

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Protective Services



Draft Language Access Plan

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Language Access Policy Statement

The Federal Protective Service (FPS) confirms its commitment to following the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Policy on Language Access:

It is the policy of DHS to provide meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency to operations, services, activities, and programs that support each Homeland Security mission area by providing quality language assistance services in a timely manner. DHS Components, therefore, should incorporate language access considerations into their routine strategic and business planning, identify and translate crucial documents into the most frequently encountered languages, provide interpretive services where appropriate, and educate personnel about language access responsibilities and how to utilize available language access resources.¹

This plan applies throughout FPS including all Federal and contract employees located nationwide.

Public: The Language Access Policy Statement and FPS's Language Access Plan will be posted along with the Department of Homeland Security Language Access Plan (LAP) to the DHS external website (www.dhs.gov), shared with the General Services Administration (GSA) partners, and disseminated to interested stakeholders.

Internal: The DHS Language Access Plan, Language Access Policy Statement, and the FPS Language Access Plan will be posted to an FPS internal system and disseminated nationwide through the available employee communications networks to FPS staff, contract security vendors, protective security officers, and customer agency representatives.

Interactions with the Public

FPS provides language assistance services (i.e., interpretation, translation) to Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons as part of daily law enforcement functions conducted by FPS law enforcement officers (LEO) in support of GSA-controlled facilities nationwide.

GSA provides language assistance services to LEP persons inside GSA-controlled facilities. FPS protective security officers (PSO) support the GSA LAP by providing information to LEP persons on GSA language assistance services.

Language Access Considerations in FPS Business Strategies and Objectives

Incorporation of Language Access considerations into strategies and business objectives will be reviewed periodically in accordance with the FPS LAP. This plan is also being closely coordinated with the GSA, as the owner and operator of the facilities that FPS protects, to ensure that services are provided without overlap and with coverage.

¹ <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/crcl/crcl-dhs-language-access-plan.pdf>

Responsible Personnel/Offices and Oversight

The activities presented in the FPS LAP will be implemented through coordinated efforts between FPS Headquarters, Regional offices, and in partnership with the GSA. The Headquarters divisions represented in the FPS LAP provide national-level governance and leadership whereas Regional offices oversee implementation nationwide:

- The FPS Director is responsible for all aspects of the FPS LAP and shall ensure that it is implemented to provide quality language assistance services in support of the FPS mission related to protection of federal facilities.
- The Deputy Director for Operations has overall authority over the implementation of the program as part of law enforcement and security responsibilities.
- The Deputy Director for Policy and Planning has overall responsibility for the development and management of the FPS LAP, associated policy, and coordination with GSA for successful implementation of language assistance services inside GSA-controlled facilities.
- The Deputy Director for Training and Professional Development has overall responsibility for training of FPS staff on the FPS LAP and the use of the language assistance service.
- The Communications Management Division Director and MegaCenter Program Manager shall develop and implement a standard operating procedure that defines specific actions related to use of the language assistance services for dispatch operations.
- The Risk Management Division Director shall develop and deploy standard language assistance information and procedures to be incorporated into post orders and implemented by PSOs.
- FPS Law Enforcement Officers shall initiate interpretation services if they are unable to effectively communicate with an LEP person they have detained or with whom effective communication is necessary (e.g., to provide instructions or gather information).

Languages Encountered

The following are the most frequently encountered languages for FPS based on data gathered over the past four years through the language line service: Tagalog, French, Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin Chinese, and Russian.

Tracking of Frequently Encountered Languages

The following are the methods FPS uses to obtain and track information about language services and encounters with LEP persons: FPS collects and manages data on the use of language assistance services associated with the FPS vendor as provided to FPS LEOs in support of GSA-controlled facilities. MegaCenter Telecommunicators maintain an active log of information on all language assistance services provided to FPS LEOs and reports of calls are available from the vendor at any time and reviewed by the Contracting Officer Representative in conjunction with the monthly invoice.

Projects: Implemented, Current, and Future

Language Access Projects that have been implemented are as follows:

- FPS uses a contract language assistance service that provides access to interpreters in a wide variety of languages that the LEOs may encounter.
- FPS post orders contain procedures for individuals, including LEP individuals, seeking an exception or exemption to permit entry of an otherwise prohibited item. Wallet cards explaining the procedures for those individuals seeking accommodations of otherwise prohibited items are provided in three languages (English, Spanish, and Punjabi). The GSA contract language assistance service is made available for other languages used by an individual requesting an exception or exemption.

Language Access Projects that are being planned for implementation in calendar year 2013-2014 are as follows:

- Coordination of responsibilities between FPS and GSA for interpretation services offered to LEP persons inside GSA-controlled facilities.
- Development and distribution of training and communications materials for FPS staff, PSO vendors, PSOs, and stakeholders including presentations, bulletins, and “I Speak” materials.
- Development of an FPS Directive to establish roles and responsibilities for implementation of the FPS LAP and procedures for key practices including translations of important documents, prioritization and approvals, and the use of interpretation service to obtain essential information through direct communication between the LEO and the LEP person.

