YOLO COUNTY HOUSING

Language Assistance Plan (LAP) for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Persons

Staff Contact
Janis Holt
Resource Administrator
147 W. Main St.
Woodland, CA 95695
Phone: (530) 669-2211
Fax: (530) 662-5428
TDD: (800) 545-1833, extension 626

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Table of Contents

Purpose and Legal Basis 3

Definitions 3

Identifying LEP Persons Who Need Language Assistance 4

Language Assistance Plan: Determining the Type of Language Service Needed 4

Language Assistance Plan: Implementation of LEP Services 5

Language Assistance Plan: Ensuring the Quality of Language Services 6

Language Assistance Plan: Staff Training 7

Language Assistance Plan: Notification to LEP Persons 7

Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan 8

Appendix A 9

Appendix B 10

Appendix C 11

Appendix D 14

Appendix E 15

I. Purpose and Legal Basis

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that people who do not speak English proficiently receive the language assistance necessary to allow them meaningful access to Yolo County Housing (YCH) programs, services and information.

YCH shall identify potential Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons, notify them that translation and interpretation services are available at no cost, and provide the needed language assistance. YCH shall also take into account HUD's four factor analysis (i.e., balancing clients' needs while not incurring excessive burden on YCH resources). At no time shall any YCH employee or contractor indicate that any LEP applicant or client might be charged for interpreter or translation services.

This plan implements the Title VI language access responsibilities of human services providers receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This plan serves to meet the legal obligation of language access requirements in compliance of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.; 45 CFR 80 and in accordance with the office for Civil Rights policy Guidance, 65 Fed. Reg. 52762 (2000).

The plan is based on the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons (2007).

II. Definitions

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) person: A person who does not speak English as his/her primary language and who has a limited ability to read, write, speak or understand English. Such persons may be entitled to language assistance at no cost to themselves with respect to a particular type of service, benefit or encounter.

Vital document: Any document that contains information that is critical for obtaining or maintaining the services or benefits that are supported by Federal funds, or that are required by law. Such documents may include but are not limited to applications, consent forms, notices that require a response from the participant or beneficiary, legal notices, and notices advising LEP persons of the availability of free language services.

Interpretation: The act of listening to one language and orally converting it into another language. Interpreting is a sophisticated skill that requires training beyond simply being bilingual. An interpreter needs to show proficient knowledge of both the source and target language, but he or she does not necessarily need to be formally certified. YCH shall not assume interpreters who can translate orally can also translate written text.

Translation: The replacement of a written text from one language into an equivalent written text in another language. Because LEP persons may not be able to read their native languages, back-up availability of oral interpretation needs to also be considered.

III. Identifying LEP Persons Who Need Language Assistance

YCH shall strive to use the most current data available in tailoring its services to meet the needs of its LEP constituents. To discern the language assistance needs of its general eligible population, YCH will use a variety of data sources. To discern the needs of individual clients, it will rely on client self-identification and staff interactions.

YCH shall use the following procedure to determine the number of LEP persons currently using Yolo County Housing services and the number of LEP persons in the jurisdiction who may be eligible to receive services.

1. *YCH data*. The languages and degree of proficiency previously encountered by staff shall be tabulated and analyzed (Appendix A)
2. *Client data*. Clients can self-report their respective language using "I Speak" cards. The number and variety of languages will be considered in the final assessment. The most common languages will also be part of a simple, laminated flip book posted at YCH offices so clients can point to their language and identify themselves faster.
3. *Federal Data*. The latest Census Department language demographics for Yolo County shall be analyzed. (Appendix B) Because the last Census occurred nine years ago it is important to use other data sources as well.
4. *State and local data*. Data from government and community-based organizations shall also be analyzed. This includes discussions with county and non-profit agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, the Health Department, and the Department of Employment and Social Services. YCH shall also incorporate data from Yolo County School Districts. (Appendix C)

IV. Language Assistance Plan: Determining the Type of Language Service Needed

YCH shall use HUD's four factor analysis to decide the type and scope of language assistance services it provides:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by YCH.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with YCH.
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by YCH to people's lives.
4. The resources available to YCH and costs.

