practice guide for working with interpreters for DCYF staff, that includes suggestions on best practices when working with persons who are LEP
- Develop a simple quality assurance process to gather information from individuals who are LEP, on the quality of the interpreter service
- Organize the current DCYF collection of interpreter resources for languages with fewer interpreters available, into a structured and easy-to-use format
- Five Year Goals
 - Explore feasibility of language testing, conversational language assessments, and per diem reimbursement for DCYF staff who may be bilingual but who are not in a dual language position, to assist with language services on as as-needed basis
 - Research and obtain additional interpreter contracts for Indigenous languages of Mexico and Central America

d) Translation

Translation focuses on written communication and is the replacement of written text from one language into another. DCYF needs to provide written translations to people who are LEP to ensure meaningful access and an equal opportunity to participate fully in the services, activities, programs, or other benefits provided by DCYF. All translation services will be provided at no cost to individuals and families with LEP.

When identifying what needs to be translated, the term “vital document” is used. A document is considered vital if it contains information that is critical for obtaining services and/or benefits, or is required by law. The following are examples of vital documents: applications, consent and complaint forms, notices of rights and disciplinary action, notices advising persons who are LEP of the availability of free language assistance, letters or notices that require a response from the beneficiary or client, etc. Non-vital information includes documents that are not critical to access such benefits and services. Additionally, for larger documents, translating the vital information within the documents is usually sufficient – the documents do not need to be translated in their entirety. The U.S. Department of Justice has developed a safe harbor provision as a recommendation, and following the recommendation is strong evidence of compliance with the written translation requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The recommendation is to provide written translation of vital documents for each LEP identified language group that constitutes 5% or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered.

Divisions will make determinations about their vital documents with support from the Language Access Services team. The vital documents may vary from division to division, and the languages into which they are translated may vary from division to division.

Vital documents will be translated into the highest demand languages within each division. If a program receives a request for a vital document by an individual with LEP whose primary language is not one of the highest demand languages, the program will provide a timely and accurate translation

of the document. All documents within DCYF should be written in language that is easy to understand for all audiences, regardless of educational or language proficiency level.

i) Action Steps

- First Year Goals
 - Review translation request process, making sure that it is easy to use and understand, and update and streamline if needed, including specific processes for urgent needs; communicate the process to staff and conduct training
 - Working with each division, and OIAA staff, determine into what and how many languages all vital forms and vital documents will be translated (this will be different from division to division and should, at a minimum, reflect the safe harbor recommendations)
 - Create a tool to assist programs and divisions determine what documents are vital
 - Support Communications staff to encourage use of plain language in all writing and communication
- Second Year Goals
 - Work with Communications staff to compile an inventory of all DCYF forms and publications and the languages in which they are currently available, and sort the list by DCYF program/division
 - Division and program staff identify documents they consider “vital documents”, with the assistance of the written tool, and compare this list to the completed inventory of translated documents and languages
 - Assign a staff person to keep current on developments connected to computer/machine assisted translation, AI, and other technology advancements related to translations
 - Determine the need for a quality assurance process for translations, including community and DCYF staff input
 - Determine what documents should be translated into ASL and begin video recording of translations
 - When DES implements new translation contracts, request translated, fillable PDFs as an option
 - Begin development of a DCYF language glossaries for use in translations
- Five Year Goals
 - Complete translations of vital documents into the highest demand languages in each division
 - Review existing forms, and create fillable forms in Spanish, and in other languages as determined by the distribution, topic importance, and recipients of the form
 - Create videos of sign language translations

4. Improve Clarity of Provider/Contractor and Grantee Roles and Responsibilities

DCYF utilizes community-based providers and contractors to assist families in a variety of ways. These providers are required under state and federal law to provide language services to individuals with LEP. Contractors must understand their obligations, and DCYF should implement quality control measures to ensure compliance. DCYF also provides grants to individuals and organizations.

a) Action Steps

i) First Year Goals

- Connect with DCYF Contracts and Procurements to determine types and scopes of providers and contracts
- Determine types of and scopes of grants awarded by DCYF
- Review language in contracts related to language access requirements
- Review language in grants related to language access requirements

ii) Second Year Goals

- Identify people in each program and division who work with contractors and providers
- Identify people within each program and division who are responsible for administering grants
- Determine the best way to educate providers/contractors and grantees about their obligations
- Develop a compliance review tool and educate staff on the use of the tool so that staff can help assess service provider language access compliance

iii) Five Year Goals

- If necessary, suggest revisions or additions to contract language to require contracted service providers to provide clients with information about their rights, how to request an interpreter or translation, and how to file a complaint in languages other than English
- If necessary, suggest revisions or additions to grant language to address language access requirements
- Develop guidelines on what entity (the provider or DCYF) is responsible for paying for language services when a mutual client has a language need

