

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this plan is to document the procedures planned or in place at the Town of White to ensure meaningful access to Township services and information to limited English proficiency (LEP) in a language and format they can use and understand.

**Authorities:**

* **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**, 42 U.S.C. §2000 et seq.; Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
* Nondiscrimination under programs receiving federal financial assistance through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
* **Office for Civil Rights Policy Guidance**, Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients regarding Title VI prohibition against national origin discrimination affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, 68FR 47311 (2003
* **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Action (WIOA)**, Section 188, and 29 CFT part 58 Nondiscrimination and Equal opportunity and its imp lamenting regulations. The Civil Rights Center 9CRC), Department of Labor, is assigned monitoring and enforcement responsibilities.
* **Communication Services**, Minnesota Statute 15.441, subd (1), (2), (3), (4)
* Information for persons with limited English language proficiency, Minnesota Statute 256.01, subd 16.
* **Minnesota Human Rights Act**, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 363A prohibits discrimination based on race or national origin in public services.

**Definitions**

* Culturally appropriate services – utilization or application of services, testing, and any other methodology that does not have the effect of subjecting individuals with LEP to discrimination because of their race, color, or national origin, or do not have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, or national origin. – 45 CFR 80.3(b)(2).
* Effective communication – this occurs when staff have taken the necessary steps to make sure that a person with limited English proficiency (LEP) is given adequate information to understand the services and benefits available and receives the benefits for which they are eligible. Effective communication also means that a person with limited English proficiency can communicate the relevant circumstances of their situation to the provider.
* Individual with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – a person with Limited English Proficiency or “LEP” is not able to speak, read, write, or understand the English language well enough to allow them to interact effectively with healthcare, social service agencies, and other providers.
* Interpreting – the oral or spoken word transfer of a message from the source language into the target language. There are different modes of interpretation such as consecutive, simultaneous, sight-translation, and summarization
* Meaningful access – meaningful access to programs, information, and services is the standard of access required of federally funded entities to comply with Title VI’s language access requirements. To ensure meaningful access for people with Limited English Proficiency, service providers must make available to clients free of charge, and without undue delay, language assistance that results in accurate and effective communication.
* Office for Civil Rights (OCR) – the Office for Civil Rights is the civil rights enforcement agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. OCR Region V is the regional office that enforces Title VI in Minnesota for health and human service agencies and providers.
* Primary languages – the languages other than English that are most spoken by customers as identified by the Township’s collection of demographic data. Currently, none of the households in the 2020 Census data reported speaking a non-English language. If a customer, citizen, or employee of the Township has limited English proficiency, the Town of White will provide aids upon request.
* Translation – means the written transfer of a message from the source language into the target language.

**Meaningful Access Policy**

Access to any of the Township’s programs or services will not be denied due to the inability of a customer to speak or read English. A person has LEP when they are not able to speak, write, read, or understand the English language at a level that allows them to interact effectively with staff. The Township staff will foster effective communication between staff and customers with LEP by making timely appropriate language assistance services available at no cost to the customer. This plan covers all Township programs or activities of those who are receiving federal financial assistance. The Town of White will offer language assistance to clients who have difficulty communicating in English. When customers ask for language assistance, staff will offer free interpretation or translation services in the language the customer understands. These services must be completed timely, and confidentiality must be maintained on a need-to-know basis.

**Methods of Providing Services to Individuals with LEP**

The Town of White will contract with interpreters and translation service providers.

**Interpreter Services**

The Town of White without undue delay, and at no cost to individuals, provides meaningful access to information and services to all customers with LEP. Interpreters must have demonstrated proficiency in both English and the intended language that includes skills and ethics of interpreting. The Township works primarily with Language Line Services, Inc. for our client interpreter needs and covers all cost associated with this service.

**Translation of Documents**

The Town of White contracts with qualified translators or agencies to translate documents needed by LEP customers to access mandated or vital information or services.

**Dissemination of Information to Staff**

The Town of White provides language access training opportunities to all staff, which includes at least:

• Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

• How to work effectively with interpreters.

• Cultural issues related to delivery of agency information and services to LEP.

• Equipment and services available to staff when working with limited English speakers.

**Annual Review of Language Access Plan**

This plan will be reviewed annually. It will be revised, if needed, based on data collected during its delivery of information and services to limited English speakers throughout the year.

**This language Access Plan is available on the Town of White’s website for public access. This plan is available for all staff to access in an electronic format.**

**Complaint Process:**

**Jodi Knaus, Town Manager is responsible to investigate any complaints received related to discrimination. Individuals who have a concern about discrimination may contact Jodi Knaus at (218)229-2813 or** **Jodi.Knaus@townofwhite.com****. Mail to: PO Box 146, Aurora, MN 55705.**