

Executive Order 13166

Limited English Proficiency Resource Document:

Tips and Tools from the Field

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U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

From the Executive Office of the President

Office of Management and Budget

2002 Report

"The benefits of language-assistance services for particular LEP individuals,

while not readily quantifiable in dollar units, can be significant.

Improved access to a wide variety of services -

ranging from the delivery of healthcare and access to food stamps to

motor vehicle licensing and law enforcement -

can substantially improve the health and quality of life of many

LEP individuals and their families.

Moreover, [it] may increase the efficiency of distribution of government services to LEP individuals and may measurably increase the effectiveness of public health and safety programs."

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/lepfinal3-14.pdf>

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Introduction: Overview of the Document and of the Federal Limited English Proficiency Initiative

Over the last few years, the Coordination and Review Section (COR) of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice (DOJ) has spent considerable time meeting with, training, and learning from individuals working in sectors ranging from the justice system to the nonprofit and social service providers, to federal, state, and local government, regarding the provision of language assistance to limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. We have done so because we are charged with coordinating enforcement and implementation of certain federal civil rights laws that require entities that receive financial assistance from federal agencies, as well as federal agencies themselves, to ensure that they are taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access for LEP individuals.

In June of 2002, DOJ issued guidance relating to language assistance pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq. (Title VI) and its accompanying regulations. The guidance focused on recipients of DOJ financial assistance (primarily law enforcement agencies, departments of corrections, courts, domestic violence service providers, and entities having a law enforcement or juvenile justice mission). That guidance has served as a launching point for COR's training efforts and discussions with federal, state, and other partners on the subject of language assistance. Often these interactions and trainings have become opportunities for sharing tips and tools from the field based on the experiences of recipients and communities working with LEP populations. Sharing anecdotes of community solutions that have been positively received, as well as sharing information about some of the drawbacks of certain approaches, offers entities opportunities to make great strides in developing their own solutions to language access concerns.

DOJ believes that this exchange of experiences more broadly is a useful tool for enhancing access for LEP persons. This document furthers that sharing.

What Will You Find In This Document?

To develop this document, COR reviewed information collected in informal surveys of court personnel, social service providers, police departments, 911 call centers, several DOJ components e.g. the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Office of Justice Programs), to determine how these organizations have responded to the call for meaningful access for LEP individuals. This document lists many of the tips, tools, and practices identified in our surveys. We highlight some agencies that have taken an innovative approach or applied a strong policy or strategy to a particular aspect of language services.

This document does not endorse or suggest that any particular program is legally required. Nor would we presume to state that this project has encompassed all of the current innovations in this area; local innovation will certainly produce additional successful practices. Moreover, variations in size, resources, mission, and populations served mean that different approaches will work for different agencies. The examples are, as described, consistent with the goal of the DOJ LEP Guidance and with Title VI and regulatory requirements, but the Department has not conducted an extensive review of

the agencies providing these examples, nor has it reviewed how all of the policies and practices are being implemented in practice. While we strove to provide as comprehensive an approach as possible, you might find that certain types of interactions with LEP individuals are not fully covered by these tips. Language access coordinators and decision-makers should consult the DOJ LEP Guidance, discussed below, in conjunction with this document. More work will be done to continue to seek out additional resources and strategies for communicating effectively with LEP individuals.

For more information on the work of the Coordination and Review Section of the Civil Rights Division, click on <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor>.

What Is the Legal and Policy Background?

This document is part of a broader effort by the Department to share existing language access resources, practices, and tools for recipients. It is inspired by, and reflects the work of, entities in the field that focus on 911 call response, law enforcement, courts, and domestic violence, as well as some federal program managers. The framework and grounding for choosing the tips and highlighting particular aspects of the recipient programs is Title VI, the Title VI regulations, and policy guidance issued by DOJ in this area.

Under Title VI and federal agency regulations implementing Title VI, recipients of federal financial assistance have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to their programs and activities. Title VI and its accompanying regulations prohibit recipients from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Discrimination on the basis of national origin can occur if a recipient does not provide appropriate language assistance to LEP individuals because these individuals, whose language is usually tied to their national origin, will not have access to the same benefits, services, information, or rights that the recipient provides to everyone else. Thus, in certain circumstances, failure to ensure that LEP persons can effectively participate in or benefit from federally assisted programs and activities may violate Title VI and its regulations prohibiting national origin discrimination.

**To access Executive Order 13166, click on: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/eolep.htm>;
You can access the DOJ LEP Guidance for recipients at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/DOJFinLEPFRJun182002.htm>**

Executive Order 13166, titled "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," required two things. First, it required federal agencies to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access for LEP people to federally conducted programs and activities (essentially, everything the federal government does). Second, under the Executive Order, every federal agency that provides financial assistance to non-federal entities must publish guidance on how those recipients can provide meaningful access to LEP persons and thus comply with Title VI and Title VI regulations.

On December 18, 2002, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights sent a letter to DOJ recipients

of federal financial assistance and representative organizations, providing them with a copy of the DOJ LEP Guidance and asking them to spread the word about the need to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals. To view this document, click on: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/BoydDec13LEPArtr.htm> . A copy of an article for newsletters can be found at: <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/Pubs/BoydLEPAr.htm>, or go to <http://www.lep.gov>.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13166, DOJ published final guidance for its own recipients on June 18, 2002. 67 Fed. Reg. 41455. DOJ's LEP Guidance assists recipients with fulfilling their legal responsibilities to provide meaningful access to LEP persons. This policy guidance provides a description of the four factors recipients should consider in fulfilling their responsibilities to LEP persons. DOJ uses these factors in evaluating whether recipients are in compliance with Title VI and its regulations. These four factors are:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population;
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with the program;
3. The importance of the benefit, service, information, or encounter to the LEP person (including the consequences of lack of language services or inadequate interpretation/translation); and,
4. The resources available to the recipient and the costs of providing various types of language services.

The DOJ LEP Guidance should be used in conjunction with this document. Appendix A to the guidance provides additional information on how some DOJ recipients of federal financial assistance, such as law enforcement, correctional institutions, courts, and domestic violence programs, can apply the four-factor analysis. See 67 Fed. Reg. 41466-41472. The guidance also discusses the value and possible format of written language assistance plans, presents options for identifying language services and ensuring competency of interpretation and translation services, and provides DOJ's insights on when translations of certain vital documents should be considered.

Providing high quality and accessible services, benefits, information, and access to the justice system for LEP individuals requires resources but is often critical. Moreover, often the costs of failure to provide appropriate language access can be even higher than the costs of providing a qualified interpreter, translator, or bilingual staffer. Convictions can be overturned and defendants released for inaccurate interpretation during interrogation, evidence development, or testimony. Victims and witnesses may be unable to provide law enforcement and emergency responders with accurate information, resulting in additional human and financial costs. Poor translations may require expensive revisions and reprinting, or result in inaccurate information exchange. Thus, in addition to the legal requirement to provide meaningful linguistic access, recipients and others have many additional incentives to avoid initial non-compliance.

<http://www.lep.gov> is the website of the Federal Interagency Working Group on LEP. The website is

intended to serve as a clearinghouse that contains useful information, guidance, demographic links, and resources for recipients, agency representatives, community members, and other stakeholders. This website is frequently updated to provide new tools that will facilitate language access.

In addition, there are many productive steps that the federal government, either collectively or as individual grant agencies, can take to help recipients reduce the costs of providing language services without sacrificing meaningful access for LEP persons. To that end, DOJ has provided and will continue to provide assistance and guidance in this important area. DOJ has established and oversees a Federal Interagency Working Group on LEP, which has developed a website, <http://www.lep.gov>, to assist in disseminating this information.

The Civil Rights Division is also working closely with DOJ funding components to ensure that language access measures are considered in the funding and monitoring of recipient programs and activities. The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the Office for Justice Programs (OJP) is responsible for ensuring that recipients of financial assistance from OJP and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) comply with civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of national origin, including limited English proficiency. Since the DOJ LEP Guidance was issued, OCR has provided training to representatives from hundreds of organizations funded by OJP and COPS on providing services to their LEP communities. OCR has also recognized the value of the information exchanged during these interactions and has passed along some of these tips and tools from the field to the Civil Rights Division and incorporated them into its training presentations. OCR conducted a number of compliance reviews of law enforcement agencies regarding their level of services to LEP persons. Through these reviews, OCR was able to see a number of promising approaches to providing services to LEP populations up close and gauge their effectiveness through interviews with the affected LEP communities.

For more information on the work of the Office for Civil Rights of the Office of Justice Programs, click on <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr>.

The Civil Rights Division is committed to providing the necessary LEP training and technical assistance to all interested stakeholders. These services are provided primarily by the Division's Coordination and Review Section (COR), which is responsible for coordination and implementation of the LEP initiative throughout the Executive branch. To date, COR has conducted over 50 LEP trainings at the federal, state, local, and community levels, and will continue to do so as the need requires. COR has also worked with the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture to develop a video on the application of Title VI to LEP access issues, including vignettes regarding emergency 911 services, law enforcement, foodstamps, and healthcare. To request a training session on LEP, brochures, a copy of the video, or for other technical assistance, please call COR at (202) 307-2222. TDD: (202) 307-2678.

Additional technical assistance tools include brochures which can be found on <http://www.lep.gov> and a LEP video, which is an excellent companion to COR's general Title VI video. The LEP brochures and video were created in partnership with the Food and Nutrition Service of the Department of

Agriculture, and the Office for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

With this background, we invite you to delve into the heart of this document - the Tips and Tools Chapters. We hope that this document will spark your creativity, provide examples you can replicate, and reaffirm what is already working for you as you endeavor to communicate effectively with all community members, regardless of language or national origin.

Chapter 1: General Tips and Tools Common to Courts, Police, 911 Call Centers, and Domestic Violence Specialists and Service Providers

Whether you are a police officer, outreach worker, judge, intake worker, or emergency responder, chances are that you or your colleagues have encountered a limited English proficient (LEP) individual in carrying out your basic tasks. Having a strategy in place to deal with LEP issues effectively makes sense: it allows for cost-efficient and timely services that comply with the law and meet the needs of the public.

This General Tips and Tools Chapter provides Department of Justice (DOJ) recipient organizations, regardless of their primary mission, with a survey of strategies to deliver services to LEP community members. In reviewing the strategies that organizations used, we have found similarities cutting across disciplines and professions. One of the most important steps for effective communication is to set a policy and create a coherent plan for communicating with LEP individuals that includes a number of these common strategies. They are outlined in this chapter and are divided into five basic steps:

- A. Determining your organization's language service needs;**
- B. Identifying language resources to help you meet those needs, and ensuring that personnel know how to access and effectively utilize those resources;**
- C. Familiarizing and training staff and managers with effective and innovative methods of communication with LEP individuals;**
- D. Implementing and enforcing quality control measures to ensure that you are communicating accurately and effectively with LEP community members; and**
- E. Conducting outreach to ensure that all community members, regardless of national origin or language, know that they can access your program, and can provide feedback to you on the language services you provide.**

The five common steps are reflected in each of the chapters. You will notice some duplication of tips in

order to emphasize certain practices in the context of particular types of recipients, but we have minimized this to the extent appropriate.

While this document focuses on various types of DOJ recipients, the strategies outlined in this General Chapter should be helpful to a wide variety of other organizations as well.

We hope that this General Tips and Tools Chapter will help you create, refine, and implement a plan to address a number of the LEP issues you currently face on the job. Once a plan has been established and implemented, it should be reviewed and updated as demographics, language resources, and other factors evolve.

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A. Determining Your Organization's Language Needs and Devising a Plan

- **Review the language needs of the communities you serve or encounter.**
 - **Keep track of the languages you encounter on the job through a record-keeping method that is consistent with your agency's practice. Data should be reviewed to determine your agency's immediate language needs.**
 - **There may be LEP communities that you are not reaching and that should be included in your assessment. These populations may need additional outreach in order to participate fully. Include seasonal workers, vacationers, motorists, and visitors in your assessment. (See [Section E](#) below).**
 - **Other sources for demographic information include:**
 - **The demographics section of <http://www.lep.gov>.**
 - **For ish speakers, the 2000 Census, at www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t20/tab04.pdf, provides detailed information down to census tract level and below as to the English ability of persons over the age of five who speak ish at home. Be aware of potential under-reporting, and account for the possibility that the community you serve may be larger than estimates predict.**
 - **For languages other than ish, the most detailed data on English ability from the 2000 Census is reported only in terms of general language groups (e.g., Asian/Pacific Islander, Indo-European, Other). In such cases, more refined predictions of potential LEP populations can be made by combining the language data that is available with other demographic data closely associated with language, such as ancestry, citizenship, foreign-born data, and prior residence. Access such data through American Factfinder, an interactive demographic mapping service maintained by the Census Bureau. Log on to http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en.**

- Also access "Census 2000 Brief: Language Use and English-Speaking Ability 2000 (October 2003) at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-29.pdf>.
- Tables and maps of the thirty most commonly-spoken languages (which include languages spoken by individuals who also speak and understand English) can be found at http://www.mla.org/census_main. The tables provide information down to the zip code level.
- The U.S. Department of Education and school districts maintain data on languages spoken in the local public school systems. Schools should also have knowledge of the LEP parent population. See <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=96> and <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/stats/>.
- Some agencies contract with the Census Bureau to conduct special counts of census data for particular demographic characteristics. For instance, the U.S. Department of Labor maintains a demographics tool broken down by Workforce Investment Area (WIA). The data sorts the number of people who speak one of 39 different languages by WIA and by state. Some limited social demographics such as education, employment status, and income are also provided for each group. The information is in Excel worksheet format, and can be downloaded in total or by specific state or workforce area. This information, and other technical assistance products for the workforce system, will be made available through <http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/lep> in the very near future. The project is a joint endeavor of the Department of Labor, Berkeley Policy Associates, and the Census Bureau.
- Community, ethnic, and faith-based organizations can assist you in identifying LEP communities in your service area. Include such organizations in an "advisory committee" as part of your continuing efforts to respond to LEP issues.
- Similarly, check with local interpretation and translation associations to determine which languages are most frequently requested. Ask for general information on the purposes for which interpretation and translation services are sought (e.g., medical, legal, immigration, or other purposes).

Want more info?

- Consult [Chapter 6](#) of this document, entitled "Tips and Tools Specific to DOJ Federally Conducted Programs and Activities," for a more detailed analysis of the use of census data and special counts.
- Contact Karin Wang, Vice President of Programs (kwang@apalc.org) or Dan Ichinose, Project Director of Demographic Research Unit (dichinose@apalc.org) at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) in Los Angeles for information about effectively utilizing school

district statistics and other data to determine interpreter needs. See also, http://www.apalc.org/pdffiles/ASP_Report.pdf.

- **Devise a written plan to meet the needs of LEP individuals in your area.**
 - **Helpful considerations include the four-factor analysis guiding the implementation of the Title VI language access requirement:**
 - **The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered;**
 - **The frequency with which LEP individuals come into contact with your programs/activities;**
 - **The importance of your program, activity or service to people's lives;**
 - **The resources you have at your disposal and costs of implementation.**
 - **Formulate and distribute a written plan with instructions to staff on accessing interpretation, translation, and other language resources to serve LEP individuals. Your plan should address the various types of contact your staff have with LEP individuals. Your plan will minimize confusion and ambiguity when situations involving LEP individuals arise, and will enable your agency to determine training, administration, planning, and budgeting needs.**
 - **The approach you identify in your plan may be different for less commonly-encountered languages than it is for languages encountered more frequently in your community.**
 - **Give priority to first-response units and other services involving access to important benefits, services, information, or rights. The more serious the consequences, the more likely competent language services are necessary.**
 - **Review, update, and refine your plan on a regular basis and as language group demographics and agency capabilities change. Do so in consultation with community groups and other stakeholders.**

Want more info?

- **Consult the handy self-assessment tool available at <http://www.lep.gov/selfassesstool.htm>. This assessment asks crucial questions to enable you to determine the responsiveness of your program or activity to the needs of LEP individuals, and provides guidance on key elements of a written plan. [back to top](#)**

B. Identifying Language Resources to Help You Meet Your Needs

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- **Differentiate between the many types of language service providers available, and determine which combination is appropriate for your program.**
 - **An interpreter listens to a communication in one language and orally converts to another language while retaining the same meaning.**

- **A translator replaces written text from one language into an equivalent written text in another language.**
- **Bilingual individuals have the ability to use two languages. A bilingual person can learn to become a translator or an interpreter, but is not automatically so qualified by virtue of his or her language abilities.**
- **When selecting services, consider the strengths and limitations of various language service providers.**
 - **For instance, a bilingual person may be fluent and well-suited to having direct monolingual conversations (e.g., Spanish to Spanish and English to English conversations) in more than one language, but may not be skilled at converting those conversations from one language to another.**
 - **In addition, some of your staff may be less than fully bilingual. However, their language skills may still be helpful for limited purposes such as outreach activities and basic conversation to set people at ease or to provide simple directions in ways that do not have significant consequences if accuracy is not perfect.**
 - **By contrast, professional interpreters and translators are generally required to have undergone rigorous and specialized training.**
 - **Reflect on the importance of your services to the LEP community, the skill level and training of your bilingual staff, and the complexity of the communication, to determine whether the specialized skills of an interpreter or translator are required.**
- **Identify bilingual staff.**
 - **In-house multilingual staffing is a cost-effective way to provide language services to LEP individuals.**
 - **APALC is an example of a non-profit organization in Los Angeles adopting this approach. They have also worked with other organizations to develop a coordinated approach to providing language services to LEP individuals and to helping immigrant victims who come into contact with the legal system. Consult their publication "Expanding Legal Services: Serving Limited English Proficient Asians and Pacific Islanders," by Gabrielle Hammond, November 2003. Click on http://www.apalc.org/pdffiles/ELS_Web.pdf, or go to**

<http://www.apalc.org> and click on "literature" to obtain this document and other APALC resources.

- In the social service setting, Safe Horizon, a New York City-based victim assistance agency, has partnered with the NYU Center for Immigrant Health to adapt medical interpreter curricula to the social service context. For more information, contact Tanaz Pardiwala
Director of Community Organizing, at (718) 928-6953; TDD: (800) 810-7444 Hotline or tanaz_pardiwala@safehorizon.org.
- Where needs dictate, consider bilingual ability as a compensable hiring criterion for certain positions.
 - Some organizations and departments have instituted bilingual pay incentive programs. Employees who pass a proficiency exam and are willing to provide language services receive a bonus or salary differential.
 - Keep in mind that bilingual staff who are often called upon to facilitate communication with LEP individuals may find themselves routinely diverted from their normal work assignments.
 - For more information on pay incentives for pre-screened bilingual ability, consult The Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Fresno and the Fresno City Employees' Association http://www.fcea.net/Final_FCEA_MOU_FY03-05.pdf at pp. 32-33.
 - •For employer perspectives on this issue, click on http://www.ipma-hr.org/files/cpr_skill.pdf at 9.
- Create a directory of bilingual staff and their contact information. If appropriate for your agency's needs, bilingual staff and/or interpreters having contact with the public can wear badges indicating the languages they speak so that LEP individuals can easily identify such employees.
 - When bilingual staff provide or review written translations, they can often benefit from collaborating with others listed in the directory.
- Test and train bilingual staff providing language services on a regular basis.
 - Untrained bilingual staff may not be versed in

- the standards of the interpreting profession (e. g., role, code of conduct, modes of interpretation, specialized terminology, etc.), resulting in compromised accuracy and statements with potentially limited evidentiary value. Both the agency providing services, as well as the LEP individual, have administrative, safety, and enforcement interests in accurately-rendered interpretation and translation services.
- Enable bilingual staff to access interpreter training courses and translation and language skills training. Such access benefits both your organization and the communities you serve.
 - See also [Section D](#) on "Ensuring Quality Control" below.
 - Even when bilingual staff are used to provide direct services in a non-English language (rather than to provide interpretation), be sure to institute quality control measures and provide professional development opportunities to ensure that communication is effective and accurate.
 - Identify situations requiring the services of a professional interpreter or translator.
 - Establishing relationships with professional interpreters, translators, and other users of professional language services can help you to tap into a pool of qualified individuals to contact when necessary.
 - Professional interpreters are trained to convey meanings accurately, avoid conflicts of interest, and maintain confidentiality, impartiality, and accuracy in the course of performing their professional duties.
 - Interactions involving a possible deprivation of liberty, such as interrogations, should involve a fully-trained professional. Untrained bilingual staffers or informal communication techniques should be used only as a stop-gap measure to stabilize an emergency situation until a professional interpreter (telephonic or in-person) becomes available to assist.
 - In situations with legal implications in general, and criminal implications in particular, the stakes can be very high. For example, the terms of a temporary restraining order in a domestic violence case should be accurately conveyed, both to an accused batterer and to the alleged

- victim. Failure to do so may result in unintended consequences, e.g., compromised safety and/or misunderstandings leading to criminal liability.
- **Professional interpretation and translation services are available in most cities. U.S. Attorneys' offices, state and federal courts, and FBI regional offices often contract with such local interpretation and translation companies. Contact such entities for lists of potential individuals or companies. National, regional, and state interpreter and translator associations also post lists of members by language and geographical location.**
 - **For information on interpreter and translator associations, go to the interpretation/translation section of <http://www.lep.gov>.**
 - **Monitor quality of interpretation and translation services. See [Section D](#) below.**
 - **Telephonic interpretation services can ensure resources when in-house demand is high or immediate interpretation is needed.**
 - **Telephonic interpretation is particularly useful for officers in the field, during 911 calls, or in other instances in which a range of languages could be encountered and swift response is necessary. Telephonic interpretation can be conducted utilizing a commercial telephonic interpretation service, professional interpreter, or trained bilingual staffer who cannot be available onsite (e.g., a police call at 3:00 a.m.).**
 - **Commercial telephonic interpretation services are helpful where in-house language capacity is insufficient or unavailable. Telephone interpretation services are immediately available when crisis management is required in a range of languages. Such services can provide a per-minute rate in a broad range of languages.**
 - **Monitor quality. Ensure that the provider you choose understands the context in which you operate and can accurately interpret or translate specialized terms you use, such as Miranda warnings. Other relevant information may include the connection time necessary for telephonic interpretation, and whether it is swift enough for your purposes.**

Want more info?

- **Contact Xenia Freeman, Director of Safe Horizon's (NYC) Domestic Violence, Crime Victim, Rape and Sexual Assault, and September 11 Support Hotlines at xfreeman@safehorizon.org, for more information on the utility of telephonic interpretation.**
- **Work collaboratively with community groups and academic institutions, and train bilingual/multilingual community members, university professors, graduate and law students, and language educators to provide language services on an as-needed basis.**
 - **Identify potential sources of language assistance through local community/ethnic organizations, university language departments, law schools, and other logical venues.**
 - **Train the identified individuals to serve as part-time interpreters on an as-needed basis. Ensure their familiarity with applicable standards (e.g., ethical requirements, modes and protocols of interpretation, specialized terminology applicable to your program, etc.)**
 - **On occasion, authorities have successfully used language educators and community members to interview/debrief witnesses in the absence of professional interpreters.**
 - **Recognize the potential limitations of using such individuals. For example, a high school teacher may not necessarily be able to interpret accurately during a beat patrol investigation.**
 - **Make sure to implement other quality-control measures.**

Want more info?

- **The Washington, D.C.-based Asian Pacific American Legal Resource Center (APALRC) has created a "Legal Interpreter Project" which focuses on training community members, law students, and others to provide quality interpretation and translation for other agencies in the area. The selection process includes recruitment, training, testing, and monitoring. Refer to <http://www.charityadvantage.com/>**

apalrc/Home.asp for detailed information about this project.

- **Factor language assistance costs into your budget and planning process and include interpreter and translator costs in grant applications and contracts.**
 - **C. Working with LEP Individuals**
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- **Create convenient and accessible points of entry for the largest language minority communities, such as a dedicated telephone number for ish speakers.**
 - **Such a telephone number could be connected to community outreach units of courts and police departments and other organizations serving many different language groups.**
 - **Alternatively, provide a recorded message in the most-commonly-spoken languages in your service area, explaining how callers can access the services you provide and receive language assistance if necessary. Post this phone number where the target community congregates.**
 - **Be sure to provide a mechanism to enable LEP callers to access emergency services in the event that they are calling regarding an urgent situation. Courts and other agencies may also want to consider mechanisms to enable LEP callers to immediately access the services most often requested, such as information from the court clerk's office.**
- **Don't make assumptions regarding an individual's first language.**
 - **For example, a Native American from primarily ish-speaking Guatemala may not necessarily speak ish. His or her language may be altogether different.**
- **Make language identification flashcards (also known as "I Speak _____" cards) available to LEP individuals, so that they can identify their native languages for you.**
 - **The U.S. Census Bureau's version of these cards is available on <http://www.lep.gov/govt.html>. Simply show these cards to LEP individuals in order to determine native language, but account for the fact that the LEP beneficiary may be illiterate.**
 - **Other federal agencies, such as the Social Security Administration (SSA), have similar tools. The SSA has**

forms available to LEP beneficiaries in 15 languages. Access by clicking on <http://www.ssa.gov/multilanguage/index.htm>.

- Consider providing language assistance, even when you think an individual's English is "probably good enough."
 - It is easy to overestimate the LEP person's English language skills, particularly if he or she appears to understand you.
 - Also a person may not be LEP in some contexts, but may be LEP in others (e.g., a person who can ask for simple directions in English may not be sufficiently proficient to answer police interrogation questions).
- When working through an interpreter, use short simple sentences that are free of idioms. Avoid compound phrases, double negatives, rambling phrases, colloquialisms, etc.
 - Examples of bad questions include: "You didn't say you wouldn't go there, did you?" or, "And then, although you knew it was wrong, you didn't, although you could have, stop him from what everyone knew was a mistake?"

Want more info?

- Check out the many resources of <http://sdnyinterpreters.org/>, the website of the Interpreters' Office for the United States District Court, Southern District of New York, also available through <http://www.lep.gov>.
- Always address the LEP individual in the first person and look at that individual (not the interpreter) during questioning.
- Be aware that excluding an LEP person during long conversations with English-speaking individuals can sometimes convey negative messages. Wait until an interpreter or bilingual individual can be present to explain the communication to the LEP person and enable his or her participation.
 - Otherwise, the LEP individual may construe such communication as an indication of bias.
- Be creative in asking questions of the LEP individual - you may have to ask the same question several ways before eliciting a response. Don't expect your interpreter to "fill in the blanks."
- Don't overlook and don't overestimate the power of pictures.

- **While not a substitute for a live interpreter, posting universal signs/symbols can help enormously in temporarily bridging communication gaps in a cost-effective fashion while awaiting the arrival of an interpreter or competent bilingual staffer (e.g., a picture of a person with a beard and one without might help get a quick description of a fleeing suspect while an interpreter is being contacted, but may lead police down the wrong path if more information is not obtained in a timely fashion).**
- **Over-reliance on pictures in complex, sensitive, or critical information exchanges can lead to a breakdown in communication.**
- **Recognize the different modes of interpretation, and the contexts in which each is appropriate.**
 - **Simultaneous Interpretation - A speaker (judge, lawyer, conference presenter, trainer, etc.) speaks in one language, while an interpreter simultaneously interprets what is being said into the LEP person's or audience's first language.**
 - **Example: During a court proceeding, an interpreter sits next to the LEP defendant at the defense table and simultaneously interprets from English into the LEP person's language (either by whispering or using interpreting equipment) everything that is being said by lawyers, judges, and witnesses in the courtroom, so the proceeding can continue uninterrupted and the LEP person can follow what is being said.**
 - **Consecutive Interpretation - The speaker (judge, lawyer, intake worker, police officer, etc.) makes a statement or asks a question, pauses, and then the interpreter renders what was said in the LEP person's first language.**
 - **Example: During an interrogation, a police officer asks a question, the interpreter interprets the question, the LEP person answers the question in his or her first language, and the interpreter interprets the answer back to the officer in English. Consecutively interpreted sessions are of longer duration than when simultaneous interpretation is used.**
 - **Sight Translation - On-the-spot oral translation of a document.**

- **Example: A document must be understood and signed by an LEP person before she can receive services from an organization that represents domestic violence victims, but the LEP person cannot read the document because it is in English. The interpreter translates the content of the document aloud into the LEP person's first language.**
- **Consider and plan for the possibility that an LEP person may also have a disability.**

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- **D. Ensuring Quality Control**

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- **Bilingual staff and community members often do not have the training and expertise of professional interpreters and translators. Provide staff and others with training or arrange for bilingual employees or community members to attend interpreter training courses and to participate in opportunities to improve their language skills. Incorporate interpreter certification and evaluation exams into your LEP plan for those staff used as interpreters . In addition, evaluate and monitor language skills of bilingual staff used to provide direct service in a non-English language or to translate documents**
 - **Consult APALRC's Legal Interpreter Project, mentioned in [Section B \(6\)](#) above. This program is designed to enable community-based organizations to train bilingual individuals to perform basic interpretation tasks through cost-effective means. Click on <http://www.charityadvantage.com/apalrc/Home.asp>**
 - **Do not make assumptions about the language skills of your bilingual staffperson, or even your interpreter/translator, regardless of apparent qualifications.**
 - **When obtaining translations, strongly consider having a "second-check" system.**
 - **It is more expensive to go back and fix a published document than to expend the resources to get it right the first time. Even excellent translators can benefit from the input of others.**
 - **Where time allows, consider having**

representatives of LEP groups also look at professional translations to ensure that they are "readable."

- **Before going to the presses, be sure to note the direction in which the language reads.**
- **Put the name of the language, in English, somewhere on the document for ready identification.**
- **Learn more about your interpreter or translator's background before deciding to use that person's services, if time permits.**
- **Some background questions you might consider asking anyone providing language assistance include:**
 - **Are you a practicing interpreter or translator?**
 - **Where did you obtain your language skills (both English and the other language)? Will you be able to understand and be understood by the LEP person, who is from _____, or might there be a dialect or geography-based language barrier?**

Example: A ish-speaker from Latin America may have some difficulty understanding some vocabulary or pronunciation of a ish-speaker from Spain and vice versa.

Example: A person who speaks "White" Hmong may have some difficulty understanding "Green/Blue" Hmong.