5. Ensure Public Notice of Free Meaningful Language Access Services

DCYF has the obligation to inform all clients, customers and families that have contact with DCYF that they have the right to have language assistance provided free of charge. This notice of free language services should be provided in a variety of ways.

a) Action Steps

• First Year Goals

- Work with Communications staff to develop a Language Access Notice Document, indicating the availability of language services free of charge, how to request an interpreter or a

- translation, contact information, and other relevant information, translated into the 15 highest demand languages used by persons with LEP in Washington
- Identify which front desk areas and entry points have the [DCYF Language Assistance poster](#) (DCYF ADM_0002 (11-2019)) in a visible location
 - Identify which front desk and public reception areas have “I speak” cards
<https://www.lep.gov/translation#toc-language-identification-and-i-speak-cards>
 - Second Year Goals
 - With Communications staff, create and/or review a concise tagline to be included on public facing documents that includes information on how to obtain translation services for the document and that language assistance is available free of charge
 - In combination with training, travel to offices statewide to ensure that entry points and reception areas have the DCYF Language Assistance poster and “I speak” cards, and provide guidance on the “I speak” card use
 - With Communications staff, develop a process for use and distribution of the Language Assistance Notice Document in or with all vital written documents and electronically generated vital written communications, and distribute to community-based organizations
 - With Communications staff, develop a plan to communicate the availability of these notice documents and taglines and where they can be found to all DCYF staff, and include guidance on when/how to use them
 - Create a footer with links on the DCYF internet pages in the 15 highest demand identified spoken languages in Washington indicating the availability of language services and contact information

6. Improve and Consolidate Complaint Process

To remain compliant with federal law and to provide the best possible services to clients and families, DCYF must have a complaint and investigation process in place to provide members of the public with a means of filing language access related complaints internally with DCYF and having those complaints investigated in a fair and timely manner.

a) Action Steps

i) First Year Goals

- Develop streamlined and consistent agency-wide complaint and investigative process (including language access, ADA/504, and protected class discrimination) available in multiple languages
- Create a complaint form
- Develop a web page on the DCYF Internet site with complaint process/complaint form

ii) Second Year Goals

- Hire three Civil Rights staff to build the compliance program, train staff, provide technical assistance, and resolve complaints

- Develop and distribute notice of complaint process
- iii) Five Year Goals
- Track complaint numbers, types, and outcomes

7. Improve and Expand Staff Training on Language Access

Frontline staff in Child Welfare, Juvenile Rehabilitation, Early Learning, and Licensing interact regularly with children, youth, families, and members of the public, and must be familiar with working effectively with persons who are LEP. As part of the onboarding process, new staff receive training that includes information on Administrative Policy 6.02 Access to Services for Clients and Caregivers who are Limited English Proficient. Staff members who have requested it have had training on how to access the new interpreter service FourCorners Translation. Staff also has available information on accessing spoken word interpreter and sign language interpreter services on the DCYF Intranet site and on translation services on the DCYF Child Welfare Intranet site.

The consensus from a DCYF Language Access Focus Group was that interactive training was needed, and that an annual refresher training, particularly one for leaders and supervisors to take back to staff, would be helpful. Training should focus on equitable language access and how staff can ensure clients and families understand the information shared with them. This training will be the foundation of shared accountability between DCYF staff and the families we serve, and lead to a cultural shift around language access at DCYF.

a) Action Items

i) First Year Goals

- Review onboarding training, and design any changes or updates
- Develop interactive live and virtual training modules on language access topics, including the importance of language access, terminology, policy and equity, processes, identifying persons with LEP, best practices, when to use and to not use Google translate, achieving mutual understanding during conversations, and cultural competency related to language
- Schedule and hold monthly online Language Access “open houses” and office hours to provide information and for staff to ask questions and get assistance
- Create a monthly column in the DCYF Weekly Digest where language access issues are highlighted, and include success stories, information on specific languages, staff highlights, and more

ii) Second Year Goals

- Determine topics for, develop, and distribute short written or graphic reference materials to provide staff with fast and concise information related to language services

