



State of Nevada Human Resources Commission

**LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**

September 27, 2024

## **I. Purpose and Authority**

The Human Resources Commission (Commission or HRC) is committed to compliance with Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 232.0081 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 2 C.S. § 561 et seq. (Act 172 of 2006) to ensure meaningful access to the Commission's services for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP).

NRS 232.0081 and the federal guidance on Title VI both agree that language should not be a barrier to accessing governmental programs and services. As stated in NRS 232.0081, "Persons with limited English proficiency require and deserve meaningful, timely access to government services in their preferred language," and the legislation states that it is the responsibility of government to provide that access:

*State and local agencies and entities that receive public money have an obligation to provide meaningful, timely access for persons with limited English proficiency to the programs and services of those agencies and entities.*

The purpose of this document is to establish an effective plan and protocol for HRC staff to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, LEP individuals.

## **II. General Policy**

The Commission consists of five members and five alternate members appointed by the Governor. The Commission is responsible for adopting human resource regulations for the Nevada Administrative Code and is advisory to the Administrator of the Division of Human Resource Management (Division or DHRM) on matters of its administration. The Administrator is the nonvoting recording secretary of the Commission.

The Commission adopts the following policies and procedures to ensure that LEP individuals are afforded equal access to services and effective communication. The HRC is well versed in accommodating individuals with language barriers and limited language proficiency.

It is the HRC's policy to grant access to services to every person regardless of their ability to speak, understand, read, or write English, without discrimination based on race, color, gender, gender identity, or expression, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, pregnancy, genetic information, domestic partnership, or disability in accordance with state and federal law. The HRC intends to take all reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to its services. The Commission seeks to reduce barriers by increasing its capacity to deliver services and benefits to people in their preferred languages.

To this end, the HRC endorses the following policies:

- A commitment to equity and taking reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to all its services.
- The HRC, rather than the LEP individual, bears the responsibility for providing appropriate language services, regardless of the LEP individual's preferred language, at

no cost to the LEP individual.

- Staff at the initial points of contact have the specific duty to identify and record language needs.
- The HRC will not suggest or require that an LEP individual provide an interpreter in order to receive agency services.

The HRC Language Access Coordinators are:

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### **III. Profile of the HRC's LEP Clients**

The Commission's clients consist of current state employees, agency management and the public. Based on our interactions with our client base, a large percentage of our current state employees, applicants and vendors are typically English proficient. We may occasionally encounter individuals with limited English proficiency when providing services to beneficiaries or family members of state employees. The HRC does not collect information on its client base regarding English proficiency. The HRC is committed to tracking the languages preferred for communication among our LEP clients so staff can provide meaningful, timely access to services.

The Commission used national demographic data from the U.S. Census to identify limited English proficiency in the State of Nevada. According to U.S. Census data, 70.1% of the Nevada population speaks English only with 29.9% speaking a language other than English. The American Community Survey (ACS) administered by the U.S. Census Bureau is the nation's most current, reliable, and accessible data source for local statistics on critical planning topics. The survey samples approximately 3.5 million addresses each year. Data is collected continuously throughout the year to produce annual social, economic, housing, and demographic estimates. The data collected through ACS is used to distribute more than \$675 billion of federal government spending each year. The ACS data indicates Limited English Proficiency for the State of Nevada as follows:

## Limited English – Households Speaking --

Spanish	19.5%
Other Indo-European Languages	3.30%
Asian and Pacific Island Languages	7.20%
Other Languages	1.30%

### IV. The HRC's Language Access Services and Procedures

The Commission provides the following language access services (LAS) to facilitate LEP individuals' access to the HRC's services and ensures that all language service providers are fully competent to provide these services. The HRC will handle language access on a case-by-case basis, as the need arises.

#### A. Oral and Sign Language Services

As requested, the HRC will provide spoken and sign language translation services utilizing two resources. The State's bi-lingual list or contracted vendors through the statewide contract #99SWC-S1847 held by the Purchasing Division for the State of Nevada.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the HRC will not discriminate against any individual based on disability and will make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity to access services. LEP individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired, visually impaired, blind, deaf/blind, or persons with language disorders may request assistive technology or alternative language access services.

Assistive technology or alternative language access services may include but not limited to:

- Augmentative and Assistive Communication Systems
- Braille Translations
- CapTel
- Screen Braille Communicator
- Text Telephone (TTY) or Telecommunication Devices (TDD)

**Bi-Lingual Contact List:** Lists 142 employees who can provide translation for various languages including Spanish, Arabic, French, Chinese, Mandarin, Filipino, Korean, and Serbian/Croatian. Additionally, there is one employee on the list who can provide American Sign Language services.

