

# **Waterford Senior Services Language Assistance Plan**

This plan was developed to address Town of Waterford Language Assistance Plan to assist residents who are language deficient. At this time (93.0%) ninety-three percent of the Town of Waterford's population indicated that they speak English "very well". 7 % of the remaining population that describes themselves as speaking English less than "very well", the census indicates that the non-English speaking individuals are fluent in either Spanish or Indo-European Languages.

## **Policy**

It is the policy of the Town of Waterford to provide timely and meaningful access to all agency programs and activities for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons. Our primary goal is to communicate effectively with LEP individuals. When staff has reason to believe that an individual is LEP, it is incumbent on the staff to respond to that individual in a language he/she understands. Staff will provide or facilitate language assistance services to LEP individuals whom they encounter or upon request of the LEP individual at no charge and within a reasonable amount of time. Notice is posted in offices so that members of the public will be aware that language assistance services are available at no cost. A statement is also available on website in policies and procedures documents.

## **Procedure**

Public Hearings, notices, and brochures will indicate that free language assistance is available. Upon request, written documents may be translated in the language of the LEP individual and then be returned to the LEP individual within a reasonable length of time. Upon request, a language-interpreting vendor can provide interpretation services via the telephone. There will be no charge to the LEP individual for this service.

## **Language Assistance Measures**

In the event that a resident/customer with Limited English proficiency (LEP) requests the services of an interpreter, either by phone or in person, Senior Services staff will respond to the request in a reasonable amount of time. Staff can either contact the Title VI coordinator to arrange for interpretive services or staff can show the LEP individual the "I Speak" poster or cards in order to determine what language the person speaks. If staff can use the services of a Spanish-speaking staff member they will make the appropriate arrangements. If the LEP individual needs a translator for any other language, Staff will then dial 1-800-752-6096 to request the services of an interpreter who can translate for the individual and for the staff. The Town of Waterford has a contract with ***Language Line Solutions*** to provide on demand translation services via telephone to LEP persons.

Interpreters should demonstrate proficiency in and ability to communicate information accurately in both English and in the other language and identify and employ the appropriate mode of interpreting (e.g., consecutive, simultaneous, summarization, or sight translation). Interpreters should have knowledge in both languages of any specialized terms or concepts

particular to the program or activity and of any particularized vocabulary and phraseology used by the LEP person; and understand and follow confidentiality and impartiality rules to the same extent as the person for whom they are interpreting and/or to the extent their position requires. They should understand and adhere to their role as interpreters without deviating into a role as counselor, legal advisor, or other roles.

In certain cases, a LEP individual may prefer to choose her/his own interpreter. In this case staff should consider whether a record of that choice and the recipient's offer of assistance are appropriate. Where precise, complete and accurate interpretations or translations of information and/or testimony are **critical**, or where the competency of the LEP person's interpreter is not established, the TOW may decide to provide its own, independent interpreter, even if the LEP person wants to use his or her own interpreter as well. Extra caution should be used when the LEP person chooses to use a minor as an interpreter.

**Monitoring the Language Assistance Plan (LAP):**

The Town of Waterford will monitor the LAP through biennial demographic reviews and post-program surveys tailored for LEP clients. Surveys will be translated as needed and assess access to services, satisfaction with language support, and overall program experience. Feedback will guide improvements to language services and staff training.

**Staff Training**

Through Language Line Solutions, Senior Services will seek training and materials to assist us with providing effective access to programs and services to LEP individuals through our orientation program for new employees.