

1. Summary

What does this plan address?

This plan describes how the city of Minneapolis will improve access to city services for people who speak limited English.

One in five Minneapolis residents speak a language other than English in their homes. This means that increasingly, city of Minneapolis employees are providing services to people who may not speak fluent English. This plan offers a systematic approach for adapting city services to meet the needs of these individuals.

What are the city's primary language groups?

For implementing the plan in 2004 and 2005, the primary language groups identified in Minneapolis are below (in size order). These are the 6 languages that the city will be focusing on in the LEP plan. Section 3 provides information on how these primary languages were identified.

- Spanish
- Hmong
- Somali
- Laotian
- Oromo
- Vietnamese

How was the plan created?

In November 2003, the City Council passed a resolution approving the creation of a citywide Limited English Proficiency Plan, to give specific direction to staff about how to make city services accessible to those who speak limited English. An eight-month planning process beginning January 2004 involved representatives of all city charter departments. Members of the LEP Plan Work Team reviewed relevant legal mandates, consulted LEP plans created by other cities and counties, and met with several groups representing the interests of limited English speakers, before drafting this plan and accompanying worksheets for departments.

What does LEP mean?

LEP stands for Limited English Proficiency. A person who has limited proficiency in English cannot speak, read, write or understand the English language at a level that permits him or her to interact effectively with English speakers.

Why does the city need a plan for making services accessible to LEP individuals?

The city of Minneapolis is strongly committed to making city services and information about those services available to everyone, regardless of language barriers. This commitment stems from overall city goals of responsive government, community engagement, and customer service. As residents, workers or visitors who contribute to city life, people with limited English proficiency are entitled to fair and equal access to service.

The city of Minneapolis and its departments are required by federal law to plan for and provide meaningful access to services for those with limited English proficiency. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related federal regulations, state law and municipal ordinances apply to all city departments and contracted vendors.

What is “meaningful access”?

Meaningful access means that a person:

- is given adequate information;
- can understand the services and benefits available;
- can receive the services for which he or she is eligible; and
- can communicate the relevant circumstances of his or her situation.

What does the plan cover?

The plan describes city policies and procedures for:

- providing notice to limited English speakers of their right to service;
- identifying LEP individuals and needed LEP services in city departments;
- providing free spoken language interpreting;
- offering free written translations of vital city documents on request;

- hiring to meet multilingual service needs; and
- offering training on LEP service mandates to all city staff.

How does this plan apply to city departments?

This document provides policies and procedures that will apply to all departments. All charter departments of the city will be required to produce their own, department-specific plans and to budget for LEP services, starting in 2005.

Who is responsible for the plan?

The Department of Health and Family Support and the City Coordinator's Office oversaw the development of the citywide LEP plan. Kristin Keller, the city's Multicultural Services Coordinator, will assist all city departments in creating and implementing plans at the department level.

Acknowledgements

This plan was produced by members of an interdepartmental team (listed below), with Patricia Ohmans, MPH and Garth Osborn, MPH of Health Advocates, Community Health Consultants, www.healthadvocates.info.

For more information about the plan or about LEP Services in Minneapolis, contact Multicultural Services Coordinator Kristin Keller, 612-673-3737, kristin.keller@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Members of the LEP Plan Work Team

Patty Bowler, Chair *Health and Family Support*

Medaria Arradondo *Police*

Glenn Burt *Police*

Tony DiPietrantonio *Finance*

Roger Downey *Business Information Services*

Elise Ebhardt *Public Works*

Curt Fernandez *Regulatory Services and Emergency Preparedness*

Suzanne Griffin *City Clerk's Office*
Trudy Gayer Moloney *Public Works*
Charlotte Holt *Fire*
Tim Jenkins *Regulatory Services and Emergency Preparedness*
Kinshasha Kambui *Mayor's Office*
Merry Keefe *City Clerk's Office*
Kristin Keller *Health and Family Support*
Trudy Kjenstad *City Coordinator's Office*
Leslie Krueger *Finance*
John Moir *City Coordinator's Office*
Colleen O'Brien *City Attorney's Office*
Gayle Prest *Public Works*
Kent Robbins *Community Planning and Economic Development*
Sheila Sabas *Convention Center*
Alina Schroeder *Communications*
Erin Schroeder *Health and Family Support*
Marian Scott *Civil Rights*
Brenda Shepherd *Human Resources*
Patrick Todd *Assessor's Office*
Susan Trammell *City Attorney's Office*
Ellie Zuehlke *Health and Family Support*