- Visit offices, programs, and units statewide and attend meetings (in-person or virtually) to provide information about what resources are available, share best practices, and to develop rapport and connection between Language Access Services and all areas and staff of DCYF
 - Work with the Training and Development Unit to implement changes to onboarding training
 - Work with community members and the Training and Development Unit to determine frequency, finalize, and roll out the Language Access Training modules
- iii) Five Year Goals
- Gather data, receive feedback on training and implement needed changes

8. Engage in Linguistically Appropriate Emergency Planning

In the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or another pandemic, DCYF should have in place processes to communicate emergency information and procedures to clients, providers, and families. This should include ensuring that emergency communications are provided to the community in the top most common languages other than English, including sign language.

a) Action Steps

i) Five Year Goals

- In coordination with DCYF emergency management, the Washington Military Department, and persons requiring language access, develop procedures for communicating with families with LEP during an emergency
- Determine the number of highest demand languages in which to provide emergency communications

9. Improve Technology, Internet, and Intranet Resources

Technology resources can help to improve language equity for both staff and the children, youth, and families who we serve. A DCYF Internet site with translated text and documents can provide information to those who need it. The DCYF intranet site can provide easy to find and understand information on how to access spoken language interpreter and translation services for staff. Advances in technology related to translation and interpretation are being made and should be utilized when appropriate.

a) Action Items

i) First Year Goals

- Create a Language Access Services Internet page
- Improve and streamline the DCYF Language Access Services Intranet page with easy to use and understand language access information on how to obtain interpreter and translation services

- Work with Communications to create and build Language Access Services Internet and Intranet pages
 - Meet with Communications and Training to discuss development of staff training in video and written formats
 - Develop a method for staff to provide feedback on interpreter and translation services, and other language access services
- ii) Second Year Goals
- Review the DCYF website and determine which information has been translated and into what languages, and what information still needs to be translated
 - Add video and written training materials to Language Access Services Intranet page
 - Translate key information on the DCYF website, including existing forms and publications, into a minimum Spanish and two other most common languages other than English, and include a standard footer with offerings in other languages
- iii) Five Year goals
- Review existing and emerging computer assisted translation apps and programs, assess if any would be appropriate for use at DCYF, determine cost, and, if feasible, begin a staff pilot program to test in the field and monitored by Language Access Services staff
 - Review data bases and electronic case file storage systems in each program and division, and ensure that there are data fields, preferably in a drop-down menu, for preferred languages for spoken word, written word, and sign language

10. Engage with the Community on Language Access Needs

Agencies can gain important insight from community partners and community members, which is crucial for conducting assessments of needs and accessibility. DCYF will communicate with community partners about language equity and identify the language assistance needs of individuals with LEP. DCYF will gather and listen to the input from these communities and will implement this input when evaluating the Plan and Language Access Services, and when making changes to the Plan. The term “community partner” should be interpreted broadly to ensure a wide variety of voices are considered.

a) Action Steps

i) First Year Goals

- Identify and make connections with subject matter experts, non-profits, and government entities, particularly smaller, community-based groups and immigrant advocacy organizations
- Develop a flyer explaining the availability of language services, translate it into high demand languages, and distribute it to appropriate community groups
- Use social media to broadcast information about language services
- Utilize Spanish language media, including radio, to provide information about DCYF programs

- Continue to collaborate with other state agencies to advertise on the radio in languages in addition to English and Spanish
- ii) Second Year Goals
 - Design Plan updates with community input by gathering feedback and learning about personal experiences; determine if this is best accomplished through town-hall style meetings, webinars, in-person meetings, polling, requests for written feedback, or a combination of methods
- iii) Five Year Goals
 - Create video engagement about Language Access Services with ASL translation
 - Translate key DCYF press releases into Spanish, ASL, and other languages as needed

11. Improve Engagement with DCYF Staff

In order to ensure that Language Access Services is helping the staff members who work the most with families with LEP, Language Access Services must continually and meaningfully engage with staff.

a) Action Items

i) First Year Goals

- Create a DCYF Language Access Community of Practice; using recruitment, word of mouth referral, and staff volunteers and recommendations from Focus Groups 1 and 2, form an ongoing workgroup of staff with representation from all areas of DCYF who work with persons who are LEP
- Create and build communication and content within a Community of Practice Teams channel
- Community of Practice group meetings set quarterly to provide ideas and feedback related to specific language access topics
- Identify language access contact persons within divisions and programs
- Partner with the Office of Tribal Relations to determine language access needs of Tribal members

ii) Second Year Goals

- Create and distribute surveys for staff on the effectiveness of language services
- Create a feedback portal on the DCYF Intranet site for language access issues and spoken language interpreter and translation services

12. Expand and Improve Data Collection and Analysis

As a recipient of federal funding, DCYF is required to take reasonable steps to assure meaningful access to programs and resources by persons with LEP. To determine the appropriate language assistance services needed to ensure that all people have meaningful access to the DCYF's programs and activities, the U.S.

