



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
Olympia, Washington

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TITLE: LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) CLIENTS POLICY 5.05

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Authority: RCW 74.040  
DSHS Non-discrimination Plan  
DSHS Administrative Policies 6.12, 7.02, 7.03, 7.07

**PURPOSE**

To establish a process for the provision of services to limited English proficient (LEP) persons.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees of the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), its contractors and subcontractors.

**POLICY**

All persons shall enjoy equal access to all of our services. Such access will be provided through bilingual staff. When that is not possible, the division shall provide a certified interpreter to a client who requests the service, at no cost to the client.

**PROCEDURES**

- A. All signs on display in DDD offices and Residential Habilitation Centers (RHCs) describing services, rights or responsibilities must be in the six (6) primary languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian; and in large print.
- B. Written materials used for outreach must be available in the six (6) primary languages and in enlarged print. Films or videos must be subtitled when necessary, in order to address special language needs in service areas.
- C. Clients must be informed about and provided with free interpreter services as necessary to ensure equal access. Notification of this right must be included on

all announcements for meetings to which clients, their parents, or the public is invited to participate.

- D. When interpreter services are requested, only certified interpreters shall be used.
- E. All regions must maintain an up-to-date directory of certified interpreters.
- F. Managers shall receive training on how to evaluate their translation and interpretation needs.
- G. Managers shall review their translation and interpretation needs at least once a year.
- H. Contractors shall be made aware of and follow this policy.

Each DDD region office and RHC shall have a procedure in place to enforce this policy within sixty (60) days from the issue date of this policy. The procedure must include a method for notifying vendors and contractors.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**"Limited English Proficient (LEP)"** persons are persons who have difficulty communicating with an English-speaking employee. This can mean either understanding or being understood by that employee.

**"Certified Interpreter"** is a person who is an employee or contractor of the department who has been certified by the DSHS examination or holds an accreditation from a professional association or a federal or state certified court interpreter program.

**"Qualified Translator"** is a translator who meets the qualifications established by the Language Interpreter Services and Translation section of the Administrative Services Division and translates from one language to another.

### **SUPERSESION**

Division Policy Directive: 127  
Issued May, 1990

Approved:     /s/ Norm Davis     Date: 12/30/1993  
Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities