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SECTION 1: Overview & Context

Department Mission

Under the direction of the County’s Board of Supervisors, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) provides fiscal and management leadership, facilitating policy development and effective program implementation to improve the well-being of the County’s residents. The CEO primarily functions as an internal-facing department, focusing on policy formulation and program incubation rather than direct service provision to external customers. Furthermore, while incubated programs may eventually involve direct service provision, the execution of such programs – particularly the customer service portion – is typically managed by other departments.

Despite its internal-facing nature, certain branches and units within the CEO maintain periodic contact with the public, necessitating language access policies and practices for these interactions. These include:

- Countywide Communications
- Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- Homeless Initiative (HI)
- Poverty Alleviation Initiative (PAI)
- Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion Initiative (ARDI)
- Municipal and Unincorporated Area Services (MUAS)

Because the CEO plays a countywide leadership and coordination role, most of its branches and initiatives are designed to serve the general population of Los Angeles County rather than discrete or narrowly defined client groups. For example, both Countywide Communications and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) are tasked with reaching all County residents, including during high-stakes or emergency scenarios, which necessitates broad and inclusive language access considerations.

In some instances, certain focused initiatives—such as PAI and ARDI—engage with more targeted communities. These engagements span a wide range of ages and geographies and often include populations with limited English proficiency.

- PAI has identified high demand for support in languages such as Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Pashto/Urdu, Vietnamese, and Armenian, especially in relation to its guaranteed income pilot. Requests for Mandarin, Tagalog, and Russian have also emerged.
- ARDI frequently receives feedback from community advocates about the importance of expanding language access for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) residents.

The CEO remains committed to refining its language access practices as we learn more about the communities through outreach and engagement, ensuring that our approach supports inclusion across all programs—both broad and targeted in scope.

Department Priority Languages

For the CEO in general, there are no laws or regulations at present mandating the department to offer language assistance for any spoken, non-English languages. However, based on data from the most recent United States Census and historical demand from constituents, Spanish is the most prevalent non-English language requiring assistance. Although requested less frequently, language assistance in Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean, and Armenian (aka “Core 4”) has also been provided occasionally, particularly during the County’s Covid-19 response. In addition, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters have been used to support community meetings and press events.

Beginning January 1, 2025, Assembly Bill 1638 ([AB1638](#)) would require any jurisdiction that provides emergency response services provide information related to the emergency in English and in all languages spoken jointly and in common by 5% or more of the population that does not primarily speak English. This would potentially impact any townhalls, press releases, social media releases among others post disaster. At the time of publication, the overall list of languages meeting this threshold in LA County includes Spanish, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Korean, Armenian, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Russian, Farsi, Japanese, and Arabic. However, each city may have a different combination of these languages depending on its specific population.

SECTION 2: Department's Language Access Policy

General Policy Statement

The CEO is dedicated to supporting the County's policy of offering diverse language assistance services to all members of the public, regardless of their language proficiency. Accordingly, it is the policy of the department to provide language assistance services free of charge to all speakers of Languages Other Than English (LOTE) who request such services during interactions with the department.

Language assistance will be provided through several methods: competent bilingual staff, contracts or formal arrangements with local organizations offering interpretation or translation services, and through technology and telephonic interpretation services. For planned events such as public meetings that rely on professional interpreter services, sufficient advance notice is required. Currently, this can mean 3-4 weeks prior to a meeting to effectively arrange and ensure the availability of necessary language assistance resources. For spontaneous or urgent needs, the department will make every effort to provide immediate language assistance through available resources, which could include technology-based tools, telephonic interpretation services, disaster service workers and on-call bilingual staff.

All staff will be informed of this policy and procedure. Staff likely to have direct contact with LOTE speakers will be trained in the appropriate procedures to identify the language needs of LOTE speakers and how to arrange for language assistance when required. Language assistance is generally available during public-facing engagements or when outreach, meetings, or emergency communications involve members of the public.

Scope of Policy

The CEO's general policy applies to all CEO personnel, including but not limited to management, general staff, and contracted Language Service Providers (LSPs). It ensures that all employees and contractors are aware of and adhere to the language assistance services policy, providing consistent and equitable access to services for all members of the public.

SECTION 3: Key Terms & Definitions

Term	Definition
Speaker of a Language Other Than English ("LOTE")	Also known as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or English Language Learner (ELL), this designation refers to individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who do not read, write, or speak English.
Preferred Language	The primary language in which an individual prefers to read, write, and speak.

