



**Department of Public Safety
Language Access Plan
2024**

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Introduction

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety (DPS) serves as the state's chief protector and defender of the public and is the statewide public safety and homeland security agency. It is home to Alcohol Law Enforcement, Emergency Management, Governor's Crime Commission, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, NC National Guard, NC Office of Recovery and Resiliency, Private Protective Services, Samarcand Training Academy, State Capitol Police, and State Highway Patrol and employs more than 6,000 full time personnel and 12,000 National Guard members. DPS also provides administrative support to the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission and the Boxing and Combat Sports Commission

DPS focuses citizen and legislative attention on law enforcement and public safety issues, such as justice reinvestment; highway safety; crime prevention; victim services; homeland security; and preparation for, response to, and recovery from natural and man-made disasters.

Mission Statement

Safeguard and preserve the lives and property of the people of North Carolina through preparation, prevention, and protection with integrity and honor.

Vision Statement

To provide exceptional public safety services by engaging our communities and investing in our employees.

Organizational Values

Safety We value the safety of our employees and the citizens we serve.

Integrity We perform our work in an ethical, honorable, respectful, courageous, truthful, and sincere way.

Customer Service We consistently exceed our customers' expectations through speed of delivery of services and continuous evaluation.

Professionalism We exhibit a courteous, conscientious, and businesslike manner in all customer service activities. We stay knowledgeable of all aspects of our job. We act for the public good without regard for convenience or self-interest.

Diversity & Inclusion We draw strength from our differences and work together as a family in a spirit of inclusion, teamwork, and mutual respect.

Excellence We pursue excellence in delivering the programs and services entrusted to us.

Innovation We seek innovative solutions to tackling public safety issues.

This Language Access Plan has been developed to ensure that all North Carolina residents have access to and can meaningfully participate in the programs and services provided by DPS. This plan outlines the language assistance services provided by DPS to ensure communication and participation for individuals with limited English proficiency. The State of North Carolina is committed to increasing digital equity and overall access to services and opportunities for the state's growing population of immigrants, refugees, and all individuals who use languages other than English.

DPS serves a diverse and growing population across the state. This diversity is reflected in the range of languages spoken by individuals who may require services from the Department. According to [2020 U.S. Census Bureau reports](#), 12.7% of North Carolina households speak a language other than English. Outside of English, Spanish was the second most preferred language recorded spoken within North Carolina households at 7.9%.

DPS is committed to enhancing its language access services to bridge communication gaps and ensure that all residents can effectively engage with and benefit from the Department's services. By implementing a robust Language Access Plan, DPS aims to uphold its mission of protecting and serving all communities within North Carolina.

Legal Basis

The State of North Carolina is committed to advancing the goals of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 13166 and ensuring compliance.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d) (Title VI), prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. As a recipient of federal financial assistance, DPS is bound by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7, and its implementing regulation, 45 C.F.R. Part 80, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (which includes Limited English Proficiency).

Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (Aug. 16, 2000), requires federal agencies to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). This includes providing individuals with LEP language services, such as interpretation and translation, in order to meaningfully access and engage in federally conducted programs and activities.

EO 13166 requires all federal agencies to develop and implement a Language Access Plan to “improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons”.

Guiding Principles

In accordance with federal and local requirements, this language access plan provides a framework for timely and reasonable language assistance to limited English proficient individuals.

To ensure all citizens can access critical services and participate fully in programs, DPS is committed to:

- Implementing a comprehensive language access plan and taking concrete steps towards meeting the administrative and language service standards outlined in this language access plan;
- Providing language access services for individuals who speak a language other than English when feasible;
- Training staff to ensure that they understand the importance of language access and the rules and regulations governing language access services, and that they are equipped to communicate with and serve individuals who speak a language other than English;
- Ensure all DPS staff, regardless of their primary language, can access and understand necessary resources, documents, and support services provided to employees and

- Monitoring progress across DPS divisions and sections and supporting their efforts to meet compliance standards.

In committing to providing linguistically accessible services, when feasible, for limited English proficient individuals, DPS also aims to increase public trust and confidence and increase the general public's awareness of DPS's services.

Definitions

- **Language Access:** the process of ensuring that LEP individuals have access to vital documents and services in a language they can understand, either through interpretation or translation services.
- **Limited English Proficiency (LEP):** the inability to understand or to effectively express oneself in spoken or written English as a result of one's national origin and the individual has not developed fluency in the English language.
- **Interpretation:** the act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.
- **Translation:** the replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

Language Assistance Services

DPS is committed to taking reasonable steps to ensure meaningful communication and access to information for individuals with limited English proficiency. This section outlines the types of language assistance DPS currently provides, as well as steps DPS will take to support meaningful communication and participation for limited English proficient individuals.

Access plans currently in place or in development:

- A [Public Participation Plan](#) that is evaluated annually that outlines how the department will commit to connecting with, responding to and engaging with members of the public to encourage participation in department-sponsored events and other outreach opportunities.
- The [North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency Language Access Plan](#).

Language assistance services currently provided:

- Multi-lingual personnel who are embedded in multiple divisions and sections throughout DPS who assist with translation or interpretation services to ensure the Department's mission is understood, and services are available to those who live in and visit North Carolina. Divisions or sections with multi-lingual staff

include: Communications, Emergency Management, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency, State Capitol Police, State Highway Patrol, and Victim Compensation Services.

- Google Translate services enabled on ncdps.gov that will automatically translate website copy into fifteen different languages.
- Spanish language interpreters who translate live press conferences for weather-related emergencies.
- Utilizing an external agency to translate NC S.A.F.E. materials, so information on firearm safety is accessible to everyone in North Carolina.

To continue to improve language access, DPS is taking the following additional steps:

- Convening an advisory group to address language access, including personnel from the following divisions and sections: Communications, General Counsel's Office, Law Enforcement and Strategic Relations, and Policy and Strategic Planning.
- Completing an environmental scan, gathering information internally and externally to identify factors that may impact or supplement DPS's language access plan.
- Compiling a comprehensive inventory of the language access opportunities that currently exist with DPS.
- Surveying DPS divisions and sections to ascertain language access needs and develop solutions and promoting cross-division collaboration where possible.