Language Access Projects that are being planned for the future are as follows:

- Leverage the DHS Efficiency Review Initiative on Language Services Acquisition to provide shared services contract for the language assistance services.
- Evaluate the exclusive use of the interpretation service rather than the use of FPS personnel with foreign language competency to provide language services.

Language Access Procedures/Protocols

When FPS LEOs respond to a law enforcement incident associated with a GSA-controlled facility, interpretation services may be required if an LEP person is involved so that FPS LEOs may provide instructions or gather information. At the first point of contact, FPS LEOs will:

- Determine whether the person is able to communicate effectively in English (e.g., understand and respond fully to questions in English);
- Attempt to identify the language spoken by the LEP person by asking the LEP person directly, or using “I Speak” language identification materials;

- Contact the FPS MegaCenter Telecommunicator and provide information on the situation including the language spoken and the questions the LEO will ask, after which the Telecommunicator establishes a three way connection.
- If the language is not known, the MegaCenter Telecommunicator contacts the contract interpretation services provider for assistance with identifying the language.
- If an LEP person contacts the MegaCenter directly by telephone, the MegaCenter Telecommunicator will contact the contract interpretation services provider to determine the nature of the call and take appropriate action.

When the need for interpretation services is identified by FPS PSOs inside a GSA-controlled facility, an LEP person may require interpretation services to understand security requirements associated with access control and screening. Post orders will include procedures with actions for the PSOs to take at the first point of contact to:

- Determine whether the person is able to communicate effectively in English (e.g., understand and respond fully to questions in English);
- Attempt to identify the language spoken by the LEP person by asking the LEP person directly, or using “I Speak” language identification materials;
- Facilitate access to interpretation services for the LEP person through coordination with the GSA facility point of contact.

Translation of documents that are provided to LEP persons as part of activities inside GSA-controlled facilities is performed by GSA as part of their language services. Requests for documents to be translated that are associated with FPS LEO activities shall be submitted to the Deputy Director for Policy and Strategic Planning to determine the need and priority of the translation.

Training

FPS will develop a training presentation and materials that relay the content of the FPS LAP including language assistance responsibilities and available services. Materials and the finalized FPS LAP will be distributed to all staff and posted for reference, within 30 days from the date the FPS LAP is finalized. Individuals with specific responsibilities may receive additional instruction. For example, FPS LEOs also receive instruction through:

- Roll Call Training – delivered within 30 days from the date the FPS LAP is finalized and as needed to reach all LEOs.
- Training Bulletin – distributed with release of the finalized FPS LAP by email and as part of the roll call training.
- Physical Security Training Program – content will be incorporated into the curriculum for new FPS LEOs; and
- Advanced Law Enforcement Refresher Training Program – content will be incorporated into curriculum for existing LEOs who receive the training every five years.

MegaCenter Telecommunicators (dispatchers) shall receive instruction on the FPS LAP as well

as standard operating procedures established for interpretation services. FPS will offer this training within 30 days from the date the FPS LAP is finalized, as refresher training on a routine basis, upon change in procedure or policy, and as part of the new employee orientation training.

PSO vendors and the PSOs shall receive a message from FPS within 30 days from the date the FPS LAP is finalized that explains language assistance responsibilities of PSOs at security posts inside GSA facilities. It will include a training bulletin, an updated post order template with standard procedures for interacting with LEP persons, accessing interpretation services, and use of materials such as “I Speak,” or similar.

Resources

Current interpretation services offered through the MegaCenters are funded through FPS Headquarters Communications Management Division using existing resources.

Notice to LEP Persons

FPS PSOs will interact with the LEP person inside GSA-controlled facilities in accordance with the procedures in the post orders for how the interpretative services will be delivered including accessing interpretation services and use of materials such as “I Speak,” or similar. FPS PSOs will inform the LEP person of GSA language services.

For interactions that occur between an FPS LEO and an LEP person, the FPS LEO has immediate access to interpretation services through the FPS MegaCenter dispatch operation and will inform the LEP person of the availability of FPS language services.

Procedures for Quality Control

The FPS language assistance service provider monitors performance through quality assurance and internal review processes to raise and quickly address problems to resolve any possible impact to service. Their quality specialists regularly monitor calls to ensure language assistance quality and if there is a problem during the call, they implement established protocols for corrective action.

Outreach to LEP Communities

FPS coordinates with the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties on efforts to engage with and provide information to LEP communities on FPS programs and services and available language services.

Monitoring and Performance Measures

FPS collects and manages data on its use of language assistance services and uses the data to inform program improvement. The language assistance services vendor provides a report of language assistance calls performed at any time upon request. In addition, the FPS MegaCenter

Telecommunicators maintain an active log of the language assistance service contract use, which is leveraged on a monthly basis in conjunction with the monthly invoice review.

Language assistance services are also evaluated on an annual basis, or in conjunction with a contract option year or renewal, whichever is sooner, to evaluate whether the scope of the requirement has changed. Examples include whether the encounters with LEP persons have changed by number, language, location, or type of law enforcement interaction. FPS reviews and updates, if needed, directives, procedures, and any associated materials at a minimum every two years.

Acronyms

DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FPS	Federal Protective Service
GSA	General Services Administration
LAP	Language Access Plan
LEO	Law Enforcement Officers
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
PSO	Protective Security Officers