Term	Definition
Priority Languages	Languages identified by a department, not necessarily by regulatory requirements or demographic thresholds, as critical for communication and service delivery based on factors such as the number of speakers and community needs – ensuring accessibility for significant non-English-speaking groups.
Core 4 Languages	Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Korean and Armenian. For the CEO, these are the most prevalent languages requiring language assistance based on the Census.
Language Access	Providing free language assistance to LOTE speakers in their preferred language, including through interpretation and translation services, to help enable reasonable access to and an opportunity to fully participate in the services, resources, and programs administered by the County.
Language Access Complaint	Common scenarios include but are not limited to the availability of language services not communicated to the public when language services were not provided when requested, and when the quality of language services did not meet the needs of the LOTE speaker.
Language Assistance	Services provided to individuals not proficient in English to help them communicate effectively and access information or services, including interpretation, translation, and in-language communication. Services can be delivered through bilingual staff, contracted LSPs, telephonic interpretation services, or other language support technologies.
Interpretation	Rendering spoken or signed language into another language while maintaining the meaning and tone of the language.
Translation	Rendering written communication into another language while preserving meaning.
In-Language Communication	Verbal or written exchanges conducted directly in the recipient's preferred language without the need for immediate translation or interpretation services. Information is both created and delivered natively in the recipient's language, ensuring a culturally relevant interaction.
Vital Documents	Documents that affect enrollment, continued participation, or termination from a county program, benefit, or service.

Term	Definition
Language Service Provider (LSP)	External providers, such as vendors or community-based organizations, that provide language access services through interpretation or translation through the means of contracting or community engagement.
Bilingual Staff	Employees who have demonstrated proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking a non-English language through a countywide test administered by a County-certified language examiner and who use their bilingual skills as an essential and ongoing part of their daily duties.
Certification	Formal recognition by an accredited institution (e.g., American Translators Association, California Healthcare Interpreting Association) of one's skills and communications competencies (i.e., writing, reading, and speaking). Not to be confused with the designation of County employees to receive a bilingual bonus, which is determined by a separate internal County process (see "Bilingual Staff" below).

SECTION 4: Procedures

Though the CEO is primarily an internal-facing department, branches and units that do occasionally interact with the public do so through one or more of the following points of contact, categorized here by type of language assistance required:



Interpretation

- 1) Public Meetings/Townhalls (in-person and virtual)
- 2) Media Briefings/Press Conferences (in-person and virtual)



Translation

- 3) Web/Social Media and Other Publicity (such as flyers promoting programs or events)
- 4) Emergency Alerts (text, email, phone)
- 5) Information Guides (print and digital)



In-Language Communication

- 6) Public Information Inquiries (phone, email)
- 7) Field Outreach

Following are general procedures for identifying the public's language needs and how staff can access language assistance resources for each of these points of contact:



Interpretation

1) Public Meetings/Townhalls

(applicable to all CEO staff)

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Interpretation services typically through contracted vendors (vendor list available to staff on department intranet).
- **Identifying Language Needs:** Anticipate language needs in advance of meeting due to average 3–4-week lead time to procure services – based on expected audience demographics and/or historical data. Ideally, ASL needs should also be included in the planning process.
- **Accessing Resources:** Identify vendor 3-4 weeks in advance of event and issue purchase order to procure services (allow for added time if more in-depth contracting needed due to complexity/volume of services needed). Virtual meetings will have arrangements for telephone lines and breakout rooms for interpreters, through the videoconference platform used (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Webex).

2) Media Briefings/Press Conferences

(typically the domain of Countywide Communications and the Office of Emergency Services)

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Live interpretation of media events through interpreter phone lines utilizing contracted vendors. ASL interpretation should ideally be included as part of planning and interpreters should be stationed next to the speaker to provide real time interpretation.
- **Identifying Language Needs:** Determine languages needed based on expected media representatives, typically focusing on the Core 4 languages (though many media outlets prefer to conduct initial interactions in English and translate the content).
- **Accessing Resources:** Staff follow a similar process as public meetings and townhalls to identify vendors, procure services and set up the interpreter lines day of the event. Media outlets also receive recordings to use for their in-language broadcasting purposes.

In both cases above, if the timing of the event does not allow sufficient time to procure vendors or if late requests are received for additional languages, the CEO will make every reasonable effort to accommodate language needs, including utilizing bilingual staff from the CEO or other departments.



