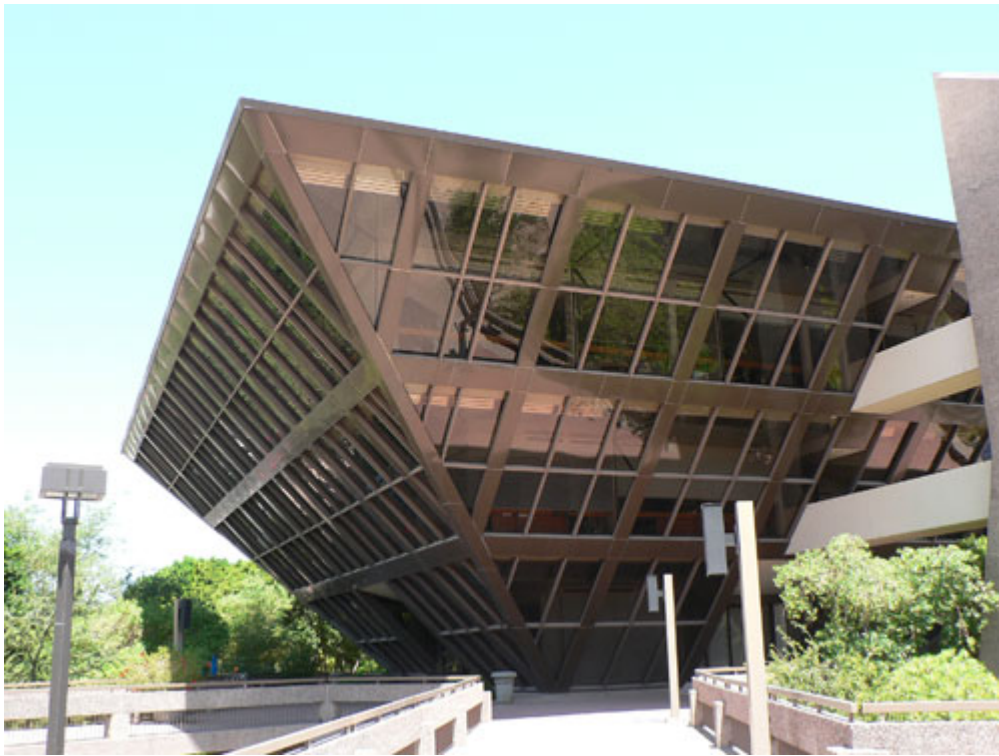


**City of Tempe
Housing Services Division
Limited English Proficiency Policy
and Language Action Plan**



January 1, 2008



Limited English Proficiency Policy Statement and Language Action Plan

The City of Tempe is committed to providing equal opportunity in all programs and services to ensure full compliance with all civil rights laws, including Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which requires non-discrimination on the basis of national origin. Equal opportunity includes physical and program access for persons with disabilities and program access for persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Program and physical access for persons with disabilities is covered in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, Section 504. This policy is based on HUD's suggested four prong analysis which examines the number of limited English proficiency persons served, the frequency with which those persons come into contact with services, the nature and importance of services provided and the costs to the City of Tempe. This policy is intended to ensure Tempe's compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" and was drafted upon consideration of the services offered, the community served, the resources of Tempe's Housing Services, and the costs of various language service options.

It is the policy of this agency to provide language access services to populations of persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who are eligible to be served or likely to be directly affected by our programs. Such services will be focused on providing meaningful access to our programs, services and/or benefits.

Any individual eligible for programs/services at the City of Tempe Housing Services Division who cannot speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits them to interact effectively with our staff has the following rights:

- A right to qualified interpreter services at no cost to them.
- A right not to be required to rely on their minor children, other relatives, or friends as interpreters.
- A right to file a grievance about the language access services provided them.

Liz Chavez, Housing Services Administrator, is the agency's designated Equal Opportunity/Limited English Proficiency Coordinator. Ms. Chavez may be reached on weekdays from 8:00am – 5:00pm at 480-350-8950 (TDD 480-350-8913). Information about discrimination complaint resolution process is available to you upon request.