Link: [Bilingual Contact List.xlsx](#)

**Statewide Contract #99SWC-S1847** makes 21 vendors accessible to state agencies for on-site spoken, sign language interpretation and document translation services at a cost.

Link:

[https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation\\_Interpretation/](https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation_Interpretation/)

**B. Written Language Services**

As requested, the HRC will provide translated “vital documents” and related written translation services by vendors contracted through statewide contracts by the Purchasing Division for the State of Nevada.

**C. Community Outreach and Engagement**

During participation in job fairs in the community, the HRC will share their commitment to providing services to those with limited English proficiency.

**D. Providing Notice of Language Assistance Services**

The HRC will provide notification of the relevant points of contact on the Division of Human Resource Management’s website.

**V. Implementing the HRC’s Language Access Services**

In order to implement LAS for clients who have limited English proficiency, the HRC requires it’s members, alternate members and Division staff to follow the policies and procedures referenced below to ensure meaningful access to available language services. The Commission is committed to full compliance with these procedures and provides staff with the training described below so that all staff are familiar with these policies and procedures and recognize their importance to the HRC’s mission.

Language Access Procedures

To promote diversity and inclusion of all individuals who receive services from the HRC, it will facilitate all types of language access for LEP individuals who they serve.

The HRC will provide notice of its available language services to LEP individuals at the relevant points of contact, at no cost to the LEP individuals.

**A. Identifying Client Language Needs and Preferred Language**

In order to understand the HRC’s client language access needs, the Division, on behalf of the HRC, will gather and assess data, and update the LAP as needed. This will include DHRM staff: (1) interacting appropriately with LEP clients, (2) informing clients of the availability of language services, (3) determining clients’ preferred languages, and (4) documenting and tracking LEP client language preferences. These policies and procedures will guide the HRC’s staff through all their interactions with LEP clients.

**B. Accessing Appropriate Oral and Sign Language Services**

The HRC recognizes that certain circumstances may require specialized interpretation and translation services even when staff with bilingual abilities are available, and in those instances, staff should seek assistance from the Language Access Coordinators along with staff on the bi-lingual contact list or contracted vendors for professional in-person or

telephone interpreters.

### **C. Accessing Appropriate Written Language Services**

A determination of “vital” documents will be based on front-line interactions with LEP clients and an evaluation of the HRC’s documents. These actions will identify the necessary steps to ensure meaningful access to qualified written language services. This will apply to both written information intended for broad distribution, as well as written communications between the HRC and individuals accessing services.

If qualified staff are unable to meet these needs, the HRC will utilize State of Nevada contracted language translation services to provide accessible vital documents.

### **D. Language Services Quality Assurance**

The Commission is committed to ensuring that all language service providers it uses are qualified and competent to provide those services. The following procedures are in place to establish provider qualifications and track provider performance.

- DHRM staff, on behalf of the HRC, who are identified as possible interpreters or translators will be screened to determine qualifications and officially designated as interpreters or translators if qualifications are deemed sufficient.
- The HRC will use vendors contracted through statewide contracts by the Purchasing Division for the State of Nevada.

### **E. Staff Training Policies and Procedures**

The Commission acknowledges that appropriate interactions with diverse clients and the provision of language services for clients with limited English proficiency is vital to the fulfillment of its mission. To that end, DHRM, on behalf of the HRC, will ensure that its staff completes cultural competency training and are familiar with its LAP for providing services.

## **VI. Evaluation of and Recommendations for the HRC’s Language Access Plan**

The HRC is committed to monitoring the performance of the applicable policies, procedures, and resources to ensure that its LAP is responsive to the needs of its clients. At a minimum, DHRM, on behalf of the HRC, will review, evaluate, and, as appropriate, update the LAP biennially.

### **A. Processes for Monitoring and Evaluation**

On behalf of the HRC, the Language Access Coordinators will solicit qualitative and quantitative data biennially from members and alternate members and review statistical data to determine LAP needs and program compliance.

### **B. Evaluation Outcomes and Proposed Changes**

DHRM, on behalf of the HRC, will evaluate LAP data and propose changes to LAP policy and procedures as necessary.

### **C. Proposed Budgetary Implications**

Additional funding needs are currently being identified.

**D. Suggested Legislative Amendments**

No suggestions at this time.