

6. Staffing and Training

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Definitions for staffing

Staffing

The process of filling a vacant position with the most highly qualified candidate.

Highly desirable qualification

A skill or competency that is not required to perform the essential functions of a position, but would complement the qualified candidate's overall abilities and add value to the organization.

Position classification

The process applied in determining the appropriate job classification of an individual position or group of positions.

Job announcement

The document "announcing" the need to fill a vacant position. This document includes the general job duties of that classification, job duties that are specific and unique to the position being filled, and position requirements, including desirable qualifications and administrative information.

Policies for staffing

Staffing decisions should be based on the city's customer service needs, including LEP service needs.

When individuals are hired for positions in which they interact with LEP residents, language skills may be a relevant job qualification.

Hiring to meet LEP needs can be done in three ways:

1. by creating new positions for and hiring full-time or part-time interpreters or translators within departments within standard hiring processes;
2. by reclassifying an existing position. If the need for interpretation and translation services is high and is expected to be long-term, departments may request Human Resources study a vacant position to determine if a reclassification is necessary. This request must be made before filling a vacant position.
3. by making bilingual or multilingual capability a "highly desirable" qualification in job announcements.

If bilingual or multilingual skills are included on the job announcement, LEP service capabilities should be assessed as part of the selection process. Assessment

may include:

- informal testing of language proficiency or interpreting/ translation ability (*permissible when the skill is a highly desirable qualification.*)
- formal testing of language proficiency or interpreting/translation ability (*recommended, if the skill is a requirement of the job*)
- certification, transcripts, diplomas or other evidence of language proficiency in English or other language (*strongly encouraged as evidence of skill level for either option*)
- certification, transcripts, diplomas or other evidence of training in interpreting and/or translation (*strongly encouraged as evidence of skill level for either option*)

Compensation for an employee who provides interpretation and translation services will depend on whether the service is an essential function of the job.

If interpreting/translation is an essential job function of the position, the position should be classified appropriately, ensuring the compensation is consistent with legal guidelines.

If interpreting and translating skills are desirable qualifications, but not an essential function of the job, department management may, under many circumstances, require a qualified employee to perform this function within the category of “other duties as assigned.” These duties should not exceed 40% of the employee’s work time.

The pay scale for non-exempt employees is defined by labor contract and departmental policies relating to overtime. Compensating exempt employees falls within the administrative leave language found in labor contracts and Civil Service rules. Both non-exempt and exempt employees may be required to provide these services if there is a business need. Any “additional” benefit (overtime or administrative leave) would be given in accordance with those provisions.

Procedures for staffing

How to amend a job announcement to include bilingual skills

When bilingual skills are required for a position, work with your department’s Human Resources Generalist (HRG) to request a job study of a vacant position. Once a determination is made on the job classification, it may be necessary to amend the job announcement. Work with your department’s HRG team to make revisions.

When it is determined that these skills are a highly desirable qualification, work with your Department's HRG team to make revisions.

How to describe the work of a full-time or part-time interpreter/translator for a job posting

See *Sample job announcements* online at CityTalk. Click on "Work Tools" and then on "Language and Translation Services."

How to informally test for language proficiency (*permissible when language skill is a highly desirable qualification*)

Include a native speaker of the desired language in the interview process, as one of the interviewers. Conduct part of the department interview in the desired language. If the job includes significant writing duties, ask for a writing sample in both languages.

Note that there are important distinctions in the syntax and vocabulary of any language, depending where a speaker is from, their education level, and their social class. Choose the native speaker interviewer with this in mind.

How to formally assess language proficiency (*recommended if interpreting and translation skills are a required qualification and are part of the position duties.*)

All individuals hired to perform interpreting services should, at minimum, be able to demonstrate oral proficiency in each language (English and other language) through a test, such as the one developed by the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). For more information on the ACTFL test, visit the Council's website, www.actfl.org. Note that there is no ACTFL proficiency test for the Somali language.

It is important to also assess a candidate's English proficiency as well as the other desired language. Currently, English proficiency can be demonstrated through the written exam (always in English and at a level similar to what would be used on the job); the oral exam process (communication skills typically measured); and the department interview process.

How to assess an applicant's ability to serve as an interpreter and/or translator

All individuals hired to deliver interpreting or translation services should, at minimum, demonstrate oral proficiency in each language (as spelled out above) and demonstrate familiarity with and comprehension of ethical standards for interpreters. See *Standards Recommended by the Minnesota Interpreter Standards Advisory Committee* online at CityTalk. Click on "Work Tools" and then on

“Language and Translation Services.”

All individuals hired to perform interpreting or translation services full time should complete basic courses in interpreter training, such as those offered through the University of Minnesota and community colleges. See online resources for Staffing, Section 8, part L for a list of interpreter training opportunities.

Definitions for training

Training

Ensuring that city staff is familiar with mandates requiring equal level of service for LEP residents. All staff should know their department's procedures for LEP service.

Policies for training

Training will be coordinated through Human Resources and the Multicultural Services Coordinator.

Each department should provide Human Resources with a list of staff who will help develop the department's LEP Plan.

Information on LEP service will be provided to all newly hired city staff.

Information will be delivered to new hires as part of employee orientation.

Training on department-level procedures will be planned and carried out by departments.

Training relative to individual department LEP Plans should be provided annually. These activities will be coordinated within each department, with support from Human Resources and the Multicultural Services Coordinator.

Procedures for training

How to design and deliver department-level training on LEP services and procedures

Human Resources Training and Development and the Multicultural Services Coordinator will design in-house training guidelines to assist departments and ensure consistency of curriculum content.