Definitions

Definitions of Terms:

- **Effective Communication** – In a Housing Services assistance setting; effective communication occurs when agency staff have taken necessary steps to make sure that a person who is LEP is given adequate information in his/her language to understand the services, benefits or the requirements for services or benefits offered by the City of Tempe Housing Services Division (THS). These necessary steps must allow an individual the opportunity to qualify for the benefits or services provided by THS without unnecessary delay due to the person's LEP. Effective communication also means that a person who is LEP is able to communicate the relevant circumstances of his/her situation to THS staff.
- **Interpretation** – Interpretation means the oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another language.
- **Limited English Proficiency** – A person with limited English proficiency or "LEP" is not able to speak, read, write or understand the English language well enough to allow him/her to interact effectively with THS staff.
- **Meaningful access** – "Meaningful access" to benefits, programs and services is the standard of access required of the City of Tempe Housing Services Division since it receives federal funding. Meaningful access requires compliance by THS with federal LEP requirements as set out in relevant federal laws. To ensure meaningful access for people with LEP, THS must make available to applicants/recipients of benefits/services free language assistance that results in accurate and effective communication that does not result in undue delay or denial of benefits to which the LEP applicant/recipient is eligible.
- **Translation** – Translation means the written transfer of a message from one language into another language.
- **Vital Documents** – forms or documents *designed and utilized by THS that* are critical for accessing federally funded services or benefits or are required by law. Vital documents can include but are not limited to; applications for THS programs, consent forms designed by THS or letters designed by THS requesting eligibility documentation.
- **Outreach Documents** - THS designed documents utilized to provide information to the general public but targeting individuals who are eligible or may be eligible for THS programs.



LEP Population, Analysis and Access Plan:

The City of Tempe Housing Services Division has determined that the language(s) other than English that is/are most likely to be encountered by employees of THS is Spanish. The methodology used to make this determination is as follows: According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 75% of households in the City of Tempe speak only English within the household. The language most commonly spoken at home by City of Tempe citizens who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) is Spanish. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 15% of Tempe's citizens speak Spanish at home. Executive Order 13166 mandates that if the size of the language group exceeds more than 5% of the eligible population, all vital documents shall be translated. The City of Tempe, therefore, will translate all vital documents into Spanish. Currently, no other languages meet the 5% eligible population threshold mandating translated documents.

The City of Tempe Housing Services will periodically monitor the LEP population of those served or those who could be served by THS. If it is determined that other LEP language groups are seeking benefits/services or are potentially eligible to receive benefits/services, THS will adjust its methods and services to serve the new population accordingly. Any new LEP populations will be reflected in an updated version of the LEP plan.

City of Tempe	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percentage of Total Population
Total:	152,710	+/-8,982	
Speak only English	114,621	+/-7,619	75.06%
Spanish or Spanish Creole	23,717	+/-5,204	15.53%
French (including Patois, Creole, Cajun)	716	+/-492	0.47%
German or other West Germanic languages	543	+/-382	0.36%
Slavic languages	930	+/-566	0.61%
Other Indo-European languages	2,528	+/-1,213	1.66%
Korean	658	+/-672	0.43%
Chinese	3,244	+/-1,428	2.12%
Vietnamese	286	+/-314	0.19%
Tagalog	409	+/-467	0.27%
Other Asian or Pacific Island languages	3,392	+/-2,067	2.22%
Other and unspecified languages	1,666	+/-1,196	1.09%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey</i>			

Interpreter Services:



The City of Tempe Housing Services Division, at no cost to the LEP individuals or families, provides interpreter services to all LEP individuals or families applying for, participating in programs or receiving services/benefits through THS. The interpreter services are provided in an efficient and timely manner so as not to delay a determination of eligibility for an individual or family, receipt of eligible services/benefits or participation in City of Tempe run program beyond that of an English speaking individual or family. English and Spanish applications and outreach material are available at the agency. Additionally, English and Spanish brochures describing services are available at the agency and at various community events, fairs and speaking engagements.

THS addresses phone calls and voice mail by LEP individuals in the following manner:

The City of Tempe Housing Services Division automated phone message is available in both Spanish and English. The automated attendant that greets clients calling the agency provides a Spanish greeting. Clients indicating they speak Spanish are automatically transferred to Spanish speaking staff by the receptionist. City of Tempe Housing Services Division addresses walk-ins who are LEP individuals in the same manner (refers to receptionists or point of contact). Spanish speaking staff is also available for walk-in clients, scheduled appointments and written translation.

City of Tempe Housing Services Division does not require, suggest or encourage LEP individuals or families to use friends, family members or minor children as interpreters. If a LEP individual or family insists that a friend or family member serve as interpreter, that choice is documented. City of Tempe Housing Services Division will then, on a case by case basis, consider factors such as: competence of the family or friend used as the interpreter; the appropriateness of the use in light of the circumstances and ability to provide quality and accurate information, especially if the interview could result in a negative affect on the individual or family's eligibility for benefits/services; potential or actual conflicts of interest; and confidentiality of the information being interpreted to determine whether the agency should provide its own independent interpreter for itself. In no case does City of Tempe Housing Services Division allow a minor child to act as interpreter for an LEP individual or family.

Translation of Documents

As a result of our analysis which indicates that 15.53% of Tempe residents are Spanish speaking, the City of Tempe Housing Services Division is beginning the process of translating all agency designated vital documents into Spanish. The translation process will be conducted as expeditiously as possible with a goal of completing the process within the next calendar year.

