

## **Language-Access Services for California's Non- or Limited-English Proficient Populations**

### **State Law**

The Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (Act) requires the State of California to provide for effective communication between government and all people of the state. The state's programs and services must be accessible to Limited-English proficient (LEP) persons. If you are not fluent in the English language, you have the right to access information regarding programs and services to which you may be entitled in your native language.

### **Language Access Resources**

The State of California has bilingual resource available to assist LEP individuals in accessing state government information and services. The law requires state departments to make the same information that is available in the English language accessible in the native languages of the public they serve. The state department will determine whether to provide access by use of interpreters, translated material or other available bilingual resources.

An Interpreter Service Notice or Language Access Poster that explains your right to receive service in your native language and how to request language assistance should be displayed by all state departments in their public offices. State departments can assist you by providing bilingual staff certified in the non-English language you speak, or by using other qualified interpreters. Additionally, state departments may provide you with copies of documents, forms, or other written materials translated into your native language. If a department does not have its materials translated, it may provide an interpreter to explain the information to you and assist you in completing any required documentation.

### **Requesting an Interpreter**

You have the right to request an interpreter in your native language. You should not be requested to provide or pay for your own interpreter. A state department may request a family member or child to interpret for you only in an emergency situation, or to obtain non-essential information such as identifying the language that you speak. A qualified interpreter should always be used to ensure effective communication between you and the state department.

## **Language-Access Complaints**

If a state department has not provided you with the requested translated materials or interpreter services, you should request to speak to a manager in charge. State departments are required to have a process for receiving language-access complaints and should have information regarding their process posted in their public offices. If you feel the state department you contacted is unable to assist you or provide the requested language access, you may contact the State Personnel Board (SPB) for further assistance.

In addition to each state department's process, the SPB has established an informal language access complaint process. The SPB's process provides the LEP public with the opportunity to bring their complaints to another resource, should they feel they were not provided with adequate language services at one of California's state departments. The SPB has established a toll-free telephone number to receive language access complaints. SPB's complaint line can be reached at:

**1-866-889-3278**

This telephone number will connect you to a voice recorder where you will be able to leave a message explaining the details of your complaint. Please listen to the instructions carefully and wait to select the language you wish to utilize.

These voice recordings contain instructions in the English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Tagalog, Mandarin, Korean, Russian, Armenian, Japanese, Punjabi, Arabic and Farsi languages. If you do not speak one of these languages, you will need to contact SPB Bilingual Services Program at (916) 651-9017 or for the hearing impaired the CA Relay Services at 711 for assistance. The SPB will attempt to identify the language you speak and locate a qualified interpreter fluent in your native language. Please be prepared to have your call placed on hold while an interpreter is contacted.

For additional information regarding the SPB's language access complaint process, you may contact the Bilingual Services Program by telephone at (916) 651-9017 or TTY (916) 651-8782 or by e-mail at [bilingual@spb.ca.gov](mailto:bilingual@spb.ca.gov).