

Language Access Plan

Suffolk County

Department of Parks, Recreation & Conservation



**SUFFOLK
COUNTY
PARKS**

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Introduction

This Language Access Plan for the Department of Parks, Recreation & Conservation has been prepared in accordance with Executive Order 10-2012 and outlines Park's planned actions to improve access to Park programs and services by limited-English proficient individuals (LEPs)

I. Agency Mission and Background

- Develop and maintain all park areas for public use;
- Recommend, institute and implement programs to preserve the greenery, wildlife, natural resources and habitats of fish, birds and other animals;
- Organize recreational activities and develop recreational facilities and programs;
- Provide interpretive tours and instruction by the Parks Department staff;
- Provide for the restoration and interpretive tours of historic properties under the jurisdiction of the Department;
- Eliminate artificial barriers and provide recreational opportunities for handicapped individuals;
- Meet on a regular basis with constituent organizations to further improve recreational opportunities in the County Parks;
- To provide a safe environment in the parks for patrons.

The Department Offers the following Services:

- Recreational Facilities and Beaches
Parks manages over 46,000 acres of parkland (passive & recreational), 10 campgrounds, 4 Golf Courses, 3 Beaches, and 3 Marinas that provide direct recreational activities to Suffolk residents of all ages. Nature trails, picnic areas, hunting opportunities, fishing, horseback riding, rowboating, canoe & kayak launch sites, etc are also services provided by our department.
- Numerous Passive Parks and Nature Preserves.
- Concessions, Non-profit Partnerships and Special Events
A variety of services provided through Parks are available via private sector concession agreements such as golf course pro shops and restaurants, picnic caterers, camp stores, ice cream vendors, camper rentals, etc. Parks also provides services in partnerships with non-profit organizations such as historic societies, Seatuck Environmental Association, Cornell Cooperative Extension, LI Greenbelt Trail Conference, Splashes of Hope, etc. to host special events, tours, and environmental programs at some of our historic sites and parks.
- Park Enforcement and Lifeguarding
Park rules and regulations and safety guidelines are enforced by Park Police, park security aides, and lifeguards.

II. Goals Of Parks Language Access Plan

Guided by Executive Order 10-2012, Parks main goals and timetables for its language access plan are as follows:

- To provide clear access to LEPs at all our staffed office locations through revamped signage, "I Speak Cards," and through telephone interpretation services provided through County Contract and paid for through Grants obtained by the County for this sole purpose. The Community Relations Director with assistance from the Parks Commissioner will manage this initiative and will conduct a site by site review of language access at each facility to ensure achievement of these goals.
- To gain access to County's contracted Language Line for translation and interpretation services and train appropriate staff in Language Line operations. Parks will work with designated County representative to obtain (through County grant and funding) the necessary equipment and phone numbers to implement this program.
- To expand use of universal symbols on park signage especially in key areas such as playgrounds, beaches and campgrounds where public safety is crucial. On general information signs, a line could be inserted to direct LEPs to our website where the interpreted information will be posted.
- To train all staff, especially first point of contact personnel (cashiers, security, etc.) to assist LEPs and to understand the goals and tolls involved with this plan.
- To translate essential documents including rules and regulations and waiver forms, and to host this material on the Parks website. Parks would coordinate the translation of these documents through the contracted vendor selected by the County and would work with grants obtained by the County to encumber these translation costs.

III. LEP Population Assessment

As identified by Executive Order 10-2012, documents and signs identified in previous section would be translated into the six languages spoken by the most limited English-proficient (LEP) residents of Suffolk County: Spanish, Italian, Mandarin, Polish, French Creole and Portuguese.

Parks would provide interpretation services through the County's contracted vendor utilizing grant funds obtained by the County for LEPs using Spanish, Italian, Mandarin, Polish, French Creole and Portuguese.

IV. Implementation Plan Logistics

Some of the Parks main implementation timelines are as follows:

- Parks will implement Language Line once we receive notification of County contracted vendor and grant funds obtained by the County for this purpose. (2014)
- Parks will begin rollout of updated signs with addition of universal symbols (where applicable) and the addition of website or phone number where LEPs can see language assistance if needed. (May 2014)
- Parks will conduct initial training for first contact staff members (May 2014)
- Parks will begin to provide translated content on Parks website in Spring 2014 or when we receive notification of County contracted vendor and grant funds obtained by the County for this purpose.

V. Training

The Parks Department will take the following steps to introduce the Language Access Plan to staff and to incorporate language access into our long term training efforts:

- Through Employee training session, staff will receive instruction on using "I Speak" cards as well as the dual hand-set translation services once they are obtained.

VI. Record Keeping and Evaluation

Parks will take the following steps to ensure the quality of language access services:

- Parks will evaluate signage and written documentation each year to determine what updates and changes need to be made
- Parks will formally report when and how often “I speak” cards and dual handset translation services are used each year.