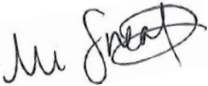




DATE: July 26, 2021

TO: All DHS Employees

FROM: Meg Snead
Acting Secretary 

RE: Limited English Proficiency Policy Statement

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is committed to establishing and maintaining practices that ensure meaningful access to the department's services and benefits by persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). It is the policy of DHS to ensure that no person is denied access to services and benefits as the result of the inability or limited ability to communicate in the English language.

It is the responsibility of each program office to ensure through its contracts, grants or other agreements, that contractors, subcontractors, grantees, and subgrantees ensure meaningful access to benefits and services for individuals with LEP. Each office, as appropriate, shall establish and implement protocols for monitoring its contractors and grantees for civil rights compliance in conjunction with the Bureau of Equal Opportunity.

The Deputy Secretary for Administration, Ms. Carolyn K. Ellison, is responsible for the oversight of department's compliance with federal LEP requirements. The Director of the Bureau of Equal Opportunity is responsible for the agency's day-to-day compliance with federal and state civil rights regulations. Ms. Charlene Natcher, Equal Opportunity Specialist, is the agency's LEP Coordinator. Each program office, in conjunction with Ms. Natcher, will develop a written plan that includes protocols and procedures to guide their operations and ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. The plan must address methods for ensuring compliance in the areas of Assessment, Language Access, Staff Training, and Monitoring as follows:

Assessment of Needs:

- Estimate of the number of persons/households with LEP served and their preferred language
- Identify languages for which interpreter and translator services (both oral and written) will or may be needed
- Determine individual language needs of those served
- Record of individual language needs of those served
- Identification of language assistance contact persons in each office
- Identification of available resources
- Identification of protocols to ensure timely access to services

Language Access:

Based on the above assessment, each program office must establish procedures to provide for language access through:

- Notice of availability of language services to persons with LEP
- Notification to applicants and recipients of the availability of free oral and written language translation services
- Oral language interpretation
- Translation of written materials
- Protocol for use of the statewide contract for translation and interpretation
- Protocol to ensure that all contractors/business partners are aware of their responsibility to provide meaningful access to services for individuals who are limited English proficient and a strategy to monitor the same

Staff Training:

Development of a written training plan to ensure the program office's LEP protocols and guidelines are conveyed to all staff in a comprehensive manner that enables them to provide effective and timely services to customers with LEP.

Monitoring:

Each deputy secretary will identify a Limited English Proficiency Coordinator to act as a liaison between the program office and BEO. The LEP Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring the internal operations of the program office to ensure compliance with the agency's LEP policy.

The Office of Administration, BEO is responsible for ensuring that all program offices establish an LEP plan and operate in compliance with the LEP policy. The department's LEP Coordinator will be responsible for providing training, technical assistance and monitoring each of the eight program offices to ensure the development, implementation, and maintenance of the LEP policy and guidelines agency-wide. Ms. Natcher is located in the Bureau of Equal Opportunity (BEO), Room 223 Health & Welfare Building. Her telephone number is (717) 214-6791.

Complaints:

Complaints regarding meaningful access to services by persons with LEP may be filed with either of the following agencies:

Department of Human Services
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 225 Health & Welfare Building
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105
Telephone: (717) 787-1127
FAX: (717) 772-4366
TDD -PA Relay Services 711
(within 90 days of incident)

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office for Civil Rights
Room 326-W, Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
Telephone: (202) 720-5964
(voice and TDD)
(within 180 days of incident)

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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary Aids and Services available upon request to individuals with disabilities.