

2015 Language Access Plan

1. Agency Mission and Background

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) is a licensing and regulatory agency that provides direct services to TLC licensees on a daily basis. There are over 120,000 TLC-licensed drivers, the majority of which are not born in the United States and speak English as a second language.

2. Agency Language Access Goals

One of our agency's overarching goals is to provide quality customer service to our licensees, including those who have limited-English proficiency (LEP), at our in-person locations, telephonically, electronically, and via written correspondence. In order to reach these goals, the Language Access Coordinator will work with the Language Access Working Group to monitor the Agency's language access policy on a regular basis to ensure that all divisions are upholding the goals and expectations identified in the Language Access Plan.

3. LEP Population Assessment

As per Executive Order 120, TLC identified the top six LEP languages covered by this agency. The six languages are:

- Spanish
- Russian
- Chinese*
- Bengali
- Arabic
- Urdu

These languages were identified through a demographic analysis that compared data from the Department of City Planning with data from the TLC's Language Line interpretation service to ensure availability of language access to the specific populations that TLC serves.

In addition to these sources, the TLC utilizes internal databases to track licensee language preferences. This information is obtained through an optional question on the license application, and this information is currently available for 41,370 TLC-licensed drivers. This represents 29% of the total TLC-licensed driver population. A future goal for LEP Population Assessment includes utilizing internal databases of driver preferred language to a greater extent once this information is available for a larger population of TLC licensees.

* According to U.S. Census Bureau, Chinese includes Chinese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Formosan.

4. Implementation Plan Logistics

TLC will work to implement the goals identified in the language access plan over the next two years, with regular reporting to the Mayor's Office of Operations through the annual Language Access Report. The Language Access Coordinator and Working Group will work together to take action on the agency's language access goals.

Major milestones of this plan will be evaluated every six months through a convening of the Language Access Working Group. The Working Group includes representatives of various Departments, including Training, General Counsel, Operations, and External Affairs, and members of the Working Group will coordinate language access initiatives in each department and report back at the bi-annual meetings.

5. Service Provision Plan

In 2014, TLC successfully provided language assistance through a variety of services, including language access telephonic services and on-site bilingual staff at the Licensing and Woodside Facilities. In December 2014, TLC signed a new task order with Language Line for telephonic interpretation services, provided language service cards for telephonic interpretation at facility counters, and displayed signage to help identify the primary languages of LEP customers. In addition, TLC successfully hosted bilingual information sessions in Spanish and English, and ensured consistent notification about free interpretation services on all TLC Commission Meeting notices.

In addition to interpretation services, TLC utilized plain language practices and signed a new task order with Geneva Worldwide for written translation services, with bilingual TLC staff providing quality assurance for plain language and translated materials. Of the 41,370 TLC-licensed drivers who specified a language preference, 7,184 identify Spanish as their primary language spoken at home. This represents more than 17 percent of self-identified LEP TLC-licensees, and as such, TLC posts industry notices on the website and sends to all members of the listserv in English and Spanish. In addition to industry notices, the TLC created a dedicated Spanish version of the webpage on the TLC website for the new For-Hire Vehicle Electronic Dispatch Trip Records initiative. In addition to these resources, the entire TLC website can also be translated into over 30 languages.

Future goals for providing language access services include an even larger focus on plain language principals for all priority documents, including industry notices, directives, texts, and applications. Additional future goals include utilizing technology, such as adding electronic signage to the Licensing facility to display messages in different languages, and increasing the number of accessible phones with headsets so TLC employees and licensees who use a Language Line interpreter can hear the entire exchange.

6. Training

In 2014, the TLC trained all new frontline staff at the TLC Call Center, Licensing Facility, and Inspection Facility on language access services. This training includes resources on how to identify a customer's primary language and how to utilize the telephonic interpretation services through Language Line for LEP licensees and applicants. TLC training also includes annual

Diversity Training at all TLC locations. In total, TLC trained a total of 142 new Enforcement and Safety & Emissions inspectors and Licensing frontline staff in 2014. Additionally, the Training Division continued the process of updating and improving training materials and standards.

Future goals for training TLC staff on language access policies and procedures include publishing a Quick Reference Guide for Accessing Interpretation Services Agency Wide on the TLC's forthcoming intranet. The Training Division also hopes to publish the names of TLC Volunteer Language Bank translators in the TLC's Monthly EEO & Diversity Newsletter. Additional future goals include finalizing the improvement of new language access training materials for initial new-hires, identifying better ways to track training for new hires, and requiring mandatory annual Language Line trainings for current frontline staff.

7. Record Keeping and Evaluation

TLC tracks and evaluates language access goals through a combination of indicators. In Fiscal 2014, TLC received a CORE score of 87, an improvement from the score of 84 in Fiscal 2013. Additionally, TLC maintains records of the language services provided by the agency through monthly invoices received from Language Line and Geneva Worldwide.

Future goals for TLC record keeping and evaluation include tracking the information of Language Bank volunteers more regularly. This is closely tied with the TLC Training Division's goal to regularly circulate the information of TLC employees who have signed up as members of the Volunteer Language Bank. An additional future goal includes tracking language access complaints received by 311.

8. Public Awareness and Outreach

In 2014, TLC ensured public awareness of language access services through signage at all three facilities, as well as consistent notification about free interpretation services on all TLC Commission Meeting notices. Additionally, TLC successfully conducted bilingual information sessions as part of our Outreach Strategies.

Future goals include utilizing technology, such as adding electronic signage to the Licensing facility to display translated messages in different languages. Other goals include the increased focus on plain language for priority documents, including industry notices, which will help with clarity when documents are translated through the TLC website.

9. Resource Analysis and Planning

Currently, the TLC utilizes bilingual staff and citywide task orders to provide interpretation and translation services. In the future, the agency will also leverage new technologies, such as digital signage, to ensure constituents are aware of language access services. The Language Access Coordinator monitors the Agency's language access policy on a quarterly basis, and will convene with the Language Access Working Group twice a year to ensure that all divisions are upholding the expectations and making progress on goals identified in the Language Access Plan.