These four factors shall be used to address individual client's needs as well as to craft policy for the entire YCH service area. Although the conclusions of this analysis may change, the underlying goal behind them is constant: to ensure LEP persons have meaningful access to critical services while not imposing undue financial burdens on YCH.

YCH shall take extra steps to provide written translations for specific LEP populations that represent a significant portion of its clientele. YCH shall use the following HUD criteria in conjunction with the four-factor analysis to comply with its written-translation obligations:

A. YCH shall offer written translations of vital documents for each eligible LEP language group that constitutes five percent (5%) or 1,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served or likely to be affected or encountered. Translation of other documents, if needed, can be provided orally; or
B. If there are fewer than 50 persons in a language group that reaches the five percent trigger in subparagraph A, YCH shall not translate vital written materials but instead provide written notice in the primary language of the LEP language group of the right to receive competent oral interpretation of those written materials, free of cost.

Conclusions about the YCH Language Demographic for 2009

After analyzing the Yolo County's language demographics, YCH shall translate vital documents into Spanish and Russian.

Yolo County's LEP Spanish-speaking population contains more than the necessary 1,000 persons needed to mandate translation of vital documents. Although the LEP Russian-speaking population does not constitute 1,000 persons nor five percent of the county's eligible population, internal polling of staff suggests that YCH has frequent contact with LEP Russian speakers in its housing and voucher programs.

Additional interpretation or translation services for these two languages—as well as for other LEP populations—will be handled on an individual basis using the four factor analysis and the implementation plan below.

V. Language Assistance Plan: Implementation of LEP services

YCH shall offer the opportunity for meaningful access to all LEP clients. If a client asks for language assistance, or if staff identifies a client who needs assistance, YCH shall make reasonable efforts to provide free language assistance.

The following options shall be considered when providing language services:

- *Bilingual staff or in-house interpreters*. Bilingual staff shall be identified and their effectiveness monitored through client satisfaction surveys. A list of such people shall be compiled and accessible to all staff members.
- *Family members or friends*. Staff shall never require or encourage a LEP client to use family members or friends as interpreters; however, YCH will also not deter clients if they prefer to use a friend or family member.
- *Contracted interpreters/translators*. YCH shall develop and maintain an index of interpreters and translators for staff to use when language services are required for LEP persons.
- *Community organizations and volunteers*. Volunteers who understand this Plan, the ethics of translation, and can interpret or translate to the client's satisfaction. YCH shall also have an index of community volunteers.
- *Telephone interpreter services*. YCH shall investigate the feasibility of such a service and, if acceptable, shall maintain a phone number and protocol for how to use it.

At no time shall children under the age of 18-years-old be used to interpret or translate.

Documenting the LAP implementation

The responsibility of documenting adherence to these procedures lies with the YCH staff member working closest with the client. Nevertheless, all staff members who work with clients, especially those who act as first points of contact, shall identify and address language needs of members of LEP populations in a timely manner. The YCH Resource Administrator shall oversee the implementation of this Plan as a whole.

VI. Language Assistance Plan: Ensuring the quality of language services

YCH shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that the language services it provides are of high quality and that the competency of the interpreters and translators is appropriate to the situation.

Bilingual staff and in-house interpreters will be third-party certified in speaking and/or reading and writing. They will receive YCH's LAP staff training, be familiar with this Plan, and understand the ethics of interpretation.

When using contracted interpreters or translators, YCH shall use contractual language to ensure that outside vendors are bound by the legal requirements of the YCH policies. All contracted services are required to demonstrate that the interpreters they employ receive training in the ethics and competency standards of interpreting. Agencies shall be required to ensure that their interpreters have been tested on their fluency in both English and the non-English language. YCH will make visits to these agencies and review their training and testing methods on an as-needed basis.

