

Language Access Plan

Suffolk County

Department of Economic Development and Planning



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I. Introduction

The Suffolk County Department of Economic Development and Planning (“EDP” or “Agency”) has prepared this Language Access Plan (“LAP” or “Plan”) which defines the actions to be taken by EDP to ensure meaningful access to departmental services, programs and activities on the part of persons who have limited English proficiency. EDP will review and update, on a biannual basis, this LAP in order to ensure continued responsiveness to community needs and compliance with Executive Order 10-2012.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to ensure clients of the Department have meaningful access to services, programs and activities although they may be limited in their English language proficiency.

The Department is committed to this Language Access Plan as the appropriate response to meeting our constituents’ needs. The Plan is consistent with the requirements of Executive Order 10-2012.

A Limited English Proficient (LEP) person is someone who is not able to speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that allows him/her to interact effectively with Agency staff. A constituent maintains the right to self-identify as an LEP person.

III. Agency Mission and Background

The Department of Economic Development and Planning assists and promotes the attraction, development, growth and retention of a broad mix of companies and industry clusters that facilitate job opportunities and private investment, as well as implements programs that enhance both economic development and the quality of life for Suffolk County residents. The Department provides a wide range of services to the County's towns, villages and municipalities including assistance, research, planning services and consultation.

The Department is comprised of four divisions with a number of sub-divisions that include the following:

1. Economic Development
 - 1.1. Agriculture and Fishing
 - 1.2. Business Development
 - 1.3. Downtown Revitalization
 - 1.4. Energy/Sustainability
 - 1.5. Film and Cultural Affairs
 - 1.6. Foreign Trade Zone
 - 1.7. Neighborhood Design Planning
 - 1.8. Tourism and Marketing
 - 1.9. Transportation Planning

2. Planning
 - 2.1. Cartography
 - 2.2. Environmental Planning and Aquaculture
 - 2.3. Open Space Planning and Farmland Protection
 - 2.4. Water Quality
 - 2.5. Zoning and Subdivision

3. Real Property Acquisition and Management
 - 3.1. Community Development
 - 3.2. Housing
 - 3.3. Real Estate

4. Aviation
 - 4.1. Gabreski Airport

IV. Language Access Plan

The EDP Language Access Plan shall be fully implemented subject to the availability of fiscal resources. This Language Access Plan has been developed to adhere to Executive Order 10-2012. This Language Access Plan represents EDP's administrative blueprint to provide meaningful access to EDP services, programs and activities on the part of LEP individuals. This Language Access Plan outlines the tasks EDP will undertake to meet this objective.

Note: Re: LAP *Coordinator* and *Designee* assignments.

Language Access Plan Coordinator – the person(s) overseeing the county-wide LAP program.

Language Access Plan Designee – the person(s) responsible for maintaining an individual department's plan. Administers the program under the Coordinator's guidance.

Language Access Plan

(a) EDP Language Access Plan Designee

Jeffrey Kryjak
Department of Economic Development and Planning
H. Lee Dennison Bldg., 11th Floor
100 Veterans Memorial Highway
Hauppauge, NY 11788
Phone: (631) 853-5192
Email: jeffrey.kryjak@suffolkcountyny.gov

(b) Language Resources Availability

EDP has one staff person in the division of Community Development who is technically able to deliver services in Spanish and is willing to serve in a volunteer capacity as an interpreter – Camilo Salazar. Both Camilo and his supervisor have agreed that Camilo can provide services to employees and constituents of the Department of Economic Development and Planning who are located in the H. Lee Dennison building provided he has availability.

Camilo Salazar
Department of Economic Development & Planning, Community Development
H. Lee Dennison Bldg., 2nd Floor
100 Veterans Memorial Highway
Hauppauge, NY 11788
Phone: (631) 853-5952
Email: Camilo.Salazar@suffolkcountyny.gov

(c) Language Service Protocols

LEP individuals that come into contact with our Department will be informed of the availability of free telephonic and video interpreting services for all languages, including American Sign Language (ASL). The department's double-handset "LanguageLine Solutions" phone will be physically situated in the reception area of Economic Development on the 11th floor of the H. Lee Dennison building and will be accessible to all EDP personnel. When in the field, interpreting services are offered by LanguageLine Solutions via mobile phone and remote video app.

Upon request, an LEP individual may be permitted to use an adult family member or friend as an interpreter for routine matters including, but not limited to, inquiring about hours of operation, locations of offices or scheduling of appointments.