Translation

3) Web/Social Media and Other Publicity

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Translation of select content for the department's website, social media platforms, and other public-facing materials. Countywide Communications currently employs multiple staff members who can provide Spanish translation, while others can speak and write Korean and Armenian suitable for small, time-sensitive assignments. Larger translation jobs or translations into other languages are managed by contracted vendors. Additionally, the CEO website features a Google Translate button for instant translation into various languages, acknowledging the use of such technology is imperfect.

In addition, steps should be taken to ensure digital content can be read through screen readers, includes a closed caption, or includes a video box as a subset of video that shows ASL interpretation.

- **Identifying Language Needs:** Determine languages needed based on demographics of target audience receiving the web/social media content and/or other publicity materials. ASL needs should also be considered when developing video-based content.

Typically, emergency alerts on social media are provided in Spanish.

- **Accessing Resources:** As the development of web, social media, and other publicity content is typically managed by Countywide Communications, the department primarily relies on translation to be arranged through this team. Spanish translation may be handled by the team's bilingual staff, or for larger projects and translations into other languages, contractors may be identified and engaged as needed. The team may either contract with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, which offers translation as a shared service, or approved vendors from the Countywide Communications Master Agreement or the On Demand Interpretations and Translation Services (ODITS) Master Agreement Program. The latter, offered through the County's Internal Services Department (ISD), offers interpretation and translation support in at least 66 languages, with others that can be added as needed.

4) Emergency Alerts

(SMS text message, email, and recorded telephone message alerts)

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Translation required for text and email alerts, while voice messages need both interpretation and pre-recording in the target languages.
- **Identifying Language Needs:** Residents in unincorporated areas, Sheriff contract cities, and cities without their own alert systems can

identify their language preferences through AlertLA (alert.lacounty.gov). Messaging preferences offered include Spanish, Chinese (Simplified, PRC), Japanese, Korean, and Russian. Alongside registration-based notifications, the OEM utilizes the federal Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) system to send messages directly to cell phones in specific areas without requiring registration. WEA alerts in Spanish only go to phones with Spanish set as the preferred language.

- **Accessing Resources:** OEM is responsible for the transmission of emergency alerts. Bilingual staff within OEM handle Spanish translations; for other languages, OEM primarily relies on technology to provide basic translations at present, though demand for these languages have also been minimal. Internal procedures within OEM ensure that alerts are transmitted efficiently and accurately across different platforms. Countywide Communications may also provide additional support by further amplifying messaging through social media, both in English and in Spanish. Based on the circumstances and how quickly translation services can be engaged, ISD's ODITS program is also being explored as an option for transmitting alerts in a broader array of languages.

5) Information Guides

(includes print and digital editions of the County Guide to Services, Guide to Municipal Services in Unincorporated Areas, and Emergency Survival Guide, and related service locator tools)

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Translation of print and digital information guides utilizing contracted vendors.
- **Identifying Language Needs:** The *County Guide to Services* and the *Guide to Municipal Services in Unincorporated Areas* are available in Spanish. The *Emergency Survival Guide* is provided in 13 languages: Arabic, Armenian, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. Audio versions of the *Emergency Survival Guide* are available in English and Spanish. If additional languages are requested, efforts will be made to accommodate these requests.
- **Accessing Resources:** Units in the CEO responsible for developing public-facing content (e.g., OEM, MUAS) can secure translation and production resources for both digital and print formats, either through the ODITS Master Agreement program, the Countywide Communications Master Agreement or other translation lists maintained by ISD, Public Health or other departments. CEO Contracts and Countywide Communications can provide guidance to units as they identify and contract with LSPs to translate guides into the

required languages. Units must identify funding and can procure resources through a purchase order.



In-Language Communication

6) Public Information Inquiries

(in-bound calls or emails requested information from the County, including Public Records Act (PRA) requests; typically handled by Countywide Communications)

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Bilingual staff for inquiries in Spanish; in rare instances where inquiries received in other languages, staff may reach out through the informal department and county network for additional language support. ASL video relay services should also be considered, especially for emergency-related communications.
- **Identifying Language Needs:** Self-identified by individual when making their inquiry.
- **Accessing Resources:** Upon receiving a call in Spanish, staff use a developed script to direct the inquiry to the appropriate bilingual staff member. Emails requiring Spanish language assistance are likewise diverted to the bilingual staff for handling. For non-urgent written inquiries in languages other than Spanish, staff can contract with a translation provider through the ODITS Master Agreement program, to translate both the inbound request and subsequent response.