Because there are at least 42 different languages spoken by LEP persons in Yolo County, it is impossible for the YCH staff to corroborate the accuracy of every interpretation. Therefore, YCH shall use client satisfaction surveys on a sampling of customers to determine if the interpretation services it offers are sufficient (Appendix D). Surveys will be returned to the Resource Administrator. If a client was satisfied with the thoroughness of the interpretation or translation he or she received, then the type and quality of that service shall suffice. This procedure shall be used for both in-house and contracted services.

YCH will work to increase current LEP Resources including translation of identified vital documents into Spanish (see Appendix D). YCH will also endeavor to translate vital documents into Russian.

VII. Language Assistance Plan: Staff Training

YCH shall train its staff about its LAP plan and policies. They will know how to implement the procedures, such as:

- How to respond to LEP callers or written communications from LEP clients
- How to assess what language assistance is needed and use the "I Speak" cards
- How to access outside language line service
- The type and location of translated documents
- Which staff speak other languages and are available for interpretation at appointments
- What outside vendors are available for interpretation

Bilingual staff shall also be trained to understand the ethics of translation, such as how to adhere to their role of interpreter without deviating into a counselor, legal advisor or other role.

VIII. Language Assistance Plan: Notification to LEP persons

YCH shall make a reasonable effort to try and alert all LEP persons that they may receive free language assistance. Examples of these efforts are:

- Posting signs in common areas of public housing buildings and in the YCH office lobby in Spanish and Russian.
- Stating in outreach booklets, brochures, web page and other documents that language services are available free of charge.
- Printing at the bottom of critical documents a brief tag that says "If you need this document translated, contact YCH" in Spanish and Russian.
- Include a flier with the main voucher and housing applications that alerts clients to YCH no cost language services.
- Employing a telephone voice mail menu that clients can access 24/7.

- Translating pages on the YCH website: www.ycha.org, and including information about the availability of free language assistance.
- Working with grassroots and faith-based community organizations that might interact with LEP persons to alert those persons that they can attain free interpretation or translation of their YCH documents.

IX. Monitoring and Updating the Language Assistance Plan

YCH will routinely monitor this Plan's effectiveness. The YCH Resource Administrator shall coordinate this assessment and review data collected. An overall analysis of YCH plans and policies shall be conducted annually. This evaluation shall include, among other elements:

- Reclassification of vital and non-vital documents
- Demographic changes in Yolo County
- Feedback from staff about their implementation and understanding of LAP policies
- Feedback from clients about their satisfaction with YCH language assistance
- Feedback from Community Based Organizations on LEP/LAP process and assistance.

The customer feedback forms will be returned to the YCH Resource Administrator who will evaluate and follow up as needed. YCH staff will provide an annual report to the Board of Commissioners on the effectiveness of the Language Assistance Plan.

Appendix A

Tabulated Staff Data for LEP Persons Previously Encountered, 2009

This table examines the most current number of clients that have already been identified as LEP. (Applicant and waiting list data is being collected)

Language	Number of LEP Speakers	Percent of Total Clients
Spanish	258	15.52%
Russian	99	5.96%
Laotian	13	Less than 1%
Punjabi	7	Less than 1%
Other	15	Less than 1%

Appendix B

Most Recent U.S. Census Data for Yolo County

This table examines the most recent language demographic for Yolo County as tabulated by the U.S. Census. An estimated 16,899 Spanish speakers, or 9.4% of total Yolo County residents, speak English less than very well and would qualify as LEP Spanish-speaking persons. This is a sufficient amount to break the 1,000 person or 5% threshold, as well as to merit specific LAP attention.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME				
	Estimate	**Margin of Error**	**Percent**	**Margin of Error**
Population 5 years and over	**179,171**	**+/-83**	**100%**	**(X)**
English only	116,341	+/-2,590	64.9%	+/-1.4
Language other than English	62,830	+/-2,592	35.1%	+/-1.4
Speak English less than "very well"	26,256	+/-1,840	14.7%	+/-1.0
Spanish	35,886	+/-1,717	20.0%	+/-1.0
Speak English less than "very well"	16,899	+/-1,495	9.4%	+/-0.8
Other Indo-European languages	12,581	+/-1,770	7.0%	+/-1.0
Speak English less than "very well"	4,417	+/-812	2.5%	+/-0.5
Asian and Pacific Islander languages	13,139	+/-1,114	7.3%	+/-0.6
Speak English less than "very well"	4,742	+/-748	2.6%	+/-0.4
Other languages	1,224	+/-434	0.7%	+/-0.2
Speak English less than "very well"	198	+/-151	0.1%	+/-0.1