Minors cannot be used during routine encounters. Where the interaction with the LEP individual occurs at one of the offices or divisions within the Department and an individual is permitted to use an interpreter of his or her choosing, he or she must sign a statement waiving their option to Suffolk County-offered interpreter services. This waiver is only valid for the date it is signed and a new waiver must be signed upon each visit if the person continues to request to use an interpreter of their choosing in these types of situations.

Where an LEP individual is engaged in official business with the Department, the Department will provide an independent interpreter at all times and free of charge via LanguageLine Solutions phone, mobile phone or remote video to the LEP individual. An LEP individual will not be permitted to use an independent interpreter of his or her choosing when completing applications or involved in any legal matters. However, if the LEP individual would prefer to have their informal interpreter present, their interpreter may observe the conversation unless there are compelling reasons to exclude them.

Notices of Public Meetings will contain the following statement:

"Language Access Services are available for free to Limited-English Proficient individuals. Requests for telephonic interpretation services or other special needs must be communicated in writing or by telephone to the EDP Language Access Designee at least three business days prior to the meeting. Contact: Jeffrey Kryjak, Department of Economic Development and Planning, H. Lee Dennison Bldg., 11th Floor, 100 Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge, NY 11788. Phone: (631) 853-5192, email: jeffrey.kryjak@suffolkcountyny.gov

Upon receipt of a request for interpretation services, the EDP Language Access Plan Designee will contact the contracted Translation and Interpreting Services vendor to make arrangements for telephonic/video interpretation services at the public meeting.

Documents will be explained orally to people who are illiterate.

Staff will communicate with hearing-impaired and/or deaf residents in writing.

Any documents that are received by EDP that are in a non-English language will be forwarded to the Language Access Plan Coordinator for processing.

Currently, the six most spoken languages in Suffolk County are: French Creole, Italian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

(d) **Vital Document Translation**

The vital documents listed below are the only documents that have been identified for requiring translation and have been translated and are available online through EDP's website:

- *Top Ten Frequently Asked Questions When Suffolk County Acquires Property By Tax Deed* (Spanish)
- *Suffolk County HOME Consortium (YEAR) Down Payment Assistance Program Quick Reference Guide* (Spanish)
- *Suffolk County Down Payment Assistance Program Application* (Spanish, Creole)
- *SC Real Property Acquisition and Management Hold Harmless Template* (Spanish)

In addition to these documents, the web content that is directly provided by EDP is available in over 100 languages through the use of the free online Google Website Translator Plugin.

(e) **Stakeholder Consultations**

In 2013 the EDP LAP Designee at the time participated in consultations with advocates from the Long Island Language Advocates Coalition (LILAC) and the Long Island Civic Engagement Table (LICET) in developing the EDP LAP.

(f) **Staff Training**

All EDP personnel will be required to complete training annually to assure knowledge of and compliance with Executive Order 10-2012 and the EDP Language Access Plan. Training will be provided through a PowerPoint presentation available online through the Department of Information Technology. Topics will include identifying individuals that need language access services, procedures for accessing services, and reporting requirements.

(g) **Notice to Public**

- The public will be notified of the availability of language access services free of

charge as needed through signage next to the visitor telephone outside of each division of EDP (currently floors 2 and 11).

- Notices of public meetings will include notification of free language access services as detailed in IV(c) above.

(h) **Department Monitoring**

A periodic review of the language access needs of EDP will be conducted annually, led by the Language Access Plan Coordinator. The review will include the provision of language assistance services, the availability of translated materials, whether signage is properly posted, demographic data, and other relevant measures.

The Department will consult with community-based organizations and conduct an internal review in order to assess the efficacy of its LAP.

Ongoing monitoring will be conducted using the following methods:

- Interview staff for knowledge of EDP LAP.
- Use LEP volunteers throughout the year to test the EDP language access service quality.
- Review complaints annually to identify systemic issues.
- Analyze usage of language access services and compare to general population of LEP individuals.
- Random review of implementation of services by staff.

(i) **Complaints**

The Department will display signage in its public areas and information on its website indicating the process for filing a complaint against the Department when the individual is not satisfied with the quality or availability of the Department's Language Access services.

A constituent or constituent representative may file a complaint by completing the County's "Access to Services in Your Language: Complaint Form," which is available on the Economic Development and Planning web page and returning it to the Suffolk County Office of Community Affairs via mail, email or fax listed at the top of the form.

The LAP Coordinator will be notified, have the complaint translated and evaluate the complaint to ascertain whether the issue exposes a weakness in the EDP LAP, a lack of appropriate staff training, or some other cause.

The LAP Coordinator will work with the EDP LAP Designee to remedy the problem.

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