

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES**



POLICY	
Department on Disability Services	Subject: DDS's Language Access Policy
Responsible Program or Office: Office of the Director	Policy Number: 2013-DDS-POL002
Date of Approval by the Director: March 27, 2013	Number of Pages: 3
Effective Date: April 1, 2013	Expiration Date, if Any: N/A
Supersedes Policy (Dated): N/A	
Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents: DDS's Language Access Procedure	

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Department on Disability Services ("DDS") provides equal access and participation in services, programs, and activities for people who are applying for or using DDS services who have limited or non-English proficiency.

2. APPLICABILITY

The policy applies agency-wide to all full-time employees, as well as contract and part-time employees, etc.

3. AUTHORITY

The authority and functions of the Department on Disability Services ("DDS") are set forth in D.C. Law 16-264, the "Department on Disability Services Establishment Act of 2006," effective March 14, 2007 (D.C. Official Code § 7-761.01 *et seq.*), and D.C. Official Code § 7-761.07(c)-(d), and vested the DDS Director with legal authority to issue this policy.

4. POLICY

It is DDS's policy to ensure that all people receiving services and supports through DDS's service delivery system or that participate in any DDS sponsored event, have access to and receive language access services that are specific to their individual language needs. This includes written translations, oral interpretation, and/or assistance through the Language Line.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for this policy is vested in the DDS Director.

6. STANDARDS

- A. DDS shall comply with the District of Columbia's Language Access Act of 2004, (D.C. Law 15-167; D.C. Code § 2-1931 *et seq.*) and all corresponding guidelines and regulations.
- B. DDS shall:
 1. Provide oral language services to people with limited or no-English proficiency who seek to access or participate in the services, programs, or activities offered by DDS.
 2. Collect data about the languages spoken and the number or proportion of limited or non-English proficient persons speaking a given language in the population that is served or encountered, or likely to be served or encountered, by DDS.
 3. Coordinate and facilitate the translation of vital documents in any non-English language spoken by a limited or non-English proficient populations that constitutes 3% or 500 individuals, whichever is less, of the people served or encountered, or likely to be served or encountered by DDS.
 4. Develop and maintain a two-year language access plan pursuant to regulation and in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - a. Established in consultation with the DC Office of Human Rights ("OHR")
 - b. Reviewed and updated biannually.
 - c. Sets forth the type of oral language services that DDS will provide.
 - d. Sets forth the titles of translated documents that DDS will provide.
 - e. Sets forth the rationale and data for translating any documents.
 - f. Sets forth the number of public contact positions within DDS.
 - g. Sets forth the number of bilingual employees in public contact positions and/or within DDS.
 - h. Evaluates and assesses the adequacy of language access services DDS provides.

5. Appoint a Language Access Program Coordinator or Coordinators responsible for oversight of the agency's language access plan.

Laura L. Nuss

Laura L. Nuss, Director

3/27/2013

Date