Data from 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, U.S. Census
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ADPTable?_bm=y&-context=adp&-qr_name=ACS_2007_3YR_G00_DP3YR2&-ds_name=ACS_2007_3YR_G00_&-tree_id=3307&-redoLog=false&-geo_id=05000US06113&-_sse=on&-format=&-_lang=en

Appendix C

Estimating LEP and School District EL Speakers for Yolo County

Background

HUD describes adults who cannot speak English adequately as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). California K-12 students in the same condition are called English Learners (EL). This analysis attempts to calculate the number of Yolo County LEP residents by examining the number of Yolo County EL students.

Obviously, these are two different populations. Nevertheless, this analysis is not meant to be comprehensive nor exacting. It is only a cursory calculation, one created primarily to uncover any significant LEP populations that might have been missed from other data sources. It also acts as a rough barometer to see which LEP populations are close to the 1000-speaker mark or will be in the near future (Figure 1).

The number 1,000 is significant. For YCH to be required to translate "vital documents" into a population's non-English language, there needs to be at least 1,000 LEP speakers or a LEP group must represent 5% of the area's eligible population, whichever is less. (Individual translations will still occur as needed, just not systematically.)

This analysis examines the numerical and not the proportional aspect of that requirement. It ignores the percentages because EL students are not the same as LEP adults, and their relative proportion to the fully-fluent population will have only a rough, though still some, correlation (Figure 2).

Conclusion

The Spanish EL population has a significant presence in Yolo County: there are and will continue to be more than 1,000 speakers. Thus, as suggested by other data sources as well, YCH vital documents need to be translated into Spanish. (See Figure 1.)

Neither of the next two biggest groups, Russian and Punjabi, will likely have more than 1,000 students in the next five years. Nevertheless, based on other data sources, more than 5% of its housing residents and voucher recipients are Russian LEP speakers; therefore, YCH will also translate vital documents into Russian.

Spanish and English are the only specific languages tabulated by the U.S. Census. (The others are grouped into language families). So this school district analysis is also useful in that it reveals the specific languages besides these two that are common in Yolo County: Russian, Punjabi, Mandarin, Korean and Hindi.

Figure 1: Current and Projected Number of EL Students in Yolo County K-12 School Districts

Year	Proj # of EL Students (1)	Proj. # of EL Spanish (2)	Proj. # EL of Russian (3)	Proj. # EL of Punjabi (4)
2007-08	8197	5429	350	195
2008-09	8323	5495	365	218
2009-10	8449	5561	380	241
2010-11	8575	5627	395	264

Methodology behind the numbers in Figure 1

(1) **Projected Number of EL Students.** The projected number of total EL students for Yolo County is based on a rate of 126 new EL speakers per year. This rate was calculated from averaging the change in EL students over the last 8 years (from 5,800 in the year 2000 to 6,808 in 2008).

(2) **Projected Number of EL Spanish Students.** The projected number of EL Spanish students is based on a rate of 66 new EL Spanish students a year. This rate is calculated from averaging the change in EL Spanish students over the last 3 years (from 5,297 in the school year 2005-06 to 5,429 in 2007-08). A more thorough analysis—for example, analyzing the change in the growth rate to account for whether a population is accumulating new members at an increasingly or decreasingly fast pace—did not seem necessary. Not only would the change in the growth rate be almost insignificant over such a short time frame, but all of these populations are relatively small and thus more likely to confound the data. Plus, this is only a cursory average that suffices for estimating whether or not the population will be at least close to 1,000 in the next three years.

