

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Limited English Proficiency, Accommodations, and Cultural Competency

Definitions:

Accommodations—Internal or external resources needed to ensure the customer is afforded meaningful access to services (i.e. interpreter, translation services, braille).

Customer—Current and prospective customers, families, and other interested persons.

Cultural Competence—A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, practices and procedures that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals to enable that system, agency, or professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

- a. Culture—The word culture implies the integrated patterns of human behavior that include thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups.
- b. Competence—The word competence implies having the capacity to function within the context of culturally integrated patterns of human behavior defined by the group.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)—The inability to speak, read, write or understand English at a level that permits effective interaction with providers of service. LEP is the responsibility of providers of social services who receive federal funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Assessment- HDC will assess our local communities based on the use of census data, customer demographic data, and data from community based organizations as to identify non-English languages that are commonly encountered in HDC's service area.

When necessary, HDC will utilize one of the following translator/interpreter resources, or other viable options that may be available through local educational institutions or organizations:

1. Michigan Translators List – www.michigan.gov/documents/translators_resource_list
-Provides an extensive list of entities who provide translator services, by language
2. Michigan Online Interpreter Directory - <https://w2.lara.state.mi.us/interpreter>
3. Hearing Impaired Persons Options - VOICE, INC. (Saginaw) Ph: 888-748-6423
VP(Video Phone): 989-607-2291 www.voiceinc-mi.org

At no time will agency staff utilize family members or friends as interpreters unless specifically requested by that individual after an offer of an interpreter has been made.

- a. Documentation must be included when the LEP customer refuses the offer of an interpreter supplied by the agency and prefers to use family or friends. The documentation must include the name, relationship, and confirmation that the individual is not a minor.
- b. Documentation must include a brief statement of what the interpreter helped to communicate.
- c. Under no circumstance will the agency ask or require the customer to bring their own interpreter or use another customer to interpret.

HDC will provide written materials that will be translated for each LEP group of 10%, or 3000, whichever is less, of the eligible population for forms such as applications, enrollments forms, letters, notices of eligibility, or any change to services.