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Department of Justice has developed a four factor analysis which includes: 1) The number or proportion of persons with LEP served in the population; 2) The frequency with which persons with LEP come into contact with programs; 3) The nature and importance of the program, activity or services provided by the program to people’s lives; and 4) Resources available to the recipient (DCYF) and costs. This analysis can help DCYF ensure that spoken word interpreter services, translated documents and forms, translation services, and language access notices are meeting community and client needs.

In addition, data collection and analysis should provide a way to help ensure equitable access for all persons with LEP, enable community and client feedback about that access, and provide a means by which staff can share insight and information.

a) Action Items

i) First Year Goals

- Hire staff for data gathering, analysis, and reporting
- Identify existing and needed data
- Identify the number and percentage of persons with LEP and the languages spoken in Washington statewide and by county
- Identify the touchpoints for persons with LEP with DCYF programs and divisions

ii) Second Year Goals

- Identify the highest demand languages spoken among the populations served for each division
- Collect information on the languages and dialects of lesser demand or that lack interpreter resources, including requests that are not filled, and create a list of resources for these languages and dialects
- Collect information on sign language interpreter requests that are not filled, the details about the request, and the reason it was unfilled
- Collect existing data on spoken word interpreter use, including modality (in-person, over-the-phone, or video), translation requests, and sign language interpreter requests, in each program/division
- Identify language and immigration trends in Washington statewide and by county, including connecting with immigration and refugee advocacy organizations to find this information
- Identify what documents are translated and into what language within each division and program, what documents have a language services tagline, and what programs send out a language services information sheet and with what correspondence
- In collaboration with each division or program, determine division and program data reporting requirements
- Develop staff surveys to determine best practices and gaps in language services, spoken word interpreter services, and translation services
- Establish a way to collect client feedback about interpreter services immediately after the services

iii) Five Year Goals

- Determine if statewide languages spoken matches with DCYF language needs, and if not, try to learn why there is a discrepancy and if a population is underserved
- Track complaints related to language access and resolutions
- Establish ongoing data collection about language access needs from community partners, non-profit organizations, and advocacy groups
- Use data to update and make changes to the Plan; conduct four-factor analysis every five years (ongoing)

13. Engage in Continual Assessment and Monitoring of Plan

For this Plan to be successful, it must change and improve as needs change and new challenges arise. Thus, it is important to continually assess and monitor this Plan, and to obtain external and internal feedback on how it is working, what is not working, and how to improve it. Assessment and monitoring will be done in conjunction with internal workgroups and focus groups, external partners, and community members who utilize language services. This monitoring is expected to be continuous, so this is reflected in some of the following action steps which have no associated completion target date.

a) Action Steps

i) First Year Goals

- Outline a process for making changes and updates to the plan

ii) Ongoing Goals

- Develop and use staff surveys and client surveys
- Identify and use best practices to monitor effectiveness of language services
- Monitor changing language needs based on language use and population trends
- Monitor complaint and feedback data, including feedback on interpreter and translation accuracy
- Identify where a lack of resources exists

14. Review Budgets and Assure Adequate Funding

Currently, language access is funded in different ways throughout the agency. Child Welfare, for example, has a specific budget allotment for language services. Other divisions do not, and fund language services in various ways, including through program support funding and underspends. Because language services are required under state and federal law, this type of funding could lead to difficulty in finding the resources to support a sudden new need for spoken language interpreters or a large translation bill.

a) Action Items

i) First Year Goals

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- Work with Finance and Budget, Forms, and Communications improve tracking of spending for translation and interpreter services
 - Request quarterly reports on spending for language access needs for each division
- ii) Second Year Goals
- Work with Finance and Budget ensure budget codes for translation, interpreter services, and other language services are accurate and consistent across the agency
 - Determine Language Access Services outreach needs and create a budget request for these needs
- iii) Five Year Goals
- With agency leadership, determine the feasibility of an enterprise-wide plan for translation, interpreter services, and other language services, such as one source of agency-wide funding

Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Agency (organization)	An administrative division of a government. As used in this Plan, “agency” refers to the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, which is a division of the Washington state government, and a cabinet level agency under the Governor’s office.	Merriam-Webster Dictionary
American Sign Language (ASL)	A sign language that is used especially for communication by and with persons who are deaf and is the formal sign language of the United States and English-speaking Canada and also serves as the basis for various sign languages in other countries (such as Thailand, Nigeria, and Bolivia).	Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	A federal civil rights law protects persons with disabilities from discrimination, and in many situations requires reasonable accommodation or reasonable modification to policies and practices. This law applies to employment, state and local government programs, transportation services, and places of public accommodation, and requires effective communication.	U.S. Dept of Justice
Bilingual/ Multilingual Dual language employee/staff	Using or able to use two languages, especially with equal fluency; using or able to use several languages, especially with equal fluency. Dual Language (DL) Employees are assigned to DCYF approved DL positions and have provided verification of passing the required DCYF DL employee examination from a DCYF recognized professional examination, including, but not limited to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Testing International (LTI) • Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Language Testing and Certification program (LTC) • American Translators Association • DSHS Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing • State of Washington Administrator for the Courts Federal Court • American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) 	Bilingual/ Multilingual DCYF Administrative Policy 11.19
Civil Rights Act of 1964 - Title VI	Landmark civil rights and labor law in the United States that prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 provides that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.	US Department of Justice
Clients	Individuals who are the beneficiaries of services or benefits from DCYF. This term includes but is not limited to, consumers, recipients, applicants, parents, youth, and children involved with DCYF. Clients include	DCYF Administrative Policy 6.01 Racial

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Term	Definition	Source
	individuals who previously were the beneficiaries of services or benefits and persons applying for benefits or services.	Equity and Social Justice
Community engagement	The process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the wellbeing of those people. It is a powerful vehicle for bringing changes that will improve the lives of the community and its members. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices.	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Contractor	Any person, business, non-profit, or government entity who provides goods or services when requested by DCYF under a contractual agreement and not as an employee of DCYF.	DCYF Administrative Policy 6.01 Racial Equity and Social Justice
Cultural humility	Engaging with others in a culturally responsive way; proactively engaging with people in ways that are appropriate within <i>their</i> cultural values, behaviors, and norms.	Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice
Culture	The shared social behaviors and norms within a society. This can include shared knowledge, beliefs, laws, arts, customs, habits, priorities, expectations, and many other shared practices.	Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice
Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)	DCYF is a Washington State cabinet-level agency focused on the well-being of children.	
Dialect	A regional variety of language distinguished by features of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from other regional varieties.	Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Division	One of the parts or groupings into which a whole is divided. Within DCYF, these divisions include Licensing, Child Welfare, Early Learning, Juvenile Rehabilitation, and Partnership, Prevention, and Services.	Merriam-Webster Dictionary DCYF Organizational Charts
DCYF employees	Individuals to whom DCYF pays salaries, wages, or benefits for work performed for DCFY.	DCYF Administrative Policy 11.19

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Term	Definition	Source
DCYF Leadership	The DCYF Leadership Table includes the Secretary, Directors, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Officers. More broadly, an individual or group of people who influence or guide members of an organization, team or society. Someone who fosters relationships with individuals and teams to reach their full potential, while achieving organizational goals.	DCYF Leadership Table Membership document, TechTarget, Lindauer Global
DCYF programs and services	The natural grouping of the operations and work units of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. For the purpose of this Plan and per the agency’s Title VI/LEP policy, agency and division leadership are responsible for determining how they will operationalize this Plan. This should include implementation at all levels of the division where services that benefit individuals with LEP are provided. For example: Division leaders may choose to coordinate the implementation of this Plan at the division, office, program, section, or unit levels.	
Effective communication	Communication sufficient to provide the LEP individual with substantially the same level of access to services received by individuals who are not LEP.	
Equitable access	Providing everyone with access to programs, benefits, services, information, and places of business, regardless of ethnicity, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, veteran or military status, disability status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, status as a breastfeeding mother, use of a dog guide or service animal, socio-economic status, age, or any other class protected by state or federal laws.	
Executive Order 13166	An Executive Order signed by President Clinton in 2000, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency.” Requires federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to persons with LEP, and develop and implement a system to provide those services so persons with LEP can have meaningful access to them.	US Department of Justice
Inclusion	An environment or practice that is welcoming to all people and in which everyone is valued, respected and able to reach their full potential.	University of Washington Research Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Definitions
Interpretation	Immediate verbal or signed communication of meaning from one language (the source language) into another (the target language). Messages are conveyed orally. Interpretation services that occur over-	