(3) **Projected Number of EL Russian Students.** The projected number of EL Russian students is based on a rate of 14.5 new EL students per year. This rate was calculated from averaging the change in EL Russian students over the last 3 years (from 321 in the school year 2005-06 to 350 in 2007-08).

(4) **Projected Number of EL Punjabi Students.** The projected number of EL Punjabi students is based on a rate of 23 new EL students per year. This rate was calculated from averaging the change in EL Punjabi students over the last 8

years (from 149 in the school year 2005-06 to 195 in 2007-08). See the accompanying Yolo County School District Data for EL student data.

Figure 2: The Degree to Which the Number of EL Students Can Predict the Number of LEP Residents

Area	Total Limited English Population	Total Population	Relative Proportion
Yolo County Residents (1)	26,256 (defined as "speaking English less than 'very well'")	179,171 (defined as "population above 5 years of age")	14.7%
Yolo County School District (2)	6,610 (defined as "English Learners")	29,493 (defined as "Yolo County Enrollment Total")	22.4%

(1) Data is from http://factfinder.census.gov. The survey is from 2005-2007, the most recent years available.
(2) Data is from http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/ for the 2006-2007 school year so that it corresponds to the same period of the Census data.

APPENDIX D

Vital Documents List

Yolo County Housing has identified the following vital documents for translation into Spanish.

Priority One	Priority Two
• Consent to Release Income • Contract for HCV Assistance • Contract for HCV Assistance Lease Addendum • Applying for HUD Housing Assistance • YCH Occupancy Rules • YCH Parking Policies • Mold and Mildew Policies • Pool and Barbeque Policies • Reasonable Accommodation Request Forms • Consent Forms • Income Verification Form • Childcare Verification • Translation Statement • Full Application and Intake Forms • Income and Asset Statement • Inspection Letters (Annual Recertification Letters and Rescheduled Letters) • Failed Inspection Notice • Termination Notices • Letter for denying HH member with Criminal History • Hearing Notices • Public Housing Wait List Opening Notices • Public Housing Wait List Application • Application for admission and eligibility intake forms • Briefing Packet • Lease and house rules including addenda • Income Reexamination Packet • Written notices of rights, hearings, denial or termination of assistance, and decrease in benefits or services	• HCV Wait List Opening Notices • HCV Wait List Application • Current or Former Landlord/Tenant Screen Verification Form • List of Non-Contending Family Members • Affidavit for Support • HCV Briefing Packet • Notices Advising LEP persons of free language assistance • Homeownership brochures, packets, etc. • Customer Service Surveys

YCH provides translation features on its webpage which allows all viewers to read information in their "first" or preferred language. YCH documents are added, revised and deleted throughout the year. This list will be reviewed continually and as additional vital documents are identified; they will be translated into both Spanish and Russian. All documents' classifications shall be reviewed at least once a year.

Appendix E

Yolo County Housing Translation Satisfaction Survey

This survey will take you less than 60 seconds to fill out. It helps us determine if the language assistance services we provide are meeting our clients' needs.

1. I am aware I can receive free interpretation or translation to help understand YCH documents, forms or interviews.
   ____Yes ____No

2. Answer questions 2-5 only if in the past year you have used an interpreter or translator to help you understand YCH documents or procedures.

   a) When you needed help, who translated?

   ____ Friend or family member

   ____ YCH staff (name): _____

   ____ Professional interpreter or translator (name): _____

   ____ Other (specify): _____

   b) For what language did you need translation: _____

3. I felt my interpreter spoke with a strong understanding of both my language and English.

1	2	3	4	5	NA
Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree	

4. I felt my translator wrote with a strong understanding of both my language and English.

1	2	3	4	5	NA
Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree	

5. I felt my interpreter/translator acted courteous and professional.

1	2	3	4	5	NA
Highly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Highly Agree	

Comments: