

Northwest Wisconsin WDA #7 Limited English Proficiency Policy

(Revised July 1, 2021)

POLICY STATEMENT

Northwest Wisconsin WDA #7 is committed to:

Providing equal opportunity in all programs and services to ensure full compliance with all civil rights laws, including Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which requires non-discrimination on the basis of national origin. Equal opportunity includes physical and program access for persons with disabilities and program access for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Program and physical access for persons with disabilities is covered in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, Section 504.

It is the policy of this WDB or Subrecipient to provide language access services to populations of persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who are eligible to be served by our programs. Such services will be focused on providing meaningful access to our programs, services and/or benefits

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions and other provisions are applicable to this policy:

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d.et seq. And its implementing regulation at 45 CFR part 80** - The law that protects individuals from discrimination based on their race, color, or national origin under any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance.
- **Limited English Proficient** - (LEP) those customers, who cannot speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits them to interact effectively with program service providers.
- **Vital documents** - A document, either paper or electronic, that contains information that is critical for accessing the provider/WDB or Subrecipient services and/or benefits; letters or notices that require a response from the customer; and documents that inform customers of free language assistance. Examples of documents containing vital information include, but are not limited to applications, consent and complaint forms; notices of rights and responsibilities; notices advising LEP individuals of their rights under this part, including the availability of free language assistance; rulebooks; written tests that do not assess English language competency, but rather assess competency for a particular license, job, or skill for which English proficiency is not required; and letters or notices that require a response from the beneficiary or applicant, participant, or employee.

Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need assistance with this information, please call us through Wisconsin Relay Service (7-1-1) or at 800-947-3529. To request information in an alternate format, including language assistance or translation of the information, please contact us at (715)-682-7235.

- **Vital information** – Information, whether written, oral or electronic, that is necessary for an individual to understand how to obtain any aid, benefit, service, and/or training; necessary for an individual to obtain any aid, benefit, service, and/or training; or required by law.
- **Safe Harbor** - The threshold that permits programs to decide when a written translation is required in order to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The following are the thresholds:
 - Written translations of WDB or Subrecipient vital documents will be provided for each eligible language group that constitutes at least 5% or 1,000 individuals, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or encountered by programs in the service area.
 - If there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group, the recipient does not translate vital written materials, but provides written notice in the primary language of the LEP group of their right to oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.
- **Major LEP Language Groups** - The populations of persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in Wisconsin that represent 5% or 1,000 individuals in the area. For Wisconsin, the **Statewide Major LEP Language Groups** are Spanish and Hmong.
- **Qualified Interpreters** - Qualified interpreters have: demonstrated proficiency in English and the second language; demonstrated knowledge in both languages of relevant specialized terms or concepts; and documentation of completion of training on the skills and ethics of interpretation, and awareness of relevant cultural issues.
- **Interactive Voice Response** - (IVR System) an automated system that enables callers to obtain and provide information over the telephone in English and other languages.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY COORDINATOR

A Limited English Proficiency Coordinator (LEPC) will be appointed at the management level to oversee the LEP requirements and procedures, including as required by funding recipients. LEP planning and services are provided in coordination with provisions of equal opportunity in services and employment.

The WDB or Subrecipient management level Limited English Proficiency Coordinator is:

Name: Ryce Davis- Program Assistant
 Phone: 715-685-1425
 Email: Rdavis@nwwib.com
 Address: 301 Ellis Avenue Suite 3 Ashland, WI

The WDB or Subrecipient back-up LEPC is:

Name: Jenny Decker
 Phone Number: 715-682-9141

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ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

LEP populations to be served will be assessed on an annual basis and the major language groups identified. Following the assessment, a plan and related procedures and requirements will be developed to meet the needs of eligible or encountered populations and assure compliance with the WDB or Subrecipient 's LEP policy.

MONITORING

Regular monitoring of the plan will be conducted in accordance with the WDB or Subrecipient 's monitoring procedures.

WRITTEN NOTICE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS RIGHTS

Language access statements shall inform LEP clients of their rights as follows:

- Their right to qualified interpreter services at no cost to them.
- Their right not to be required to rely on their minor children, other relatives, or friends as interpreters.
- Their right to file a grievance about the language access services provided them.

Written language access rights will be distributed in the major LEP languages through the following methods:

- Posting of signs in lobbies and waiting areas
- Customer orientations
- Statements in appeal notices
- Statements in brochures, booklets, outreach, recruitment information and other materials that are routinely disseminated to the public.

DET WIOA EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS THE LAW DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT POSTINGS

The DET WIOA "Equal Opportunity is The Law" discrimination complaint policy and process will be posted in plain view in the major languages in every service area or point of customer contact, i.e., reception or customer waiting areas.

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION

WRITTEN TRANSLATION

Written translation of WDB or Subrecipient vital documents will be provided for each eligible language group that constitutes 5% or 1,000 individuals, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served encountered by our programs.

If there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group, the recipient does not translate vital written materials, but provides written notice in the primary language of the LEP group of their right to oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.

The provision of written translation of WDB or Subrecipient documents, including vital documents, will be in accordance with an annual WDB or Subrecipient plan that addresses costs and priorities.

ORAL INTERPRETATION

Oral interpreters will be offered to customers in a timely manner free of charge. Services offered to LEP customers will be documented in appropriate records.

ACQUIRING TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION SERVICES

Resources and procedures for obtaining oral interpretation and written translation will be made available to program staff.

Oral Communication

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development secured services for oral communication through the contractors whose bids are accepted by the Division of Administration (DOA). Recipients can seek out commercial vendors contact DOA to access their list of approved vendors.

Written Communication

The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development secured services for written communication through the contractors whose bids are accepted by the Division of Administration (DOA). Recipients can seek out commercial vendors contact DOA to access their list of approved vendors.

COMPETENCY OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

Qualified interpreters and translators will be utilized to provide services. Interpreters and translators will be screened for appropriate training and cultural sensitivity, and will be required to comply with WDB or Subrecipient confidentiality policies and Code of Ethics when interpreting or translating.

OTHER COMMUNICATION METHODS

Interactive Voice Response Systems, voicemail, web pages, posters, videos, and media used will be made accessible to LEP populations in accordance with the WDB or Subrecipient 's plan to translate vital documents and other materials.

Electronic systems and computer-generated notices will be made accessible to LEP populations in accordance with the WDB or Subrecipient 's plan to translate vital documents and other materials.

TRAINING

Training, including refresher training, will be made available to WDB or Subrecipient staff and funding recipients.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach to the major LEP groups served by the WDB or Subrecipient 's programs will be conducted to ensure LEP customers have equal access to services.

AUTHORITY

Executive Order 13166

Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts

Director or Chief Executive: _____ Date: _____