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Term	Definition	Source
	<p>the-phone are referred to as telephonic interpretation services. Interpretation services that occur through a computer, phone or tablet video is referred to as video remote interpreting (VRI). In-person interpretation is when the parties are in the same physical location.</p>	
Interpreter	<p>Provides information from one language into one (or more) other languages, either through spoken word interpretation or sign language interpretation. Interpretation can take place in-person or through a telephonic or video interpreter. This assistance must be provided by qualified interpreters or dual language DCYF staff and ensures meaningful communication and access for individuals who are LEP or Deaf/Hard of Hearing.</p>	
Language access	<p>Providing all persons with reasonable access to the same services as to those who speak, write and understand the host-country language.</p>	<p>Migration Policy Institute</p>
Language Access Plan (LAP)	<p>A Language Access Plan (LAP) represents the procedures, processes, and best practices to help promote language-based inclusion and increase ways to serve families with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). The purpose of the LAP is to comply with legal requirements and be effective in providing meaningful access to benefits, services, information, and other important aspects of the programs and activities for individuals with LEP. A Language Access Plan is a public document, available for public input and disclosure.</p>	
Language access services	<p>Services agencies use to bridge the communication barrier with individuals who cannot speak, understand, read, or write fluently in the host-country language. These services often include interpreters and translation of documents.</p>	<p>Migration Policy Institute</p>
Limited English proficiency (LEP)	<p>Persons who do not speak English as their primary language, and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.</p> <p>DCYF Language Access Services understands that the term ‘Limited English Proficiency’ is not without controversy and can be construed as a negative phrase utilized by an English-language centered culture. However, this is the phrase currently used by the federal government, and as a federally funded agency, we are using this term for consistency. We are open to finding a more inclusive phrase that describes persons who speak a preferred language that is not English.</p>	<p>U.S. Department of Justice</p>

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Term	Definition	Source
Living document	A document, plan or outline that will change over time with needs, changing circumstances, and community partner input; updated and modified on a regular basis.	
Machine Assisted Translation (MT) Computer Assisted Translation (CAT)	MT is a tool or software that translates text from one language into another without human support. CAT tools are software programs that assist human translators in transferring the meaning of text between languages more quickly and efficiently. More specifically, CAT tools provide translators with an interface for submitting, editing, managing, and storing multilingual content in one place.	phrase.com amperetranslations.com
Meaningful language access	Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual with LEP. For LEP individuals, meaningful access is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior as compared to programs or activities provided to English proficient individuals.	
Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)	A division within the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) that offers services to the Deaf, DeafBlind, Deafdisabled, Hard of Hearing, Late Deafened, and Speech Disabled individuals, their families, and services providers in Washington State.	www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/odhh
Partners (community and internal)	Individual or organization having a right, share, claim, or interest in a system or in its possession of characteristics that meet their needs and expectations.	
Preferred language	The language in which an individual prefers to communicate orally or in writing. An individual may have different preferred languages for oral and written communications.	
Primary language	An individual’s primary language is the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.	
RCW 49.60	The Washington Law Against Discrimination, which prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodation, credit and insurance based on race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, age (over 40, employment only), immigration and citizenship status, status as a breastfeeding mother (public accommodation), disability, use of dog guide or service animal, honorably discharged veteran and military status, marital status (except public accommodation) and familial status (housing only).	www.hum.wa.gov <u>v</u>

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Term	Definition	Source
Section 504	A Section of the federal Rehabilitation Act which forbids organizations and employers from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services.	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Sign language	Any of various formal languages employing a system of hand gestures and their placement relative to the upper body, facial expressions, body postures, and <u>finger spelling</u> especially for communication by and with persons who are deaf.	Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Strategic objective	Purpose statements that help create an overall vision and set goals and measurable steps for an organization to help achieve the desired outcome.	Indeed.com
Taglines	Short statements written in non-English languages that indicate the availability of language assistance services free of charge.	
Translation	The conversion of written communication from one language (source language) to another (target language) in a written form. An accurate translation is one that conveys the intent and essential meaning of the original text.	
Translator	A dual-language employee or contractor who accurately translates written documents from one language to another.	
Vital documents	Paper or electronic written material that contains information that is critical for accessing a program or information or is required by law to be publicly disseminated by DCYF. This could include documents, forms, announcements, and other materials. Whether or not a document (or the information it solicits) is "vital" depends upon the importance of the program, information, encounter, or service involved, and the consequence to the LEP person if the information in question is not provided accurately or in a timely manner.	