- **How long have you been a practicing interpreter/translator?**
- **If not a practicing interpreter/translator, have you interpreted/translated before and, if so, in what situations?**
- **What specialized training have you received, or are you self-taught?**
- **Are you certified by and/or an active member of any interpreter/translator association?**
- **[For spoken interpretation only] Are you able to perform simultaneous interpretation (technique where the interpreter interprets at the same time as the speaker)? Are you able to do consecutive interpretation (where there is a pause between language conversions)?**
- **Do you know (the LEP individual)? Have you**

- ever seen him or her before?
- What will you do if you don't understand something that [the LEP individual] has said/written?
- What will you do if you believe you have interpreted/translated something inaccurately?
- Do you receive continuing education?
- Do you specialize in law enforcement, medical, educational, or some other type of interpretation (oral) or translation (written)?
- Do you have any background issues I should know about? (Be sure to check!)
- If appropriate, give the individual providing language assistance relevant background information. For instance, consider providing:
 - The LEP individual's name and native country and town;
 - The LEP individual's educational level, if known;
 - The LEP individual's ability to read and write, if relevant;
 - Any speech or other particularities, including the LEP individual's use of slang words, names, or other common words;
 - Information necessary to check for potential conflicts that the interpreter may have, as appropriate.
- Make sure that the person providing language services understands his/her ethical obligations.
 - Professional interpreters are required to adhere to a code of ethics emphasizing confidentiality; impartiality; accuracy; avoidance of a conflict of interest; abstinence from communication with the LEP person beyond that which is necessary to carry out professional duties; and no adding to, editing, summarizing, or embellishing the LEP person's statement.
- Ensure that the parties understand each other.
 - For instance, does the individual providing language services understand the LEP person and vice versa? Do you and the individual providing language services understand each other?
 - You might consider asking a question that requires more than a "yes" or "no" answer and,

- as appropriate, one to which you know the answer, so that you can determine if effective communication is going on.
- **Make sure that the LEP individual is comfortable with the person providing language services.**
 - **Do the interpreter and the LEP individual seem to know each other?**
 - **Do they come from traditionally adversarial communities? (This should ideally be determined before a face-to-face meeting between the interpreter and the LEP individual.)**
 - **Is there any affinity between the interpreter or translator and a party who opposes your LEP individual's interests (e.g., if your LEP individual is a victim of domestic violence, is the interpreter somehow aligned with the batterer)?**
 - **Instruct the person providing language services and the LEP individual to avoid having long dialogues between interpretations.**
 - **When dealing with professional interpretation services (telephonic or in-person), be sure to ask the following additional questions, and to include appropriate terms in any contractual agreement regarding the services and qualifications of the interpreters:**
 - **Is the interpreter familiar with specialized terminology used in your field (e.g., American legal concepts such as Miranda warnings)?**
 - **Does the interpreter have experience in the particular field (e.g., legal, medical, or other interpreting)? How much experience does he/she have?**
 - **What is the cost? When entering into a contract with a telephonic interpretation service or professional interpretation/translation company, can the company offer services in a sufficient number of languages to justify the cost?**
 - **Are the interpreters familiar with both formal language and colloquialisms/street slang? Are the interpreters familiar enough with the community to be able to interpret effectively? People may share a single language, but speak it very differently.**
 - **What is the connection time necessary for telephonic interpretation? Is it swift enough for your purposes?**

- **Ensure that the person providing language services answers all questions in the first person, as if he/she were the LEP person.**

Want more info on quality control?

- An assessment tool that agencies can use to determine the quality of their language assistance contractors is available at <http://www.lep.gov/selfassesstool.htm>.
 - Also check out <http://sdnyinterpreters.org>, the website of the Interpreters' Office for the United States District Court, Southern District of New York, one of the sources for the tips above. This site can also be accessed through <http://www.lep.gov>.
 - The American Translation Association has a guide to buying translations entitled: "Translation: Getting it Right." Contact the ATA at 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314 (703) 683-6100; <http://www.atanet.org>; e-mail: ata@atanet.org.
 - Learn more about interpreter and translator standards in legal and quasi-legal settings from The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) at www.najit.org.
 - Consult the DOJ LEP Guidance, <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/DOJFinLEPFRJun182002.pdf> at pages 41461 to 41464, for guidance on assuring quality control in interpretation and translation.
- **E. Conducting Outreach**

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- **Form alliances with community-based organizations that serve your various language communities. Such alliances can promote referrals and sharing of expertise, and spread awareness about assistance available to affected LEP community members.**
 - **Consider including representatives of such organizations on an LEP "advisory committee" to ensure ready access to resources, assistance, and feedback.**

Want more info?

- Refer to the [TAPESTRI](#) feature box in Chapter 4 (Domestic Violence Service Providers and Specialists).
- For more information on building programs that link and train community interpreters with agencies needing interpreters, see [Section B \(6\)](#), above.
- **Distribute important information at temples, mosques, churches, synagogues, ethnic shopping centers, and other gathering places for non-native English speakers in your community.**
 - Religious and ethnic organizations maintain their own internal communications networks for their members, and often serve as safe and familiar cultural havens for speakers of various languages. A community relations officer may, for example, attend an on-site intake or legal clinic conducted in partnership with a legal service organization.

Want more info?

- Consult the self-assessment tool at <http://www.lep.gov/selfassesstool.htm> for suggestions on outreach and providing notice of your services to LEP persons.
- Consider downloading and distributing the LEP "Know Your Rights" brochure, soon to be available in several languages, from <http://www.lep.gov>.
- Consider partnering with media outlets (private television/radio stations and print media, ethnic and foreign language media) to develop feature stories, public service announcements, and dramatizations to deliver important information to non-English speakers in your community.
 - Some entities, such as courts and law enforcement agencies, have produced educational videos and other tools.
 - COR recently developed a LEP video. Call COR at (202) 307-2222 for a copy.

Want more info?

- Consult the self assessment tool at <http://www.lep.gov>.

lep.gov/selfassesstool.htm for suggestions on communicating information about your services through ethnic media outlets.

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Chapter 2: Tips and Tools Specific to 911 Call Centers

The three-digit telephone number, "9-1-1," is the designated nationwide emergency telephone number for all individuals throughout the United States to request emergency assistance. The number enables fast and easy access to a centralized public safety answering point that can dispatch emergency services, including police, fire department, and emergency medical services. By virtue of the context in which emergencies arise, accessing emergency services takes place in a stressful environment ripe for mis-communication. The trained 911 call-takers and dispatchers must be able to accomplish their mission despite this high stress. Their task is easily compounded if the caller: (1) is wary of government because of unpleasant interactions with the government in his/her country of origin or here; and/or (2) has no familiarity with a government that provides a benevolent or helpful public service. When a caller has a limited ability to speak or understand English, the vital nature of the call presents a new and critical challenge.

Many of the general tips and tools set forth in [Chapter 1](#) apply to 911 call centers as well. The following are our additional recommendations specific to making 911 services more effective and accessible to LEP communities. These recommendations are based on our general survey of practices that many 911 call centers - including Miami, FL; Prince George's County, MD; Allentown, PA; Fairfax, VA; Oakland, CA; and others - use to communicate with callers who are LEP. LEP coordinators and decision-makers for 911 call centers should also consult the DOJ LEP Guidance.

- **A. Identifying Need and Setting Policy**

- **Formulate a written policy/procedure for communicating with LEP callers.**
 - **911 centers should have written procedures on communicating with LEP callers as part of standard operating procedures for call-takers and dispatchers. Such written procedures should specifically address**

the process for connecting to the 911 center's telephonic interpretation service or to the appropriate in-house bilingual staff.

- **Issue a Directive on the Importance of Communication with LEP callers.**
 - **In order for any written policy/procedure for communicating with LEP callers to be effective, the head of the 911 center should inform all staff of the vital nature of 911 services to LEP callers and the importance of effective communication to the mission of the call center.**
- **See [Section A in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for an in-depth discussion of how to assess your LEP needs and create a plan to address those needs.**

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■ **B. Accessing Language Resources**

- **Employ In-House Bilingual Staff.**
 - **Use bilingual staff to communicate with LEP callers.**
 - **Assess the language demographics within the call center's jurisdiction in order to identify hiring needs for bilingual call takers and dispatchers.**
- **Advertise for bilingual call takers and dispatchers in ethnic newspapers.**
 - **Consider giving incentives or bonuses for language skills to recruit bilingual call takers and dispatchers.**
 - **Ensure that bilingual staff are available for each shift, to allow for 24-hour language assistance. Have a telephonic interpretation service as a back-up to live personnel.**
- **Monitor quality control, as discussed below, and provide bilingual staffers/dispatchers with ongoing training opportunities.**
- **Some 911 centers that have neither bilingual staff nor a contract with a telephonic interpretation service, communicate with LEP callers by accessing a city or county-wide language bank consisting of city or county employees who are bilingual.**
- **When bilingual operators are not available, contract with one of the several available telephonic interpretation services.**

- **Some centers rely solely on telephonic interpretation services, while other centers use these services only when the caller's language is not recognized as one spoken by in-house staff or when sufficient in-house staff is not available.**
- **Typically, under such systems, when a call-taker receives a call from an LEP individual and recognizes the foreign language, the call-taker places the individual on "hold" and contacts the interpretation service, usually through a speed dial button that connects the call-taker directly to the interpretation service. The call-taker asks for the appropriate language interpreter and, once the interpreter is available, the call-taker then connects the LEP individual to the call, so that there is a three-way call between the call-taker, the LEP individual, and the interpreter.**
- **Where the foreign language spoken is unrecognizable, the call-taker places the LEP caller on "hold," and contacts the interpretation service for help in determining the language. Generally, interpretation services employ trained professionals who have expertise in determining the language of the LEP caller. When the 911 call-taker informs the interpretation service that he or she cannot identify the caller's language, the interpretation service representative, who is trained to recognize languages, identifies the language and connects the call-taker to the proper interpreter. Once this occurs, the call-taker connects the LEP individual to the call, so that there is a three-way call between the call-taker, the LEP individual, and the interpreter.**
- **Assess your LEP needs by having a general understanding of the most frequently encountered languages within the call center's jurisdiction.**
- **Because of the critical nature of 911 emergency calls, it is advisable to use a telephonic interpretation service that has trained its interpreters in the handling of 911 calls. This can be negotiated as a contract term.**
- **Some municipalities finance telephonic interpretation contracts with an emergency service fee that all city/county residents pay towards emergency services.**
- **See [Section B in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on how to access language resources in your area. [back to top](#)**

■ C. Working With LEP Callers

- Pay careful attention to potential problems created when an LEP caller is placed on "hold," or when there is a delay in responding while the 911 call-taker quickly obtains language services.
 - Train employees to obtain appropriate language services swiftly. Practice doing so to keep call takers sharp, particularly when LEP call volume is low.
 - Make sure your call-taker knows how to say "please hold" or another appropriate phrase in the most frequently encountered languages in your service area. Some telephonic interpretation services provide material on how to say "please hold" phonetically in several different languages.
 - Consider using music or some other appropriate "hold" message or sound so that the LEP caller knows not to hang up.
 - If the caller hangs up and you have the phone number of the caller, call back with the language service provider on the line as quickly as possible.
- See [Section C in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on working with LEP individuals.

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■ D. Ensuring Quality Control

- Adopt and employ standards and quality control measures to assure an appropriate level of linguistic competency.
 - Test bilingual job applicants on their language skills, preferably under 911 simulated conditions, which are different from ordinary conversations in content, cadence, and emotional intensity.
 - Test for demonstrated proficiency in English and the foreign language, the ability to convey accurate renditions back-and-forth in each language, and familiarity in both languages with specialized terms or concepts used in emergency situations.
 - Where feasible, evaluate bilingual competency through city-wide testing of all city employees.
- Assess the efficacy of your language services by monitoring

and by obtaining feedback from the community and from dispatch units.

- Randomly review non-English language calls to ensure that bilingual staff and telephonic interpreters can communicate effectively with LEP callers.
 - Standards for dispatching units.
 - Have dispatchers inform the emergency response entity (police, fire department, or emergency medical services) that the caller is LEP and specify the caller's language. The emergency responders should also have language assistance measures in place to interact effectively with the LEP individual once they arrive on the scene of the emergency.
 - See section featuring the Miami 911 call center at the end of this chapter.
 - See [Section D in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on ensuring quality control measures and checks.
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 - E. Conducting Outreach
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- Create and distribute brochures in various languages about your services.
 - Brochures typically contain basic instructions for LEP individuals about what to do when making a 911 call (i. e., identifying their language, name and address, and type of emergency service required such as police, fire, or ambulance).
 - Make and maintain contact with various language minority communities through traditional community relations activities - reaching out to schools, attending meetings of fraternal and social organizations, having a presence at ethnic fairs and celebrations, providing information through libraries and places of worship, and identifying several individuals or organizations that serve as primary contacts and "points of entry" into the language community.
- Make contacts in migrant worker communities, since such populations also include potential crime victims, litigants, and witnesses.
 - In order to conduct outreach to the migrant worker community, consider developing language cards with instructions on using the 911 system targeted at

migrant workers and others who may not routinely call 911 in emergency situations.

- **Laundromats and ethnic markets can be effective locations for posting and distributing outreach information.**
- **Partner with ethnic and other media outlets to deliver important information to LEP community members.**
 - **See the description of "[Project Echo](#)," a media campaign in Minnesota aimed at providing timely emergency information to LEP individuals, at the end of this chapter.**
- **See [Section E in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more ideas on how to conduct effective outreach to your community and service area.**

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The Miami, Florida 911 Call Center: Responding to Need

The City of Miami, Florida call center serves a large number of LEP individuals, and provides a good example of the types of options available to call centers.

According to Census 2000 data, 47.1% of the population of Miami speaks English less than "very well." The majority of these individuals are ish speakers, followed by Creole speakers. These demographics highlight the need for the Miami Police Department's 911 system to ensure that emergency assistance services to Miami's LEP population are meaningfully accessible.

Miami's call center employs at least 20 bilingual call-takers and dispatchers, four of whom are bilingual Creole speakers and the rest of whom are bilingual ish speakers. There are at least two bilingual ish speaking call-takers on duty 24 hours a day because of the frequency of calls by ish-speaking LEP callers. One of those call-takers screens and handles emergency calls and the other handles non-emergency calls. Miami also has a contract with a telephonic interpretation service to ensure that callers who speak languages other than ish and Creole will also have access to emergency assistance services and to handle interpretation for additional calls when volume is high.

In addition to the language assistance measures discussed above, Miami has taken steps to ensure that the continuum of language assistance does not end when the call-taker and LEP individual conclude their call. When the dispatcher contacts the first or second responders (police officers, fire

department personnel, or emergency medical services technicians) to send them to the location of the emergency, the dispatcher also informs them of the language needs of the LEP individual so that the first/second responders include personnel who speak the LEP individual's language. This enables the first/second responders to assist the LEP individual more efficiently and effectively by ensuring that language will not be an impediment to receiving immediate emergency assistance.

