

**Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government - CDBG-DR
LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**

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INTRODUCTION

The Language Access Plan has been prepared to address Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG) programs’ responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance as they relate to the needs of individuals with limited English language skills. It is the policy of TPCG to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its programs and activities for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). This policy is to ensure that staff will communicate effectively with LEP individuals and the LEP individuals will have access to important programs and information.

Federal law prohibits discrimination based on national origin. National origin discrimination includes discrimination based on a person’s inability to speak, read, write or understand English. Recipients of federal funds must provide meaningful access to LEP persons in federal and federally assisted programs and activities.

On August 11, 2000, Executive Order 13166, titled, “Improving Access to Services by Persons with Limited English Proficiency,” was issued. Executive Order 13166 requires federal agencies to assess and address the needs of otherwise eligible persons seeking access to federally conducted programs and activities who, due to LEP cannot fully and equally participate in or benefit from those programs and activities. Section 2 of the Executive Order 13166 directs each federal department or agency “to prepare a plan to improve access to federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons”.

FRAMEWORK FOR DECIDING WHEN LANGUAGE SERVICES ARE NEEDED

TPCG will take steps to ensure meaningful access to its programs, services and activities for LEP individuals in a manner that balances the following four factors:

- 1) **Four-Factor Analysis:**The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be serviced or likely to be encountered by TPCG: TPCG staff reviewed the U.S. Census Report and determined that in TPCG’s jurisdiction 8.7% of the population speak a language other than English. No immediate

accommodations are required at this time. However, TPCG will continue to monitor demographic trends and adjust services as necessary.

- 2) The frequency in which LEP persons come in contact with TPCG programs, activities or services:** TPCG assessed the frequency in which staff have or could have contact with LEP persons. To date, zero requests have been made to the Parish's provider to translate information regarding the department's HUD programs in Spanish.
- 3) The nature and importance of TPCG programs, activities, or services provided to the LEP population:** TPCG provides a variety of services and programs to its citizens. To date, TPCG staff members have not yet been put in a situation in which language barriers prevented a service from being provided. In the event that a program beneficiary does not speak English very well, s/he has typically been accompanied by a friend or family member that serves as an interpreter. In the event that a person of limited English proficiency is in need of service and is not accompanied by an interpreter, TPCG staff will provide translation services of vital documents and free language assistance services as requested.
- 4) The resources available to TPCG, and the costs associated with different language options:** Most residents of TPCG and recipients of TPCG program funds within Terrebonne Parish are English speakers. TPCG has worked to provide interpreters and translations when possible, and has not received any additional requests for translation services. Therefore, meaningful access is most likely being currently provided to the LEP population in Terrebonne Parish.

MONITORING, EVALUATING, AND UPDATING PLAN

TPCG will review and update this plan yearly, or in the event of a marked influx of LEP persons to the area. The review and update will consist of the following:

1. The number and nature of request received from LEP persons annually.
2. Determination of LEP population in the service areas.
3. Review any complaints that have been received concerning the department's failure to meet the needs of LEP persons.
4. Determine whether TPCG has fully complied with the goals of Language Access Plan.
5. Access the sufficiency of staff training and budget for language assistance.

DISSEMINATION OF THE LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

TPCG will post signs in public spaces notifying LEP persons of the Language Access Plan and how to access language services.