7) Field Outreach

(activities such as door-to-door canvassing, attending community events, setting up informational booths at local gatherings, and other direct engagement with residents in public spaces)

- **Assistance Required & Available Resources:** Personnel able to communicate in target language, usually provided through community-based organizations (CBOs) that the CEO has contracted with as part of program design and development.
- **Identifying Language Needs:** Language needs anticipated upfront during program design and planning, based on historical data and community feedback. Once in-field, CBOs are expected to employ best practices for identifying language needs, such as wearing "I Speak" nametags and using trusted messengers within the community to facilitate communication.
- **Accessing Resources:** For programs likely targeting LOTE speakers, the CEO strategically engages with CBOs that have the necessary expertise and language fluency to ensure that during potential outreach events involving direct, unscripted dialogue, personnel can

effectively communicate in the required languages, fostering better engagement and understanding within the community.

Vital Documents

Per the County's definition, *vital documents* are those that are critical for accessing services, receiving benefits, or understanding legal rights. As the CEO is not a direct service provider and does not administer public benefits or entitlements, it does not produce or issue documents that meet this definition. Accordingly, the CEO does not handle vital documents.

SECTION 5: Public Notification of Available Language Assistance

Information about available language assistance resources is publicized in meeting agendas, information guides, and other public-facing materials such as event flyers. It is the current practice of the department to provide this notice in Spanish; however, if in the future there are significant requests for other languages, notice could be offered in those languages as well. Additionally, information about available language assistance services is made available to the public through this Department Language Access Plan (DLAP) posted on the CEO website (ceo.lacounty.gov).

The CEO website also features a prominently displayed Google Translate button in the bottom right corner of each page, providing instant translation of all website content into various languages. It is important to note, however, that Google Translate is an automated tool and may not always provide accurate translations. Users are advised to use the translated content with caution and refer to the original content when necessary.

SECTION 6: Monitoring Language Assistance Effectiveness

Evaluation of Language Assistance

Bilingual Staff and Qualification Process

Given the critical importance of Spanish among the CEO's priority languages, there are two officially designated bilingual employees providing Spanish interpretation, translation, and in-language communication support in the department, for which they receive bilingual bonuses.

These two staff received their official designation by demonstrating proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking a non-English language through a standardized countywide exam administered by a County-certified language examiner. Moreover, it must be proven that these bilingual skills are an essential and ongoing part of the employee's daily duties, rather than an occasional task.

Currently, there is no requirement for staff to renew their qualifications periodically; employees take the language proficiency exam once and receive a qualification card certifying their status. This qualification is also portable, meaning it can be

transferred if the employee moves to another LA County department, provided these bilingual skills remain an essential part of their job.

Contracted Language Service Providers (LSPs)

The CEO contracts with several reputable vendors to provide interpretation and translation support when called upon.

For interpretation services, we contract with industry leaders such as NTT, Language Line, and PALS for Health. These vendors are widely recognized for their expertise and are commonly used by many other departments, reflecting their industry-standard qualifications. For example, all of PALS for Health's interpreters must undergo an in-house 2.5-hour comprehensive assessment of their written and oral bilingual proficiency, and knowledge of medical terminologies. Those who pass with 80% or higher are then screened for interpreter's readiness and aptitude. Similar rigorous standards are maintained by the other vendors to ensure high-quality services. The languages primarily covered include Spanish, with occasional services in Korean, Chinese, and Armenian.

For translation services and in-language outreach, the CEO engages CBOs such as South Bay Center for Counseling (SBCC), Comunidades Indígenas en liderazgo (CIELO), and the East LA Women's Center. CIELO has provided translation services for over 30 indigenous languages, the East LA Women's Center specializes in Spanish, and SBCC offers translation for various other languages.

Additionally, the CEO has a Departmental Service Order (DSO) with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC), providing the CEO (typically Countywide Communications) another avenue to procure translation services. This inter-county service arrangement allows the department to contract with the RR/CC to provide document translation, predominantly for Spanish as well as other high-use languages as needed. Both CBOs and RR/CC are selected based on their proven track record and the high-quality services they provide, which align with the department's standards and language access strategy.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Metrics

In accordance with the newly adopted Countywide Language Access Policy, and to meet the annual reporting requirements for all departments starting November 1, 2025, the CEO will begin tracking several metrics to assess the demand for and utilization of language assistance services, as well as their effectiveness:

Demand for and Utilization of Language Assistance Services

- Number (and trends) of people served through language assistance
- Number (and trends) of language assistance requests received, by:
 - Language
 - Service provided
 - Program/service and branch

- Staff or vendor used
- Number (and trends) of events with interpretation services
- Number (and trends) of documents and communications translated and languages

Effectiveness of Language Assistance Services

- Language access complaints and their resolutions

The CEO will also explore other means of measuring satisfaction through surveys and other methods of collecting community feedback to further enhance the quality of language assistance services.

By implementing these KPIs, the CEO aims to ensure language assistance services meet community needs and continuously improve in quality.

Complaint Process

The CEO is committed to providing linguistic and culturally appropriate services to all County residents. If a resident's linguistic needs are not being met, they can submit a language access complaint using the Countywide Language Access Complaint Form. The online form and instructions on how to file a complaint will be posted on the CEO website alongside this DLAP at <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/language-translation>. The link to this page is already prominently displayed in the website footer as [Language](#). Versions of the form and instructions will be made available in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Armenian.

Complaints may be filed with the CEO through the online form posted on the CEO website or by contacting the CEO language access liaison, Jean Ho, via phone at (213) 785-3477 or email (LanguageAccess@ceo.lacounty.gov). Complaints may also be filed directly with the OIA. Complaints can also be filed by calling the OIA's Language Access Manager at (213) 948-2956, who will document and route the complaint to the CEO.

Within ten (10) business days from receipt of a direct language access complaint or notice from the OIA of a language access complaint, complainants will receive an email from LanguageAccess@ceo.lacounty.gov acknowledging receipt of the complaint. The CEO's language access liaison will field complaints and conduct initial reviews. If the complaint requires further investigation, it will be handled by a designated team within the CEO. This team will gather relevant information, interview necessary parties, and assess the situation to determine appropriate actions.

The CEO will aim to resolve the complaint and offer a resolution within ninety (90) days of receiving the complaint, per the Countywide Language Access Policy. Complainants will be informed via email of the outcome and any corrective measures taken to address the issue.

SECTION 7: Training

The CEO will distribute this policy to all staff within 30 days of adopting a final DLAP. This policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure its continued relevance.

By June 30, 2025, the department will provide training to all staff on the CEO Language Access Plan. This training will ensure that all employees understand their language access responsibilities, are aware of department procedures, and know the available resources.

Staff who regularly interact with the public will receive additional training on accessing the department's language assistance resources, namely, how to access language services providers through the ODITS Master Agreement program. Staff will also be provided access to other Countywide training topics, such as cultural competence, language rights, language access and language justice, offered through the OIA.

Staff receiving the bilingual bonus will undergo additional structured training offered through the OIA on the basics of interpretation, including best practices, standards, and ethics, as well as guidance on what to do if asked to provide language services for which they are not certified.

Moving forward, all new staff hired after June 30, 2025, will receive this information within the first month of their start date, as part of the standard onboarding experience. Furthermore, the DLAP and all accompanying training materials will be posted to the CEO intranet for all employees to revisit as needed. Updates will be communicated through department-wide email announcements.

SECTION 8: Community Outreach & Engagement

Although the department has limited direct interaction with the public, the CEO is committed to ensuring that its work and the policies it advances are inclusive and accessible to all linguistic communities. Engaging with community groups and stakeholders is key to the department remaining responsive to diverse linguistic needs and effectively sharing its policies and initiatives with all members of the community, regardless of language spoken.

The various branches of the CEO involved in large-scale initiatives and pilot programs already regularly engages with community-based organizations, reflecting an ongoing commitment to inclusivity. Following is a list of past partners (not exhaustive) that the CEO has engaged with:

- Center for Pacific Asian Families
- Comunidades Indígenas en liderazgo (CIELO)
- Chinatown Service Center
- East LA Women's Center
- Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC)

- South Bay Center for Counseling (SBCC)

Additionally, the Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI) initiative, housed within the CEO, plays a pivotal role in advocating for and ensuring inclusivity across multiple facets within the County. ARDI works closely with various community organizations to gather insights and feedback, including how to ensure language access services and policies are both equitable and effective.

To further demonstrate the commitment to solicit feedback and input from the community on language access issues, there will be a dedicated page on the CEO's website where the DLAP can be found, and public feedback can be provided through the Language Access Complaint form. This section can be machine-translated into multiple languages using Google translate, while the Language Access Complaint form will be available in 9 languages translated by professional human translators and separately validated by the Office of Immigrant Affairs.

By integrating these practices, the CEO ensures that its language access services support the inclusivity and accessibility of its communications and policies, effectively serving the community.