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Communications Section

City of Miami Police Department

Miami, FL

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Project ECHO: A Focus on Outreach and Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness raises a host of challenges beyond 911 calls, and LEP communities should be taken into consideration as strategies are developed and updated. Project ECHO (Emergency and Community Health Outreach), in St. Paul, Minnesota, has done just that by creating emergency preparedness in and among the diverse language communities that comprise a large portion of St. Paul. ECHO uses emergency simulcasting on public TV and radio stations to provide timely emergency information to LEP individuals. ECHO's overall goal is to change the viewing behavior of LEP populations by getting them to turn to public television and radio for emergency information. ECHO plans to provide critical information to LEP individuals during an emergency (e.g., disease outbreak, chemical spills, weather, terrorism), and identify public television as a reliable source of emergency information.

ECHO will initiate the process with monthly broadcasts, scheduled to air on September 19, 2004. Broadcasts include an 18-minute segment in six different languages -- Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Somali, ish, and Vietnamese. Each broadcast will focus on a particular theme or issue; provide background on the issue including an interview with an expert from the particular LEP population; and will serve as an open forum, using culturally appropriate messages to reach the intended audience for each

language. Subject matters scheduled for broadcast include influenza education, mental health issues, and fire and carbon monoxide safety, among others.

ECHO has settled on public television as its primary outlet for community outreach because of its availability to people who don't have cable access and because it has the potential to reach a broad LEP audience. The launch date for ECHO's website(<http://www.echominnesota.org>)is September 19, 2004.

Contact: Lillian McDonald

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Chapter 3: Tips and Tools Specific to Law Enforcement Agencies

Law enforcement personnel have contact with the public in a variety of ways. Officers meet members of the public when conducting routine patrol, responding to requests for services or assistance, interviewing witnesses or victims, or attending community outreach activities. While this section does not purport to address every type of law enforcement interaction, it does survey strategies used by law enforcement to communicate with LEP individuals in the most common situations.

Appendix A of the DOJ LEP Guidance for recipients discusses five areas of potential contact with LEP individuals:

- A. Receiving and responding to requests for assistance;**
- B. Enforcement stops short of arrest and field investigations;**
- C. Custodial interrogations;**
- D. Intake/detention; and**
- E. Community outreach.**

See 67 Fed. Reg. 41468-69, DOJ LEP Guidance, at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/DOJFinLEPFRJun182002.pdf>.

Chapter 1 of this document, as well as the DOJ LEP Guidance (including Appendix A of that Guidance, which provides examples in the law enforcement context), should be consulted for a broader description of the ways in which meaningful language access can be assured.

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- **A. Assessing Need and Setting Policy**

- **Study your community to identify LEP populations, set policies, and implement strategies to ensure effective communication.**
 - **Always validate projections based on demographic data against program experience based on the observations of your staff and input from the community.**

Want more info?

- **The Summit County/Lorain, Ohio Model LEP Policies and Procedures Committee, highlighted in the box at the end of this section, is an example of one group using its collective eyes and ears to assess the "real world" LEP populations encountered by law enforcement. Contact Isabel Framer, certified interpreter and one of the co-chairs of the Committee, at isainterp@aol.com.**
- **Include all stakeholders, including community groups and staff representatives, in your planning process for language access.**
- **Distribute your LEP plan to all staff likely to encounter LEP individuals on the job.**
 - **Include a list of resources and contact numbers for staff to easily access language services on the job, discussed in more detail in [Section C](#) of this chapter.**
- **See [Section A in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for an in-depth discussion of how to assess your LEP needs and create a plan to address those needs.**

■ B. Identifying Language Resources

- **Consider recruiting bilingual staff and establishing programs/training to enhance the language capabilities of existing bilingual or monolingual staff.**
 - **Attracting bilingual staff may require strategic plans and aggressive recruitment.**
 - **When hiring and training bilingual officers or other staff, account for dialects spoken, language nuances, and cultural diversity in your community.**
 - **Training in basic, everyday expressions in another language can be very helpful. For instance, simple greetings and social language skills can help enormously in setting witnesses, victims, and community groups at ease and building a bridge of trust. In addition, providing language training to officers can be a useful tool to enable them to give simple commands and respond to common inquiries. However, such basic training does not substitute for the language skills necessary to decipher and express more complicated concepts, nor does it substitute for the skills necessary to engage in important communication, especially communication with potentially serious consequences.**
 - **Various universities and other organizations have created electronic tools to supplement in-person language training. The University of Texas at Arlington, Center for Distance Education, for instance, has digitized and made "internet accessible" a state-developed course on "ish for Law Enforcement." The Center for Distance Education is developing an online program that gives audio and visual cues; gives cultural training (e.g., teaches officers about how much personal space is the norm in various cultures); and uses workplace-specific scripts and street vocabulary**

Want more info?

- **Contact the Center for Distance Education, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19027,**

Arlington, Texas 76019-0027. Voice (817) 272-5727; Voice (Toll Free) (888) 882-3478; Fax (817) 272-5728.

- **Bilingual Handbooks, glossaries and dictionaries online or in hard copy, should be made available to bilingual and other staff.**
 - **Contact Virginia Benmaman, benmamanv@cofc.edu, Director of the Master of Arts Bilingual Legal Interpreting program at the College of Charleston (<http://www.cofc.edu/~legalint/>). Dr. Benmaman is the author of a "Bilingual Handbook for Public Safety Professionals" in English and ish.**
- **Translate vital forms and documents into languages commonly spoken in your community.**
 - **Translated Miranda warnings and other important notices, rights, and forms could provide convenience and clarity in arrest, interrogation, and booking situations involving literate LEP individuals. Translation of key documents can also assist interpreters in providing consistent interpretation of important law enforcement terminology.**

Want more info?

- **The FBI has made certain translations available through its Law Enforcement Online website for use by authorized law enforcement entities. For more information, see [Section B in Chapter 6, DOJ Federally Conducted Programs and Activities](#).**
- **Making full use of existing staffs' language capabilities is one element of an effective LEP plan, as long as the plan does not require staff to perform tasks beyond their language skill level.**
 - **Make sure that your bilingual staffs' level of competence matches the need of the LEP persons being served, particularly when a failure to communicate could adversely impact an issue of importance to the LEP person.**
 - **Encourage officers and other bilingual staff to call in professional interpreters and translators when needed.**
- **Form constructive working relationships with the LEP communities you serve by teaming bilingual officers with**

volunteers from community-based organizations.

Want more info?

- See the featured box on the Haitian Roving Patrol at the end of this chapter, and contact: Officer Skip Brown, Delray Beach, Florida Police Department: (561) 243-7873.
- See [Section B in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on how to access language resources in your area.
- C. Working with LEP Individuals

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- Arm your officers and staff with effective language tools and access protocols in order for them to fulfill their duties, and to protect and be protected, in every language.
 - Adopt a standard protocol to be used by officers and staff who are not bilingual when encountering a person who speaks little or no English.
 - As noted in [Section C of Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, some agencies use "I Speak _____" cards to identify an individual's primary language and enable the officer or staff to call for a bilingual officer or telephonic or in-person interpreter in the needed language.

Want more info?

- Contact Isabel Frammer, certified interpreter and co-chair of the Ohio Model LEP Policies and Procedures Committee at isainterp@aol.com or co-chair Sheriff Alexander, Summit County, Ohio at <http://www.co.summit.oh.us/sheriff/contact.htm>; (330)-643-2181 or TTY: (330)-643-2221.
- Create convenient points of entry for the most populous language minority communities, such as dedicated non-emergency telephone numbers for ish or other language speakers, or specialized liaison units that effectively work with the LEP persons in your area.

- **Consider setting up a dedicated non-emergency number for particular language speakers housed in the community outreach units of your police department.**
 - **Provide a recorded message in various languages spoken with frequency in your service area, explaining how callers can access the services you provide and receive language assistance if needed. Post this phone number at social gathering places where the target community congregates.**
 - **See [Section C in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on working with LEP individuals.**
 - **D. Ensuring Quality Control**
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- **It is not the plan but the actual delivery of appropriate and competent language assistance when and where needed that defines "meaningful access." Don't let the good work done in developing your plans and policies go to waste by failing to implement them effectively.**
- **Be careful about substituting bilingual ability for the training and qualifications necessary to interpret accurately and completely.**
 - **Certain circumstances may require the services of a professional interpreter or translator. Management, bilingual officers, staff, and volunteers should recognize the limits of in-house language assistance ability, and identify the need to call in professional interpreters and translators.**
 - **In the absence of a professional interpreter, quality control might be achieved by sending bilingual officers to interpreter trainings set up by courts and interpreter associations, and test officers' language skills periodically.**
- **Strive for the highest quality language services in situations in which there could be serious consequences to LEP individuals.**
 - **Timeliness is an element of quality.**
 - **Training (or verifying competency) is important, but evaluation and monitoring are also key components to ensuring quality.**
 - **Part of ensuring quality is making sure that officers understand the languages spoken in the community. For instance, when time to wait for the proper**

interpreter is available, a bilingual ish-speaking officer should not attempt to interrogate in ish an LEP person who speaks a little bit of ish but whose primary language is not ish.

- **Drive home the point with all staff that failure to communicate effectively and follow quality protocols not only impedes services to LEP victims and to the community at large, but also can present law enforcement with safety, evidentiary, and legal challenges, provide perpetrators and alleged perpetrators with reason to challenge investigations, and increase monetary and human costs.**
- **See [Section D in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on ensuring quality control measures and checks. Also consult Appendix A of the DOJ LEP Guidance for specific information pertaining to law enforcement.**

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■ **E. Conducting Outreach**

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- **Outreach to the LEP populations you serve plays an integral role in implementation and refinement of your LEP plan. When LEP individuals are aware of the existence of your language resources, they are more likely to access them to communicate safety and other concerns, and to be able to assist law enforcement.**
 - **Conduct community outreach by using bilingual officers, staff, and volunteers.**
 - **Extend community outreach by offering a wide variety of services important to LEP individuals (such as health or youth-related programs), hiring bilingual officers and staff, and partnering with volunteers from community-based and charitable organizations.**
- **Target resources to specific concerns by following the approach taken by the California Highway Patrol (CHP), which is involved in a traffic safety outreach program, El Protector, directed at the Hiic community. When starting this program in 1987, CHP placed special emphasis on educating through dialogue with the community, instead of focusing solely on enforcement measures. The goal of the El Protector Program has been to reduce the disproportionate number of Hiic drivers and victims involved in traffic-related collisions. By relying upon officers and staff that are**

bilingual and bicultural, agencies conduct activities designed to educate and encourage positive traffic safety behavior and to build better community relations between the Hiic community and law enforcement agencies.

Want more info?

- **Contact Sergeant Andres Ornelas, Statewide El Protector Coordinator, Community Outreach and Partnership Section, 2555 First Avenue, Sacramento, California 95818; (916) 657-8810; TTY: (800) 735-2929.**
- **Work with community and ethnic organizations to sponsor diversity training and to train officers and staff on working with LEP individuals.**
- **Partner with neighborhood schools, churches, community groups, landlord-tenant organizations, and others to provide civic education to recent immigrants. Use such partnerships to encourage participation in police and civic activities, enhance understanding of differences between laws in this country and those of the countries of origin, and encourage crime reporting and a sense of safety.**
- **Effective communication is a two-way street. In organizing outreach to LEP communities, try to solicit suggestions on how to make your plan and its implementation better.**
- **See [Section E in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more ideas on how to conduct effective outreach to your community and service area.**

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Storefront in East Dallas: A Focus On Community Outreach and Inclusion

The Dallas Police Department's involvement with the Storefront project in East Dallas uses a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of an immigrant population and promotes a recognition by police that gaining the trust of community is a major factor in effective policing. The Storefront is a community-based program that was started to assist immigrant populations adjust to their community, access municipal services, and help develop community trust of uniformed police officers. The Storefront began operation in 1985 in response to the large number of Southeast Asian immigrants and refugees arriving in the East Dallas area. Utilizing non-uniformed personnel to gain community trust, the program initially provided primarily food and clothing. Over the years, the Storefront has evolved into a multi-tiered operation serving many

nationalities. It still continues to provide the much-needed assistance, but the emphasis is now on proactive crime prevention and community development, as well as reactive police responses.

Over the last five years, Sergeant Ray Ball has provided leadership by identifying grant funds that allow the Storefront to tailor its programs and services to the community. The program implements police initiatives to reduce criminal activity, work with youth at risk, improve access to healthcare, and create affordable housing in targeted areas. About 80% of the work done at the Storefront is providing or accessing services; the other 20% is responding to calls. When these new programs began, Sergeant Ball selected non-sworn, bilingual police employees and other bilingual persons from the community. Now he has both uniformed and non-uniformed staff. He also hires community persons as translators. Officers assigned to the Storefront are able to be creative and resourceful in their daily duties. The staff includes a sergeant, five sworn officers, four crime prevention specialists, and three grant-funded part-time bilingual community assistance clerks.

The Storefront is open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, but often provides services for evening and weekend planned events. The Storefront hosts various community and police-related meetings. It offers a Walk-in-Police Assistance Program where individuals from the neighborhood can make reports and receive assistance, information, and referrals as needed. The Storefront also provides interpreter services and cultural awareness sessions, consultation, and training for detectives during investigation. Interpretation services are available in ten languages - Vietnamese, Thai, Cambodian, Laotian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Chau Chunesse, French, ish, and English.

Contact: Sgt. Ray Ball

East Dallas Storefront

Dallas Police Department

4545 Bryan Street

Dallas, TX 75204

(214) 670-4413

Haitian Citizens Police Academy/Haitian Roving Patrol in Delray Beach, Florida: A Focus on Community Involvement

Challenged by language and cultural differences coupled with alarming Haitian victimization and the existence of fear and mistrust towards authority, the Delray Beach, Florida, Police Department, community leaders, and residents joined forces to establish a community-based initiative to turn this around. In 1995, the Haitians Citizens Police Academy, believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, was formed. Community activists and residents from the Haitian community participated in a 10-week program of instruction on policing, code enforcement, city government, and other important information. The emphasis was on establishing a positive citizens/police alliance based on a strong sense of trust, respect, and partnership. The program has been an overwhelming success, and Haitian residents have embraced the philosophy of partnering and teamwork to improve their quality of life.

Since 1995, the Delray Beach Police Department has run five Haitian Citizens Police Academies with more than 200 Haitian residents attending. A volunteer Haitian Roving Patrol was started with just five members from the first class. The Haitian Roving Patrol currently consists of 14 Creole-speaking volunteers in marked police vehicles. They patrol the city's Haitian neighborhoods as well as other targeted areas, and are used during special events to supplement the regular police force. They are trained in observation and the use of mobile phones and police radios to call in suspicious activity for police follow-up. This increases the police presence in these areas, which lends a feeling of security to troubled neighborhoods. It also facilitates communication between the police and Creole-speaking LEP residents. In addition, the Haitian Roving Patrol members appear to have created a new sense of pride in the Haitian community.

According to the Delray Police Department, in 1998 the Haitian Roving Patrol was responsible for reducing robberies in the mostly Haitian Osceola Park area by 53 percent. They are credited with a 98-percent reduction in armed robberies in the Delray Square Shopping Plaza during that same year.

This unique program has received considerable notice. The Pew Charitable Trust highlighted it as one of twelve unique grassroots projects throughout the United States in a book called Local Heroes Changing America.

Contact: Officer Skip Brown

Volunteer Coordinator

Delray Beach Police Department

300 W. Atlantic Avenue

Delray Beach, FL 33444

(561) 243-7873.

