



BILINGUAL SERVICES POLICY

POLICY

All staff of Covered California (CC) are responsible for ensuring that all persons, including those who are non-English speaking, are provided equal access to the available services and information of CC. All programs shall deliver services in ways that recognize individual differences and are sensitive to cultural differences. Effective communication with consumers who are non-English speaking shall be achieved through bilingual staff, translated written materials, and contracted interpreter/translation services.

AUTHORITY

- ❑ Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act: Government Code Sections 7290-7299.8
- ❑ Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ❑ Federal Executive Order 13166

DEFINITIONS

Qualified Bilingual Employee: A CC staff member who is certified by the California Department of Human Resources Bilingual Services Program, or by any Department if that Department has delegated authority to conduct bilingual fluency examinations, and who uses this bilingual skill to serve CC consumers.

Qualified Interpreter: An interpreter who has met the testing or certification standards for outside or contract interpreters.

Consumers: Any person applying for or receiving services from CC.

Contractor: A person or an agency that contracts with CC to provide certain services for a fee or rate according to a contractual agreement.

Interpretation: The oral translation of a message from one language to another.

Non-English Speaking Person: A person who cannot speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that enables him or her to communicate and interact effectively.

Primary Language: The language that a person identifies as the language in which they prefer to communicate.

Public Contact Position: A position determined by the agency to be one which emphasizes the ability to meet, contact and deal with the public in the performance of the agency's functions. (Government Code Section 7297.)

Translation: The written transfer of a message from one language to another.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Program Standards:

- ❑ CC regularly completes a formal assessment of its non-English language needs, including participation in a Biennial Language Survey to determine the primary languages of CC's customers in accordance with Government Code Section 4299.4.
- ❑ CC employs an appropriate number of qualified bilingual employees for each non-English speaking group that represents a minimum of 5% of the public served.
- ❑ CC utilizes telephonic or other interpreter or translation services for less frequently needed languages or when bilingual staff are unavailable.
- ❑ CC makes available translated materials in 12 foreign languages that solicit or require the furnishing of information from an individual, provide that individual with information, or describe information that may affect the individual's rights, duties or privileges with regard to the services or benefits of CC.
- ❑ CC establishes and follows procedures for providing effective telephone communication between staff and non-English speaking customers.
- ❑ CC will create a list of bilingual employees to assist in interpreting and translating tasks in emergency situations. Follow-up must be provided as soon as possible, by a qualified interpreter, to ensure the non-English speaking customer was adequately served.
- ❑ To ensure complete, accurate, impartial, and confidential communication, CC will not use family, friends, or minors as as interpreters, except in emergency situations. Follow-up must be provided as soon as possible by a qualified interpreter to ensure the non-English speaking customer was adequately served.

- ❑ Online foreign language dictionaries may be available within the CC for staff and non-English speaking customer use.
- ❑ All identified public contact staff receive training regarding appropriate procedures for providing service to non-English speaking customers in order to ensure that their interpretation/translation needs are met.
- ❑ CC informs contractors, subcontractors, vendors, providers of services, and entities that receive funds through the CC that they are subject to the provisions of Title VI to include language interpretation and ensures compliance with such requirements.

Non-English Speaking Customer Service Standards:

- ❑ Non-English speaking customers are identified as early as possible during the initial contact.
- ❑ Non-English speaking customers are offered an opportunity to utilize an interpreter.
- ❑ An interpreter is provided at no cost to the non-English speaking customer.
- ❑ Translated written materials are provided to the non-English speaking customer when available.
- ❑ No significant delay in service takes place during this process.
- ❑ Complaints about the lack of interpreter/translation services are resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of the non-English speaking customer.

ACCESS TO AND ASSISTANCE WITH BILINGUAL SERVICES

CC employees who require assistance with non-English speaking customers can seek the assistance from a certified bilingual employee. Additionally, public contacts or telephone calls with non-English speaking individuals can be handled through telephonic language interpreters.

Additional assistance in implementing this policy, or in accessing interpreter or translation services, may be obtained by contacting:

Covered California
Equal Employment Opportunity Officer
1601 Exposition Blvd
Sacramento, CA 95815
(916) 228-8611