Summit County/Lorain, Ohio Committee on Interpreter Services/LEP Model Program for Law Enforcement:

A Focus on Planning

Based on data from the 2000 Census alone, Summit County, Ohio would not be high on the list of jurisdictions requiring an extensive program of language assistance. In 2000, only 5.6% of county residents over the age of five reported that they spoke a language other than English at home. Of its ish-speaking community, which comprised only 1.24% of the county's overall population, just over 15% reported that they did not speak English very well or did not speak English at all, well below the national average for ish-speakers.

Yet in 2000, the Sheriff of Summit County became aware of many instances when language barriers had impeded the county's delivery of competent, effective, and timely law enforcement services, primarily when interacting with ish-speaking LEP persons. Realizing that the demographic data did not accurately reflect the LEP situation his officers found on the street or in the county detention facilities, and believing that the LEP problems and language assistance solutions were not unique to his jurisdiction, the Sheriff worked with the Department's contract ish interpreter, and the Chief of Police for the City of Lorain, Ohio to organize a committee of law enforcement officers from several local and state jurisdictions. The purpose of that committee, known as the Summit County/Lorain Interpreter Services/LEP Model Program for Law Enforcement Committee, is to identify commonly encountered situations in which law enforcement personnel interact with LEP persons, and to develop practical language assistance procedures to ensure that language does not bar competent, effective, and timely law enforcement.

The Committee leadership also convinced a number of recognized experts in the area of language services and legal interpretation from around the nation to form an advisory board to assist the law enforcement professionals making up the committee. A company that provides telephonic interpreter services is supporting the work of the Committee by providing teleconference services for advisory board members who do not

live in the north central Ohio area. In addition, the Sheriff arranged training on the LEP requirements for all his senior officers and command staff.

The Committee is in the final stages of producing draft LEP policies, practices, and protocols, including a picture-based communication booklet, flashcard communication booklet, and "I Speak ___" cards for officers on the street, which serve as models for other jurisdictions. The Committee's approach in combining experts from both law enforcement, as well as the interpretation and translation fields, is now being evaluated for possible statewide and/or national application. <http://www.co.summit.oh.us/sheriff/LEP.pdf>

Contact: Sheriff Drew Alexander

53 University Avenue

Akron, OH 44308

(330) 643-2181 or TTY (330) 643-2221

<http://www.co.summit.oh.us/sheriff/contact.htm>.

Or co-chair Isabel Framer at isainterp@aol.com

Chapter 4: Tips and Tools Specific to Domestic Violence Service Providers and Specialists

Domestic violence is a public health issue affecting the health, safety, and well-being of millions of families in the United States. Experts have described domestic violence as a broad pattern of behaviors that may involve physical, emotional, or mental abuse against victims. As a result, getting victims promptly linked to services and resources is critical to ending abusive relationships and protecting the victims. Victims who are LEP face unique barriers to reporting domestic violence. Their abusers may typically serve as their primary link to English-speakers if the abusers speak English. In addition to language barriers, LEP victims, depending on their legal status in the United States, may also worry about the immigration consequences of coming forward to report abuse. For these reasons and more, providing competent language services provided by those trained in confidentiality and ethics is critical.

This chapter provides some important tips and resources to assist entities in ensuring that victims of domestic violence and their family members have meaningful access to law enforcement, service providers, and the judicial system. These tips should be read in conjunction with the General Tips and Tools contained in [Chapter 1](#). LEP coordinators and decision-makers should also consult the DOJ LEP Guidance, including Appendix A, which provides examples from the domestic violence context.

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- **A. Identifying the Need**

- **LEP individuals in your community may need your help. Do not assume that "someone else can help them."**
 - **All shelters and service providers should be aware of languages commonly spoken in the community, and develop appropriate protocols and resources, including collaborating with immigrant community-based organizations, for responding to LEP individuals needing language assistance.**
 - **When possible, partner with domestic violence service providers that focus on particular ethnic or immigrant populations. Do not assume that your organization is "off the hook" on providing language services simply because some other organization does.**

Want more info?

- **For one approach, see the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence "Model Protocol on Services for Limited English Proficient Immigrant and Refugee Victims of Domestic Violence," prepared in November 2002.**
- **See [Section A in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for an in-depth discussion of how to assess your LEP needs and create a plan to address those needs.**

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- **B. Identifying Language Resources**

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- **Community organizations have benefitted from hiring and training bilingual employees to provide direct services. Many have worked with law students, undergraduate students, community members, and academics to provide language assistance. Consider hiring professional interpreters where necessary and appropriate.**
 - **If the language services are provided by an interpreter, translator, or bilingual person, make sure that those individuals are not connected to the client's community. If those individuals are connected, make sure that they are trained on confidentiality. In many circumstances, the interpreter is a member of the community and may know the abuser or the abuser's family. If this is true, remind the interpreter that any breach in confidentiality may put your client in danger. This can be especially important in rural areas where there are fewer linguistic resources, leading to a natural tendency to find anyone who speaks the language without thinking about confidentiality. Language access can be provided telephonically working with trained interpreters from other parts of the state.**
 - **Bilingual academics, students, and community members should be periodically tested/evaluated for competence in the appropriate level of bilingual ability required.**

Want more info?

- **Consult the General Tips and Tools Chapter 1, Sections [B\(6\)](#) and [D\(1\)](#).**
- **Consult the Rockland Family Shelter (featured below), concerning its training programs for volunteer interpreters.**
- **Form linkages with other non-profits, community-based organizations (CBOs), associations, and faith-based organizations serving LEP communities to promote referrals, sharing of expertise, and dissemination of information to the linguistic communities in your service area.**
 - **The coalition group TAPESTRI, featured at the end of this chapter, utilizes the expertise of eight different**

organizations, with a combined capacity to communicate in 40 different languages.

- **Have a dedicated toll-free number providing referral resources for callers who speak various languages.**
 - **Once you have formed linkages with non-profits, CBOs and legal aid offices in your area, your dedicated phone lines (staffed by individuals who speak the various languages or can connect to an interpretation service) can refer LEP community members to service providers who are equipped to meet their linguistic needs.**
 - **See [Section B in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on how to access language resources in your area. [back to top](#)**
- **C. Other Services for LEP Victims of Domestic Violence**
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- **Offer courthouse clinics where your staffing capacity permits. Such clinics are particularly helpful for individuals who could easily file pro se (proceeding without counsel) but for the language barrier. Have informational brochures available in multiple languages so that immigrant victims who come to the court system for help can learn about the range of legal options designed to help immigrant victims.**
 - **Consider posting trained bilingual staff members at local courthouses to explain court procedures to LEP individuals.**
 - **Such an effort requires cooperative approaches with police, courts, and other service providers.**

Want more info?

- **A comprehensive informational pamphlet designed for immigrant victims is available in English and ish (Russian and Hindi in progress). Contact Legal Momentum Immigrant Women Program, 1522 K Street, NW, Suite 550, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 325-0040; iwp@legalmomentum.org.**
- **A number of nonprofits have taken this approach. See [General Tips and Tools Chapter](#)**

1, Section B (3).

- **Consider offering English as a Second Language classes, vocational training, and childcare programs for the LEP community members you serve.**

Want more info?

- **Contact Refugee Women's Alliance (featured at the conclusion of this chapter) or at (206)721-0243 or log on to <http://www.rewa.org/>.**
- **Conduct law enforcement trainings. Partner with victim-witness advocates/coordinators, community relations officers, or local prosecutors with whom you have come in contact.**

Want more info?

- **Refer to TAPESTRI (featured at the conclusion of this chapter) at <http://www.TAPESTRI.org/>**
- **The New York City Community Response to Trafficking Program successfully partnered with the New York Police Department (NYPD) for trainings, resulting in the creation of an ethnically-sensitive anti-trafficking unit within the NYPD. This could be replicated for various units.**
- **Contact the Rockland Family Shelter (featured at the conclusion of this chapter), which has developed and conducted training programs for police departments concerning victims of domestic violence. (845) 634-3344; TTY: (845) 634-3119.**
- **See [Section C in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on working with LEP individuals.**

■ D. Ensuring Quality Control

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- **Accuracy and effective communication are as critical in domestic violence situations as in any emergency situation. Do not rely on friends and family members to interpret for the LEP victim in important and sensitive interactions.**
 - **It is very important to avoid using children as interpreters in domestic violence cases. Since many**

children accompany the client to meetings or at the shelter, police departments, and other services, it is sometimes perceived as convenient to use children to interpret. Children can suffer psychological harm from having to hear and interpret the details of abuse.

- **Consider adopting a protocol for community interpreters as described in [Section A](#) above.**
- **Be aware of the pitfalls that can result from using untrained, untested individuals for language assistance. For example, LEP victims could have their testimony incorrectly interpreted in court. Use only trained interpreters and translators for situations with potential legal exposure. The higher the stakes, the more important the use of trained language service providers.**

Want more info?

- **See [Section D in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on quality control.**

■ E. Conducting Community Outreach

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- **Conduct outreach clinics at ethnic gathering places, including houses of worship, ethnic shopping areas, etc.**
 - **Conduct intake clinics, answer questions, or simply post information at such gathering spots. Ask ethnic/ religious/ social organizations and/or community leaders to include information about your program in any newsletters or other information they circulate within the community.**

- **Contact Anna Laboriel, Director of Satellite Offices, for the Rockland Family Shelter, which has satellite offices in immigrant communities and maintains a liaison with houses of worship attended by LEP immigrant women. (845) 634-3344; TTY: (845) 634-3119.**
- **Contact Latinas Unidas Por Un Nuevo Amanecer (LUNA) for information on immigrant**

leadership development. They can be reached at 4814 University Avenue, Suite 3, Des Moines, IA 50311 (515) 271-5060, Latinas@lunaiowa.org.

- **Publish outreach information concerning domestic violence, sexual assault, and trafficking in the languages of the LEP populations served by your organization.**
- **See [Section E in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more ideas on how to conduct outreach effectively to your community and service area.**

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Rockland Family Shelter in New York City: Doing What it Takes

The Rockland Family Shelter program in New York City illustrates some of the steps that can be taken by smaller organizations to locate and provide language access and other services to LEP victims of domestic violence. The primary LEP populations served by the Rockland Family Shelter are Asians, Haitians, Hiics, and Orthodox Jewish speakers of Yiddish, Russian, and Hebrew. The shelter participates in community outreach by having materials in several languages that describe the services provided as well as define domestic violence (for example "not just physical battery"). In addition, documents on legal rights are available in the shelter in ish and Haitian Creole. The shelter also has satellite offices set up in immigrant communities, and directors collaborate with local churches to provide access to immigrant women who seek out churches after arriving from their home country.

The shelter offers special services to LEP persons including weekly ish language and Haitian Creole support groups. The Asian Community Program, the Haitian Community Program, the Hiic Community Program, and the Orthodox Jewish Community Program (Project Tivka) all employ advocates who specialize in the cultural and linguistic needs of LEP groups.

Translation and interpretation services are also available. All

staff and volunteers undergo mandatory training for dealing with LEP persons and cultural competency. In addition, in response to the recent influx of Ecuadorian immigrants, service providers went into the community and actively recruited volunteers who could assist in bilingual communication. These volunteers were then trained and briefed on confidentiality requirements. Advocates also have continual access to interpretation and translation services in 17 Asian languages and dialects through a joint effort with the Asian Women's Alliance of Kinship and Equality (A.W.A.K.E.), a local Asian community organization. Members of A.W.A.K.E. (especially board members) are encouraged to voluntarily assist in bilingual communication efforts. Bilingual volunteers, though they do not receive much training in interpretation and translation, are invited to regular meetings where they discuss outreach and receive some training on domestic violence response.

The Rockland Family Shelter works with both the police department and social services and has received referrals from all agencies involved in domestic violence response including clinics, counselors, etc. The shelter develops and conducts training for local police officers who work with domestic violence. The shelter directors also meet with police officers and chiefs somewhat regularly to discuss emerging issues in domestic violence response, including LEP issues. Additionally, police departments are encouraged to contact the shelter or A.W.A.K.E. when working with a victim who requires interpretation services that the police department cannot readily provide (usually a Southeast Asian dialect). However, this service is not used very regularly. Occasionally, when the police department is

in a tight spot, the shelter provides interpretation services and refers police officers to a bilingual staffer or volunteer at Rockland Family Shelter.

Contact: Anna Laboriel, Director of Satellite Offices

Rockland Family Shelter

Center for Advocacy and Support Services

2 Congers Road

New City, NY 10956

(845) 634-3344

**Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) in Seattle, Washington:
Working Collaboratively Across Disciplines to Assist LEP
Victims of Violence**

The Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) has used constructive liaisons with police departments and other organizations as a means of providing services in a broad range of languages to victims of violence, while at the same time increasing cultural competence in, and sensitivity to, the issues facing victims of violence.

ReWA's comprehensive range of services for LEP individuals include community outreach/education on domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking in areas with significant LEP populations; English as a Second Language (ESL) and vocational classes with on-site child care; an on-site pre-school; support groups for refugee and immigrant battered women and those at risk of becoming victims of domestic violence; consultation and training to law enforcement agencies and other service providers likely to encounter LEP victims; and specialized services to help LEP women understand and navigate the legal system. Legal services include referrals to pro-bono legal representation, as well as weekly sessions/workshops with on-site and volunteer attorneys on family law and other issues. Staff interpreters are available to work with attorneys during these sessions. ReWA has also implemented a "co-advocacy" program designed to address the problems that can arise when two or three agencies are dealing with the same client. The "co-advocacy" program ensures that clients receive comprehensive assistance (e.g., emergency response, legal action, housing, and other needs), while avoiding duplication of effort and conflict.

The primary LEP populations served by ReWA are East African, East European, Southeast Asian, and others. Jointly, advocates speak 23 languages. ReWA's Domestic Violence Program alone has seven advocates who speak about 14 languages, including Somali, Russian, Vietnamese,

Cambodian, Ethiopian, Lao, and Chinese. Interpreters, usually native speakers of the language for which they provide interpretation, receive extensive training and are "screened" to ensure that they can read and write proficiently. They also receive additional training on how to accurately interpret and translate domestic violence terminology. ReWA publishes brochures in 11 different languages. The available brochures include a domestic violence brochure (available in 10 languages) for distribution by police departments. This domestic violence brochure defines domestic violence, explains a victim's rights, describes ReWA's services, and provides ReWA's contact information. In addition to the brochures, ReWA also collaborates with the Seattle Police Department to produce sexual assault education videos in Cambodian, Russian, Somali, Vietnamese, and Amharic. The videos provide information for victims of sexual assault in ethnic communities, including an explanation of a victim's rights and the resources available to assist the victim.

Contact: Someireh Amirfaiz

Executive Director, ReWA

PO Box 28112

Seattle, WA 98118

(206) 721-0243, ext. 222; <http://www.rewa.org/>

TAPESTRI in Georgia: A Focus on Coalition-Building

In 1996, a coalition of eight community-based organizations and eight professional advocates created TAPESTRI in order to combat violence and oppression of women in immigrant and refugee communities. Coalition members speak over 40 different languages and serve as advocates for immigrant and refugee families affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, and exploitation. TAPESTRI employees provide basic case management services to victims, including writing temporary protective orders, explaining general domestic law to victims, and where necessary, referring victims to attorneys. All interactions with clients are conducted with someone in the coalition who speaks the client's language. In the event that

the client's language is not spoken, TAPESTRI hires an appropriate person who can interpret. TAPESTRI works with clients to obtain medical care, child care, educational, and other benefits. The coalition recognized that many immigrant and refugee women faced similar issues regardless of their community, so they developed an intervention strategy to assist women in confronting violence and oppression.

TAPESTRI's Immigrant and Refugee Coalition Challenging Gender Based Oppression consists of: 1) The Center for Pan Asian Community Services; 2) the International Women's House; 3) Caminar Latino which provides a ish hotline, support groups, and advocacy for Latino families; 4) the Refugee Family Violence Prevention Project of Refugee Family Services; 5) Women Watch Africa, Inc.; 6) Shalom Bayit/Jewish Family and Career Services; 7) Refugee Women's Network; and 8) RAKSHA which works with the South Asian community. Many of these organizations provide counseling to victims, and all provide direct services including legal referrals. All of these services are in the appropriate non-English language. If the language is not available, TAPESTRI will hire the services of an interpreter.

TAPESTRI Men's Program was created in 1999, and staff members from this program have worked with immigrant and refugee men from over 18 countries. This program provides community education and 24 weeks of family violence intervention lessons for men in the appropriate non-English language.

TAPESTRI is involved in a number of activities including multicultural training on issues of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking for mainstream service providers, professionals, and criminal justice system personnel. Generally, mainstream service providers consist of local shelters. The training involves general orientation to American culture by making clients aware of cultural barriers and providing tips on bridging language barriers in American culture.

For the past few years, TAPESTRI has provided training on immigration and refugee issues to police officers throughout the State of Georgia at the police training academy in

Forsyth, Georgia. TAPESTRI has developed a course outline and training schedule that meets the needs of criminal justice/ law enforcement system personnel who attend their courses. TAPESTRI has bilingual and bicultural trainers who train police officers on LEP issues.

Through its community education and outreach program, TAPESTRI educates refugees and immigrant communities about domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. TAPESTRI conducts in-person training and publishes a biannual educational newsletter on emerging issues of concern to refugee and immigrant women. TAPESTRI has developed brochures, posters, and flyers in different languages. TAPESTRI has placed these brochures in various ethnic markets.

Contact: TAPESTRI, Inc.

P.O. Box 505

Avondale Estates, GA 30002

Phone: (404) 299-2185 or (404) 299-7775

Email: tapestri@mindspring.com

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Chapter 5: Tips and Tools Specific to Courts

Over the past ten years, as the immigrant population has grown, so has the community of LEP individuals needing access to the courts and other important services. The population of LEP individuals has grown in number, as well as in diversity, leaving court administrators and clerks with the challenge of providing timely and effective interpretation and translation services for an increasing number of different language groups. Despite these difficulties, state Supreme Court Justices, state officials, clerks of court, and court administrators have, in many instances, exhibited a strong commitment to providing the language services necessary to

have an accessible and fair judicial system. Many state judicial systems have found creative, cost-effective means of ensuring that LEP persons obtain needed court services. For example, New Jersey and Oregon court policies provide for interpreters at public expense for any party or witness in civil and criminal cases, as well as for other LEP individuals who need to contact court personnel at the courthouse, whether in or outside of the courtroom. Below we have listed some ideas from the field on developing an effective language assistance plan and policy for your judicial system.

“At a minimum, every effort should be taken to ensure competent interpretation for LEP individuals during all hearings, trials, and motions during which the LEP individuals must and/or may be present. When a recipient court appoints an attorney to represent an LEP defendant, the court should ensure that either the attorney is proficient in the LEP person’s language or that a competent interpreter is provided during consultations between the attorney and the LEP person.” DOJ LEP Guidance, Appendix A, June 18, 2002 (found at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/DOJFinLEPFRJun182002.pdf>.)

This chapter should be read in conjunction with [Chapter 1, General Tips and Tools](#). Court administrators, LEP coordinators, and decision-makers should also consult the DOJ LEP Guidance.

- **A. Assessing the Needs of Your Court System and Creating a Plan**

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- **Assess the language capability of your court system and analyze the existing barriers for LEP individuals seeking court services.**
 - **One suggestion is to authorize a committee to analyze your court system and draft findings detailing your language needs and recommendations for addressing those needs, including obtaining the services of a private contractor, if appropriate.**

Want more info?

- **Consult the Oregon Judicial Department's website concerning the "Access to Justice for All" committee, which is considering measures to improve delivery of services to LEP and other underserved populations at <http://www.OJD.state.or.us>.**
- **Also, see the very detailed "2000 Language Need and Use Study" published by the California Judicial Council, which includes an analysis of demographic trends and the changing language needs in different counties throughout the state at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/courtinterpreters/documents/needusestudy.pdf> . The end result of this privately-contracted study was the designation of five additional languages for inclusion in California's Court Interpreter Certification Program. See www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/courtinterpreters/courtinformation.htm.**
- **Develop a comprehensive written plan for the provision of services to LEP individuals, and train court staff on the practices and procedures contained in your plan.**
 - **Many courts have already implemented plans for the provision of services to LEP individuals. These typically include use of court interpreters, including measures to ensure their competence and ethical conduct, training for court staff on how to access language services, translation of vital documents, and appropriate signage for LEP individuals, among many other things. One need not reinvent the wheel to create a viable LEP plan, as some**

- jurisdictions have already published comprehensive plans.**
- **State court administrators should consider statewide plans that provide for local level courts to develop their own needs assessments, policies, and procedures for ensuring access to justice for LEP persons.**
- **As part of assessing need, keep track of the languages for which interpreters are requested to determine if changes or additions to your LEP plan warrant consideration.**
 - **Be sure to adjust as demographics change. Such information may include the frequency with which interpretation services are required in those languages, and whether the services are requested in civil or criminal proceedings or in interactions outside of the courtroom.**
 - **Keeping track of which languages are most frequently encountered is essential, and will give a better idea of how to provide appropriate language coverage. For example, if there is a large LEP ish-speaking community and a very small Mixtec-speaking community, you may wish to hire a ish interpreter and contract out for Mixtec interpreting. However, you need to ensure the competence and ethics of the contractor, since this person may not be subject to the same rigorous on-going training as an in-house interpreter.**

Want more info?

- **See DOJ LEP Guidance at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/DOJFinLEPFRJun182002.htm>.**
- **More information on how to ensure competence is located in [Section D](#) below under "Quality Control."**
- **Make interpretation and translation services**

freely available in civil and criminal matters.

- **Some court systems, including the Oregon Judicial Department and the New Jersey Courts, have policies providing free interpreting services to parties needing to communicate with court staff, regardless of the nature of the matter presented. All individuals seeking services from the courthouse are served. This approach recognizes the importance of court proceedings, which can permanently alter the lives of individuals involved in the process. Implementing an approach of ensuring qualified and timely language interpretation as needed ensures compliance with civil rights laws as well as access to justice for LEP persons.**

Want more info?

- **Consult the Oregon Judicial Department's Coordinator for Interpreter Certification Program, Lois M. Feuerle, at (503) 986-7021; TTY: (503) 986-5504; Lois.M.FEURLE@ojd.state.or.us.**
- **Consult Robert Joe Lee, Court Executive, Language Services Section, New Jersey Judiciary: RobertJoe.Lee@judiciary.state.nj.us.**
- **In some instances, federal grants are available for this purpose. The Missouri State Courts Administration received a 2003 STOP Violence Against Women Act Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, which enabled the state to provide interpreters to assist LEP victims of domestic violence in filling out forms and seeking restraining orders, and later in the proceedings, interpreters were to assist during hearings and trials.**
- **In addition to providing interpreters and**

translators inside the courtroom, courts encounter LEP individuals in many settings outside the courtroom. These could include the court clerk's office, pro se assistance offices, and many other important aspects of the court program. After reviewing the most important access points for LEP persons and identifying community language needs, courts can take many positive steps to ensuring access to the courthouse for LEP persons.

- **See [Section A in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for an in-depth discussion of how to assess your LEP needs and create a plan to address those needs.**

■ **B. Identifying Language Resources**

- **Seek out the assistance of the state court administrator, state court consortiums, and national and state organizations of judiciary interpreters. The federal courts may also be able to provide lists of interpreter resources. Partner with educational institutions or community groups to identify individuals who can be trained and certified or qualified.**

Want more info?

- **Contact Dr. Virginia Benmaman, benmamanv@cofc.edu, Director of the Master of Arts Bilingual Legal Interpreting program at the College of Charleston (<http://www.cofc.edu/~legalint/>). The College of Charleston has a program to train college graduates who are fluent in Spanish to do legal interpreting. The program includes 14 courses and an interpreting internship in the jurisdiction of the student's choosing.**
- **For indigenous languages, the**

Oregon Judicial Department coordinates with the Oregon Law Center to identify individuals who are bilingual in English and an indigenous language, and it then provides training on the ethics, protocols, and modes of interpreting.

- The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) can also be a key resource in identifying and training potential interpreters: <http://najit.org/>.
- The Interpreters Office for the U. S. District Court, Southern District of New York (Nancy Festinger, Chief Interpreter) is a valuable resource for obtaining information on training, quality control, and evaluation methods for interpretation in languages for which certification is not yet available. The office also has a comprehensive list of interpreters working in various languages throughout the US.
- Other valuable resources for interpreter identification and training include Bruno Romero, Ohio Supreme Court Interpreter Services Program Manager, at RomeroB@sconet.state.oh.us; and National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators Board Member Isabel Framer at isainterp@aol.com.
- If your court or state has developed a training program, advertise and get media coverage so that you expand the pool of possible trainees.
- If you have a limited number of interpreters, consider utilizing interpreters from nearby larger metropolitan areas.
 - Pay special attention to scheduling when

you bring interpreters from far away (See [Tip 6](#) below).

- Consider using telephone interpreter services for short, non-evidentiary hearings.

Want more info?

- Contact the Oregon Judicial Department and inquire about its Telephone Interpreter Pilot Project.
- Contact Robert Joe Lee, Court Executive, Language Services Section, New Jersey Judiciary, RobertJoe.Lee@judiciary.state.nj.us.
- Use your interpreter's resources efficiently.
 - If appropriate, schedule courtroom events involving interpreters in a way that maximizes their time in your court. For example, if two litigants in different cases both require interpreters in the same language, schedule hearings, if appropriate, such that the interpreter will not have to make repeated trips to accommodate both requests.
 - Recognize that language interpreting is a physically and intellectually strenuous activity. Plan to have "relief" available for the interpreter and/or take breaks as needed

Want more info?

- Review the New Jersey Judiciary Interpreters Office website to see how courtroom coverage by interpreters is ensured, at <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/index.htm>.
- Prominently post signs in the non-English languages commonly encountered in your service area in strategic locations throughout the courthouse, directing LEP litigants,

witnesses, and others to common courthouse destinations.

- Use a telephonic interpretation service to assist LEP individuals needing assistance in clerks' offices and other offices outside of the courtroom, or hire bilingual staff.
- Partner with legal service organizations to offer self-help centers at courthouses that may be staffed by bilingual volunteers, bilingual staff attorneys from legal services organizations, or even bilingual law students as part of their clinical program.
 - Publicize such clinics on the radio or at churches, synagogues, community centers, ethnic markets, and other social hubs.

Want more info?

- Consult the Oregon Judicial Department website at <http://www.OJD.state.or.us>, concerning a project at the Marion County Courthouse in which direct services are provided in ish to victims of domestic abuse.
 - See [Section B in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on how to access language resources in your area.
- C. Working with LEP Individuals and Interpreters

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- Be aware that witnesses may find the courtroom environment and its personnel intimidating.
 - Some witnesses may find the judicial process intimidating. Cultural or language barriers may exacerbate this problem. Courthouse personnel, including interpreters, should avoid compounding such anxiety and endeavor to build trust.
 - Trial judges can take certain measures to ensure

that interpreting in the courtroom proceeds smoothly. Try the following:

- **Remind the parties and witnesses to speak clearly into the microphones. Assure the interpreter(s) that, if they so request, any unheard testimony can be repeated.**
- **Ask the prosecutor or other parties involved to provide the interpreter(s) with relevant background information, such as a copy of the indictment, pleadings, and, particularly in cases involving scientific or other specialized terminology, any filings or lists that might include such terminology so that the interpreter can be prepared.**
- **Before the trial gets underway, establish ground rules for any challenge to the interpretation to be taken up at sidebar. The interpreter may have to be included in such conversations. Note that the party challenging the interpretation has the burden to show that it was inaccurate.**
- **Instruct the jury regarding the function of interpreters, i.e., that they work for the court, and not for either of the parties.**
- **Instruct the interpreter that he/she is obliged to inform the parties of any previous out-of-court contact with the case or the parties.**
- **On the rare occasion when an interpreter requests permission to speak or clarify (e. g., an inability to hear or understand the witness), the interpreter should address the court in the third person. For example, "the interpreter would request the court to instruct the witness to speak into the microphone."**
- **Instruct witnesses to stop answering if they hear the word, "objection," and wait for the judge's ruling.**
- **Instruct witnesses not to direct any comments or questions to the interpreter during testimony.**
- **Instruct witnesses to wait for the question**

to be interpreted before they answer and to answer in their primary language, rather than to fluctuate back and forth between English and their native language.

- **Witnesses should listen to the interpreter, even if they understand some English.**
- **Instruct the witness to inform the judge if he or she is unable to understand the interpreter.**
- **Many such techniques will help court reporters in both LEP and non-LEP situations as well.**
- **Ensure quality of interpreting services as discussed in Section D below and review [Section D of Chapter 1, General Tips and Tools](#).**

Want more info?

- **Check out <http://sdnyinterpreters.org>, the website of the Interpreters Office for the United States District Court, Southern District of New York, also available through <http://www.lep.gov>.**
- **Refer to the New Jersey Judiciary Courts Online site, <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/index.htm>.**
- **See Oregon's Unified Court Trial Rule 7.080, which allows the interpreter to require counsel to provide the interpreter in advance a list of specialized terms expected to be used at trial. The list is confidential and not subject to discovery.**
- **If multiple parties need interpreters, assign each individual needing interpreting services his or her own interpreter.**
- **Establish a courthouse kiosk or other locations with self-help materials, such as pro se forms translated into non-English languages**

commonly used in your jurisdiction.

- **Note: Not all LEP individuals in your community are able to read or will have access to the web. To supplement your efforts, provide recorded information on dedicated phone lines in the languages commonly used in your community. Helpful information can include the purpose and location of pro se forms, instructions for completing and filing the forms, and legal service agencies that may be able to help pro se plaintiffs.**

Want more info?

- **Consult the Oregon Judicial Department's website, which has a ish language version of the cite with links to ish language forms used to explain and obtain protective orders and other documents related to domestic violence. <http://www.ojd.state.or.us/eol/index.htm>**
- **The North Carolina Courts' Foreign Language Service Project created brochures in ish explaining how the criminal courts operate. For more details, visit: <http://www.nccourts.org/citizens/cprograms/foreign/default.asp>**
- **Ensure that multilingual staff are available at the information booth or can be easily contacted by information booth personnel.**
- **See [Section C in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on working with LEP individuals.**

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- **D. Ensuring Quality Control**

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- **If a state interpreter certification program does not exist in your state, create one that requires**

interpreters to have an appropriate educational background and training in modes of interpreting, ethics, and cultural competence.

- **Courts have typically determined that certification and training provide the necessary assurance of quality and accuracy. However, establishing a certification program from scratch may be a costly and daunting project. Many court systems have solved this problem for themselves by pooling their resources with other courts to establish a shared testing and training program for various languages that they encounter.**

Want more info?

- **See website of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) at <http://www.ncsconline.org> and the FAQs at http://www.ncsconline.org/wc/publications/Res_CtInte_ConsortCertFAQsPub.pdf. The NCSC has established and administers a Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification that includes 31 states. This allows states to share the costs of developing model formats for tests and testing forms, hiring experts, and conducting biennial revision of test forms. See the Consortium's "Agreement for Consortium Organization and Operations" at http://www.ncsconline.org/wc/publications/Res_CtInte_ConsortAgree2002Pub.pdf.**
- **New Jersey's "NJ Courts Online" site gives detailed information about the interpreter certification process. Access this site by clicking on <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/>**

[interpreters/intro.htm](#).

- Currently many states, including California, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, Wisconsin, and many others have certification programs for court interpreters.
- If no certification program exists for a particular language, create an effective methodology to establish the qualifications of a prospective interpreter.

Want more info?

- The Oregon Judicial Department has a process for qualifying interpreters when no certified interpreter is available, and has published the procedure in Chapter 20 of its "Judge's Benchbook." Consult Oregon's website for more information at <http://www.ojd.state.or.us/osca/cpsd/interpreterservices/index.htm>.
- The Washington State Administrative Office for the Courts has published a colloquy for judges to use in determining an interpreter's qualifications. Contact the Interpreter/Guardian line at 360-705-5301 or consult the website for additional links and information at http://www.courts.wa.gov/programs_orgs/pos_interpret/.
- The North Carolina Courts have published statewide guidelines on the use of interpreters, and utilize many state and some federally certified ish interpreters. Consult the North Carolina Courts' website at <http://www.nccourts.org/citizens/cprograms/foreign/default>.

[asp](#).

- Another resource is the New Jersey Courts' site, which contains a Manual for Judges and Other Court Personnel, at <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/directive/vicops/timan2.pdf>.
- Provide new interpreters, as well as judges, attorneys and other court personnel, with training on the interpreter's code of ethics, protocols, and modes of interpreting (simultaneous, consecutive, and sight translation) to be utilized by interpreters inside and outside the courtroom.
 - Require working court interpreters to have continuing education on these subjects in order to maintain their certification or qualification.

Want more info?

- Review Oregon Judicial Department's interpreter's code of ethics at <http://www.ojd.state.or.us/osca/cpsd/interpreter/documents/ethicscode.pdf>.
- Also consult the New Jersey Courts' website, <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/codepub.htm>.
- When new or less experienced interpreters are hired, assign mentors to assist them in familiarizing themselves with courthouse processes and to evaluate their performance.
 - Consider staffing new interpreters to less complex matters like traffic court, as opposed to a felony calendar.

Want more info?

- See King County Superior Court information featured below.
- Consult the North Carolina

Courts' website at <http://www.nccourts.org/citizens/cprograms/foreign/default.asp> for more information concerning its mentoring program for new interpreters

- **The administrative offices of the state courts should consider creating/providing a state-coordinated glossary of legal terms and their translations into commonly encountered non-English languages.**
 - **Using a glossary is a good way to ensure consistent interpretation of complex legal terminology. Use of a glossary may simplify the interpreter's job and avoid confusing an LEP witness, who could hear two different (though presumably reliable) interpretations of a complex term. To ensure consistent and accurate interpretation of legal terminology inside and outside of the courtroom, work with staff, contract and telephonic interpreters, and translators to develop legal glossaries and translations of legal and quasi-legal forms in the most often encountered languages, and make such glossaries available online and in hard copy for general use. In the alternative, access existing legal glossaries and forms available online and adapt them to suit local requirements. As glossaries are always works in progress, solicit ongoing feedback on additions and/or edits.**

Want more info?

- **See the North Carolina Courts' website at <http://www.nccourts.org/citizens/cprograms/foreign/default.asp>.**
- **Check out the legal glossaries available on the New Jersey Courts' website, <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/>**

[glossary2.pdf](#)

- See **[Section E in Chapter 1](#)**, General Tips and Tools, for more ideas on how to conduct outreach effectively to your community and service area.

The Story of Seattle's King County Superior Court Interpreter Program: A Focus on Quality and Efficiency

When you enter the Office of Interpreter Services in the King County Superior Court in Seattle, Washington, you are immediately struck by the pictures, postcards, and memorabilia from various countries that have been brought to the offices by the hundreds of interpreters who have worked there. There is a room set aside for interpreters to take breaks and for clients, interpreters, and lawyers to meet in private. These touches may seem small, but they reflect the larger reality: this office is designed to support a professional interpretation corps in order to ensure the integrity of the judicial system and effective communication for LEP persons. So far, the program has provided interpreters in 110 languages.

Martha Cohen, who helps run the program, goes to great lengths to explain that this is a "low-tech operation focused on quality, not automation." She has yet to find calendaring software that meets her needs, so the program keeps three sets of hard-copy documents up to date in more traditional fashions. First, they have a language bank notebook that reflects the experience, education, and availability of various interpreters by language. The notebook contains the Interpreter Information Record for each interpreter. Certified interpreters are used whenever possible. Court certification is available in seven languages in Washington State: Cambodian, Korean, Russian, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Lao, and ish. Information on the Washington State court interpreter program can be found at http://www.courts.wa.gov/programs_orgs/pos_interpret/.

Interpreters are asked to attend orientations as well. Interpreters are expected to follow a code of conduct. New interpreters are used in non-felony cases first, whenever possible. One of the experienced interpreters on staff goes to the assignment with a new interpreter and works with the

judge or commissioner to ensure that the interpretation goes smoothly. If the interpretation is in a language the experienced staff members are not familiar with, they can still focus on the mechanics of interpreting: Is the interpreter trainee using the first person? Is the length of the interpretation reflective of the length of the statement being interpreted (understanding that there may be a difference in length that is caused by the difference in language or a need to describe something for which there are no direct translations)? Is the interpreter staying focused on the hearing? Is the interpreter interpreting everything that is being said?

The program also uses 3x5 cards that track every case. Each time an interpreter or translator is used, the card is updated. Even though interpreters are bound to a code of ethics, this office goes the extra step to ensure that there is no appearance of conflicts and attempts to avoid using any particular interpreter to interpret for more than one party or side of a particular case or in more than one aspect of that case. The program staff also keep an extensive calendar of all of the interpretations being provided in their jurisdiction each day. An Interpreter Request Form can be submitted by telephone, e-mail, or walk-in requests.

King County also provides interpreters for family law facilitations, the protection order office, and LEP parents of juveniles in all juvenile justice cases.

The Office of Interpreter Services also works closely with judges and commissioners on an interpreter services advisory committee and provides orientations for new judges and commissioners regarding the interpreter program and the appropriate use of interpreters. Scheduling has been a key to efficient use of interpreter funds, and judges and commissioners are extremely responsive to the need to call cases requiring interpreters when the interpreters are available. The office also strives to ensure that experienced interpreters are assigned to cases with newer judges and commissioners.

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King County Courthouse

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The New Jersey Judiciary: A Policy of Providing Interpreters When They Are Needed

The New Jersey Judiciary has been at the forefront of court interpretation and translation policies and practices. The Judiciary provides a broad range of innovative services to LEP individuals.

“The integrity of the judicial system relies significantly on effective communication. Without quality interpretation and translation, access to the court system for LEP litigants and witnesses is limited, sometimes with serious consequences. Without effective communication, judges may as well prepare for reversals, law enforcement and prosecutors may as well prepare for cases to get thrown out, and LEP communities may lose confidence in our justice system,” explains longtime leader and speaker in the field of court interpreting, Robert Joe Lee, New Jersey Court Executive, Language Services Section, Special Programs Unit.

In 1982, the New Jersey Chief Justice appointed a task force to look at how to provide equal access for all linguistic minorities. The task force took census data and interviewed judges, lawyers, and administrative staff in New Jersey. Three years later, the task force issued its final report entitled Equal Access to the Courts for Linguistic Minorities <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/actnplan.htm>, setting forth a definitive LEP plan/road map, and also began to

collect statistics on interpreted events. The most requested languages identified in the report were ish, Portuguese, Polish, Korean, American Sign Language, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Egyptian Colloquial, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, Turkish, and Italian.

The New Jersey Judiciary has several procedures in place for language assistance inside and outside the courtroom. An interpreter is assigned at an LEP person's point of entry into either a court or a court support office, such as the domestic violence unit. If no staff or contract interpreter is available on site, one is identified from the registry of the Administrative Office of the Courts in another area of the state and brought in, or contacted by telephone. On February 26, 2004, interpreting standards were adopted for the New Jersey Superior Court and for the Tax Court. The standards provide for interpreter assistance for all persons, including parents of minor parties, for all stages of court proceedings, intake interviews, and direct service situations that involve court personnel. See http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/directive/personnel/dir_03_04.pdf.

The New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts also provides headsets and telephonic interpreting equipment to each judicial district. It sets the rates of pay for telephonic interpreters, monitors quality and, if there is a problem, proceedings are interrupted and the Office performs an investigation. Newly-hired judges and staff are trained on an ad hoc basis. There are separate training manuals for judges, interpreters, and court administrative staff.

New Jersey also provides translations. Formal procedures have been established for issuing translations to ensure that all forms and informational brochures are being translated into ish for all parts of the courts, including for domestic violence matters. The procedures specify how the translation will be issued, what documents will be in ish alone, and what documents will be in a ish-English format.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is currently identifying all documents that should be translated, with each office that generates documents being asked to rank documents to be translated in order of importance. The objective is to produce official translations of those

documents beginning with ish and followed by other languages to be chosen based on court statistics on interpreted events. The current documents available online in ish include: "How to Sue in Small Claims Court - Non-Auto;" "Summons and Return of Service;" and "Financial Questionnaire to Establish Indigency-Municipal Court." In addition, two professional translators focus on ensuring that translations are done efficiently and correctly.

In addition to translating court-generated documents, both staff and contract interpreters are used to sight-translate court documents into whatever language is needed. At the direction of the court, they are also available for translations of correspondence and other documents. Staff interpreters who have passed the ish legal translation test may also perform written translations of a wide range of documents written in ish or English.

The New Jersey Judiciary currently has staff court interpreters in ish, Galician, Norwegian, Portuguese, Swedish and Ukrainian. In addition, a centralized list of contract interpreters and language agencies is publicly available through a link on the New Jersey Judiciary website.

New Jersey takes quality control very seriously. A professional performance exam for court interpreting is offered in 15 languages (complete information regarding this exam is available on the website). All prospective interpreters are required to attend a seminar on the Code of Professional Conduct for Interpreters, which is offered ten times a year. Interpreters must take the test, if a test exists, in their language pair and, if no test exists for that language, the interpreter must sign an affidavit saying he or she possesses the requisite interpreting competency. Newly-appointed Superior Court judges and municipal judges must attend an orientation offered once a year, which includes information on language access issues. Municipal courts offer the orientation three times a year for new employees, and other employees may attend upon request as well. The orientation covers such topics as "Learn what the Supreme Court expects court interpreters to do;" "Obtain information on resources for developing interpreting skills;" and "Find out how the court interpreter test program is managed." See <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/codesemw.htm>. By 2003, all

judges or court support personnel with any probability of needing to deliver services to linguistic minorities received an initial orientation. The njcourts.online website lists information on telephonic interpreting companies as well as operational standards for telephonic interpreting. See <http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/directive/vicops/timan1.pdf> and http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/directive/vicops/odir14_01.pdf .

A telephonic interpreting program was implemented in 2001 as an adjunct to the Judiciary's system of staff and contract interpreters. Operational standards call for use of telephonic interpretation under certain circumstances when no on-site interpreter is reasonably available. However, reliance on telephonic interpreter services is authorized only where (1) it is more fiscally responsible to obtain the telephonic interpreter; and (2) the quality of interpretation is not compromised.

The New Jersey Judiciary continues to work to refine its comprehensive language assistance program in the face of the changing language demographics of the state and the difficult challenges of shifting fiscal human resources. Both its underlying plan and its approach to ensuring quality control in the actual delivery of services continue to be a model for other state court systems.

Contact: Language Services Section, Special Programs Unit

Programs and Procedures Division

Office of Trial Court Services

Administrative Office of the Courts

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Trenton, NJ 08625-0988

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The Oregon Courts: A Comprehensive Approach

The Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) has a comprehensive program to ensure access to LEP individuals who require interpreting services both inside and outside of the courtroom, whether in criminal or civil proceedings. In addition, the Oregon legislature has enacted measures that require the provision of interpreting services for LEP parents (or for those who serve in loco parentis) of minors who appear in juvenile proceedings. Oregon statutes similarly mandate that LEP individuals who appear in administrative proceedings, including hearings before the Workers Compensation Board, Bureau of Labor and Industry, Board of Parole, Department of Corrections, and Hearing Officer Panels of the Oregon Youth Authority.

OJD's programs include measures to ensure the quality of interpreting and translating services, to inform LEP communities of available court services, to provide direct services in commonly encountered languages, and to assess and adjust programs to the changing needs of a diverse and dynamic LEP population.

OJD became a founding member of the National Center for State Courts Consortium (NCSC) for State Court Interpreter Certification in 1995. The Consortium was established to help state courts develop and share the costs of comprehensive interpreter certification programs. It created a readily accessible source of expertise for OJD and consortium members. Moreover, OJD's participation in the NCSC's Consortium helped defray the costs of creating its certification program and allowed it quickly to establish a methodology for assessing the qualifications of interpreters. The Court Interpreter Certification test screens applicants' language skills in both English and the foreign language, measures candidates' skills in modes of interpreting, and establishes that candidates possess the requisite substantive knowledge of interpreter ethics and professional responsibilities. OJD's court interpreter certification program includes the Spanish, Russian, and Vietnamese languages, as these are the LEP communities most frequently encountered in the courts of the state.

In addition to 16 staff interpreters, the OJD uses the services of approximately 80 certified interpreters, who are sent to particular districts based on the needs of the local courts. Staff interpreters are sometimes called upon to travel between counties and circuits in order to better utilize their services throughout the state. To ensure consistent quality interpreting in the state, judges are required by statute to use a certified interpreter if one is available. However, even in situations where there is no certified interpreter available locally, the OJD undertakes steps to ensure that quality is maintained by bringing in interpreters from out-of-state and even from outside the country when necessary. Certified interpreters are required to maintain and improve their skills through continued education. The OJD Interpreter Unit sponsors such events regularly. In addition, judges are provided with a colloquy that helps them assess the qualifications of an interpreter who is identified from a list prepared by the Court Interpreter Services Office. It is the policy of OJD never to use friends and family members as a source of interpreters.

Through its liaisons with community organizations like the Oregon Law Center (OLC), OJD has tapped a pool of potential interpreters and translators of indigenous languages who are being trained and tested on legal terminology, court protocols, interpreting modes, professional ethics, and language skills. The project also includes role-plays and mock trials at the courthouse, in which trainees practice interpreting and receive feed-back to improve their skills. Moreover, in a proactive effort to ensure quality interpretation and translation services for an emerging population of indigenous immigrants, OJD has also partnered with OLC to devise glossaries of legal terms in several indigenous languages. In addition, OJD has partnered with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization to provide three sets of interpreter skills-building training modules for Russian interpreters.

In an effort to improve access to justice for the approximately 40,000 members of indigenous communities from Mexico and Central America living and working in Oregon, the OLC and OJD embarked upon a pilot project. The OLC/OJD initiative included a training to prepare certified Spanish-English interpreters to work as “relay” interpreters for language

minority litigants and witnesses. An example of a “relay” interpretation is when one person interprets between an indigenous language and Spanish and the second person interprets between Spanish and English.

Two subsequent trainings focused on on teaching interpretation skills to speakers of indigenous languages, including Mixteco, Triqui, Zapoteco, Nahautl, Tarasco, Akateco, Kanjobal, and others.

In addition to its interpreter training and recruitment programs, OJD uses translated documents as a means of providing access to LEP individuals. OJD has translated the Oregon Family Abuse Prevention Act materials into ish, and instructions needed to obtain Temporary Protective Orders (TPOs) into ish, Russian, Vietnamese, and Korean. These documents are available in the courthouses and on the OJD Family Law website, which currently contains the ish language version. The Russian, Vietnamese, and Korean versions will be posted in the near future. <http://www.OJD.state.or.us/osca/cpsd/courtimprovement/familylaw/fapaforms.htm>. The website also contains links to other websites that have translated legal documents, such as the Oregon Bar Association website, which has ish, Russian and Vietnamese translations of information about wills, small claims, bankruptcy, and other legal matters.

In the Marion County courts, LEP victims of domestic violence can receive direct assistance in ish to seek TPO's from an abusive domestic partner. OJD has also undertaken several pilot projects in which telephone interpreters are used in short non-evidentiary hearings, usually involving LEP persons who speak one of the less commonly encountered language. However, telephonic interpreting also has been used in the trial of a minor traffic infraction.

Finally, the OJD has established the "Access to Justice for All" Committee, whose mission it is to continually reassess OJD's program needs and to make recommendations on how to improve racial, ethnic, and gender fairness in the Oregon court system. The Access Committee implements subcommittee recommendations, monitors the progress of pilot projects, and makes its own recommendations to the OJD for the improvement of access to service for all those

seeking services from Oregon Courts.

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Chapter 6: Tips and Tools Specific to DOJ Federally Conducted Programs and Activities

Most of this document has addressed recipients of federal financial assistance who, even before Executive Order 13166, were required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to serve LEP individuals. Title VI does not cover federal agencies themselves; it only covers their recipients. However with the issuance of Executive Order 13166, for the first time, all 95+ federal departments and agencies are also required to develop and implement appropriate language assistance plans (LAPs) governing their own "federally conducted" programs and activities. These internal federal agency LAPs must be consistent with the standards applicable to recipients of federal financial assistance.

DOJ houses a wide variety of agencies, from the Federal

Bureau of Prisons and Federal Bureau of Investigation, to the United States Marshals Service, Executive Office for United States Attorneys, and the Civil Rights Division. In developing the LAP for DOJ, we faced the same series of questions as many large recipients seeking to develop and implement a cost-effective plan. Is a single, comprehensive language assistance plan preferable to a composite plan developed independently by each component? Does the need for speedy implementation outweigh the potential benefits of a longer, more reflective period of assessment? Should existing fiscal resources govern the scope of the plan, or should the scope of the plan determine requests for future fiscal resources? What implementation activities should be a priority until necessary fiscal resources become available? The analytical approaches utilized, insights gained, and techniques implemented by DOJ in developing its LAP can perhaps assist other law enforcement, correctional, and judicial officials in their search for reasonable, cost-effective, and creative LEP policies and procedures.

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■ A. Determining Your Organization's Language Needs

- Identify your language needs.**
 - [Section A of Chapter 1, General Tips and Tools](#), provides suggestions for identifying your current LEP needs and preparing for your projected needs, including tips on accessing census, Department of Education, and school district data on minority language populations eligible to participate in your program or activity; tips on determining English-language ability of non-English speaking populations; and suggestions for navigating the different data sets available to predict the varying needs of different language groups.**
 - Organizations can conduct a review or "count" of the number and type of LEP individuals accessing a program or activity or accessing services in individual**

offices/jurisdictions. This approach, while labor-intensive, provides a detailed picture of the LEP communities actually served by a particular organization. Such counts need not be for all offices within a system, or be conducted over an entire year. The scope and timing of a count can be limited, so long as the offices chosen to participate, or the length of time over which the count or census takes place, can reliably produce data of statistical significance. Control for possible undercounts attributable to LEP community perceptions of current or past language barriers, and revise periodically to test for demographic shifts.

- **Devise a language assistance plan for situations involving the LEP individuals participating in or benefitting from your program or activity. Some suggestions include:**
 - **Obtain commitment and support by program or office leadership;**
 - **Make available senior program or office officials to function as LEP managers or coordinators;**
 - **Establish a planning committee with representation from all levels of staff (i.e., administrative/technical support staff, budget/information technology staff, professional staff).**
 - **Consult with stakeholders (linguistic community groups, professional interpreter associations, etc.).**
 - **Keep a clear and consistent focus on the nature and needs of LEP populations to be served;**
 - **Establish practical and straightforward language policies and procedures;**
 - **Adopt realistic standards that you can meet, but do not underestimate needs or your agency's ability to meet them;**

- **Recognize that there may be no "one-plan-fits-all" approach in designing a language assistance plan for a large agency with multiple components/offices. For example, DOJ, which is composed of over 33 different components tasked with different missions and administering significantly different programs and activities, rejected the concept of a uniform approach in developing its own internal LAP. A single LAP may not be viable for your entire agency, particularly if you engage in a wide range of activities or serve a geographically large or linguistically diverse jurisdiction.**
- **When creating a plan for a large organization with many sub-components having various missions and types of contact with the LEP public, outline a series of fundamental language assistance principles, identify the components most likely to interact with or impact significant LEP populations, and set component-specific goals or objectives.**

- **Direct each identified component to conduct its own assessment of language assistance needs and, as appropriate, develop a component plan that is consistent with its functions.**

- **Be sure to follow up and monitor progress so that this does not simply become a plan to plan. Build in benchmarks and accountability, where possible and appropriate.**

Want more info?

- **Review the DOJ LAP at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/dojimp.htm>. Since the adoption of the DOJ LAP, several components have made significant commitments to, and progress in, improving access for LEP persons.**
- **For agencies with multiple components or offices, test-drive a pilot plan in select**

components/regions/offices.

- **A pilot plan can, for example, help you assess the effectiveness of using a universal approach to address the needs of different language communities in your agency's different operations/ regions or within a particular region.**
- **Such pilot sites can act as a test bed for resolving questions (e.g., the impact on organizational mission, the role of English-speaking officials and staff in monitoring services and benefits in other languages, the potential for staff/ beneficiary confusion or disputes as to what must be provided, the role of language minority community outreach, and the real world fiscal costs).**
- **Program officials and staff may be more likely to accept and act upon the experience and answers provided by their own colleagues in the test pilot cities. Further, such an approach limits internal confusion and fiscal waste.**
- **Officials and staff involved in the pilot planning process can become an internal cadre of potential trainers and mentors available to others in the organization as they begin to implement LAPs in their own offices.**

Want more info?

- **Consider the experience of the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA), which was tasked with the daunting responsibility of bringing 93 different U.S. Attorney's Offices into compliance with Executive Order 13166. EOUSA elected to use pilot LAPs to help develop the above-outlined elements of an effective LAP in the context of a federal legal office. Among the**

lessons learned by the EOUSA pilot LAP participants were that: (1) the level of staff commitment at the planning stage exceeded expectations; (2) the level of expenditures for language services at the implementation stage fell short of expectations; and (3) the inclusion of language providers and LEP community representatives as part of the planning process helped improve the final LAP product. See the EOUSA description featured at the end of this section.

- See [Section A in Chapter 1, General Tips and Tools](#), for an in-depth discussion of how to assess your LEP needs and create a plan to address those needs.

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- **B. Identifying Language Resources to Help You Meet Your Needs**

- **Don't reinvent the wheel. Build upon the work of others, and then pass your own work on.**
 - **Share among offices within the organization. Many U.S. Attorney's Offices (USAOs) have informally developed and translated for their own local use a number of forms, notices, instructional sheets, and informational brochures into one or more languages. The Executive Office for United States Attorneys is developing an inventory of these locally translated documents and plans to make them available to all USAOs through its website. This allows existing translated documents to be easily modified or customized by each USAO, and allows otherwise limited resources to be focused on expanding the number of**

documents or languages contained in its internal collection.

- **Share between different entities with similar missions: The FBI has translated a number of forms, notices and waivers into a variety of languages. For example, the FBI's "Advice of Rights" has been translated into 35 languages or dialects; a "Consent to Search Premises" form is available in 17 languages or dialects; and its "Your Rights at Line-up" form is available in 10 languages. To aid the thousands of state and local law enforcement agencies across the country, many of which are recipients of DOJ federal financial assistance, the FBI is making copies of these (and other) translated law enforcement documents available through its Law Enforcement Online website for use by authorized law enforcement entities. Sample documents will soon be available to the public on <http://www.lep.gov>.**
- **When you develop and implement your own LAP and associated tools, consider contributing them to the growing inventory of LEP resources, including a database like <http://www.lep.gov>, to assist other organizations in following your lead.**
- **See [Section B in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on how to access language resources in your area.**

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■ **C. Working with LEP Individuals**

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- **Identify how your first receivers interact with LEP persons to determine language access techniques/devices that should be immediately available.**
 - **Staff members who direct the flow of public access to the services or benefits you provide are the most likely**

candidates for interaction with LEP individuals. Such "first receivers" play a critical role in serving as your organization's first point of contact with the LEP communities you serve.

- **Adopt language assistance procedures and tools that complement the work of your first receivers. For example, where programs or personnel rely extensively on the telephone (e.g., hotlines, emergency response centers, or those receiving telephonic applications for services or benefits), printed "I Speak_____ " cards are of little value. Instead, provide the public with dedicated language access telephone numbers, language-appropriate telephonic information, or automate the access process by including language assistance automatic dialers on staff telephones. Conversely, where a program or designated staff principally deal with members of the public in face-to-face encounters (e.g., certain police, enforcement or service agencies or walk-in emergency medical clinics), the availability of printed "I Speak_____ " cards and translated brochures and application forms becomes much more important and useful.**
- **See [Section C in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on working with LEP individuals.**

■ **D. Ensuring Quality Control**

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- **Reinforce language access procedures with visual tools and notices that simplify the communication process, particularly for those staff who are new or less familiar with your organization's LAP.**
 - **For example, you can ensure that employees have telephonic interpreter**

access procedures readily available. To accomplish this, DOJ's Civil Rights Division linked language assistance procedures to the opening page of its internal network, used by Division employees only. Another equally effective but decidedly non-tech approach is used by the Division's Coordination and Review Section, which has affixed stickers with the number and access code for telephonic language assistance on the base unit of every staff member's telephone. Now, when staff members are on the telephone and wonder how to access interpretative services, the answer is staring them in the face.

- Be sure to supplement visual aids and other LAP-associated "reminders" with intensive periodic re-training, as emphasized in [Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools. Ensure that staff do not rely exclusively on information contained in such visual aids because it is "easier to remember." Staff should be trained on all aspects of your LAP and should be prepared to anticipate situations where use of telephonic interpretation services or other expedient methods is not viable.
 - See [Section D in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more information on ensuring quality control measures and checks
 - E. Conducting Outreach
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- Meet with ethnic community leaders and post information at ethnic gathering places.
 - LAP planning committee members can consider identifying the service providers and faith-based or other groups most closely associated with the language communities you serve. Publicize access efforts to such groups and make translated forms and brochures available

to them for dissemination and posting at ethnic social gathering places.

- Form linkages with your federal partners across program areas to conduct joint outreach.
 - You may find that other federal partners experience goals and challenges similar to yours. For example, federal law enforcement agencies and USAOs may serve on joint task forces. Consider holding meetings as a group with ethnic community organizations, service providers, and professional interpreters/translators on issues of relevance. Solicit input from such organizations and individuals regarding outreach strategy.
- See [Section E in Chapter 1](#), General Tips and Tools, for more ideas on outreach activities.

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The Executive Office for United States Attorneys: Piloting System-Wide LAPs and Doing it Right Locally to Get it Right Nationally

In 2001, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA) was tasked with the responsibility for developing an integrated language assistance plan (LAP) for all 93 U.S. Attorneys' Offices (USAOs) in the United States and its territories. EOUSA began with a language resource and language needs survey involving all 93 USAOs, with a particular focus on the language minority groups routinely encountered rather than the language minority groups that might reside within the jurisdiction served by each office.

Based in part on the survey, EOUSA selected three pilot districts to develop and evaluate LAPs, and each was asked to designate an LEP coordinator. The LEP coordinator from each pilot district was then provided in-depth LEP training and the elements of an effective local LAP. Following the training, each returned to his or her district and, under the leadership of the local U.S. Attorney, created an LEP committee to craft the USAO LAP. Over a period of three-four months, each district drafted and began implementation of its LAP. At the same time, the EOUSA drafted governing LEP policies and procedures detailing the common

framework and language assistance principles for all USAO programs and activities.

After a short evaluation period, the pilot district LEP coordinators, the EOUSA, and the Civil Rights Division's Coordination and Review Section held a series of teleconferences to discuss the experiences of the pilot districts and to identify any "lessons learned" of potential value to sister USAOs. These teleconferences led to an updated EOUSA LEP training program. That training program was then taped and edited for broadcast in June 2004 by the Justice Television Network to all USAOs. Based on this video training and additional consultations with the EOUSA as needed, the remaining 90 USAOs have finalized, or are in the process of finalizing, LAPs for their respective districts. The LEP broadcast tape was also added to the EOUSA inventory of LEP training materials for future use.

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Conclusion

Serving the needs of individuals with limited English proficiency and ensuring that they have meaningful access to federally assisted and federally conducted programs is a vitally important project. We created this document to assist you in your efforts to serve your LEP community members.

We hope that in reading this document you will be able to

draw upon the experiences of others and take advantage of all the resources that are out there. We believe that one of the most effective ways to ensure meaningful access for LEP persons is to share successful strategies and available resources. Our goal in developing this document was to establish a framework for compiling and disseminating techniques and strategies from around the country for addressing the needs of LEP individuals.

In this spirit, we encourage you to view this document as a starting point in an ongoing process of striving to develop, disseminate, and build upon promising practices in the field. We hope that you will find these practices, tips, and tools useful as we all continue to search for creative and effective ways to adequately serve the needs of LEP communities. We look forward to continuing to work with all of you as we strive to achieve our common goal of ensuring meaningful access for all.

**To obtain this document in alternate formats, call the
Coordination and Review Section at:**

(202) 307-2222 or TDD: (202) 307-2678

**To obtain this document on the World Wide Web, go to [http://
www.lep.gov](http://www.lep.gov).**

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