

# LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN



**2024**

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# I. PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY



Nevada’s Senate Bill 318 (SB318) from the 2021 Legislative Session and the federal guidance on Title VI both agree that language should not be a barrier to accessing governmental programs and services. As SB318 puts it, “Persons with limited English proficiency require and deserve meaningful, timely access to government services in their preferred language.” Moreover, it makes it clear that it is the responsibility of government to provide that access to:

State and local agencies and entities that receive public money have an obligation to provide meaningful, timely access for persons with limited English proficiency to the programs and services of those agencies and entities.

The Nevada State Contractors Board (NSCB) is committed to compliance with Nevada Senate Bill 318 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 2 C.S. § 561 et seq. (Act 172 of 2006) in ensuring meaningful access to State services and programs for individuals with limited English proficiency.

The purpose of this document is to establish an effective plan and protocol for NSCB personnel to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, individuals who have limited English proficiency. Following this plan and protocol is essential to the success of our mission.

## **NSCB MISSION STATEMENT**

The Nevada State Contractors Board (NSCB) is committed to ensuring the integrity and professionalism of the construction industry in Nevada. The NSCB has the responsibility to promote quality construction by Nevada licensed contractors through a regulatory licensing system designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public.

# II. GENERAL POLICY



The NSCB recognizes the population eligible to receive its services include LEP individuals. It is the policy of the NSCB to ensure meaningful access to LEP individuals. The NSCB adopts the following policies and procedures to ensure that LEP individuals can gain equal access to NSCB's services and officers tools to communicate effectively. This plan applies to all applicable NSCB programs and services including, but not limited to:

- Business Assistance Program
- Licensed Contractor Assistance Program
- Consumer Brochures & Guides
- Contractor Brochures and Guides
- Forms and Applications

It is Nevada's policy to grant access to services or programs to every person regardless of their ability to speak, understand, read, or write English. The NSCB intends to take all reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to its services and programs. The NSCB seeks to reduce barriers by increasing its capacity to deliver services and benefits to people in their preferred languages.

At The NSCB, we're dedicated to ensuring everyone has equal access to our services, programs, and activities, regardless of their English proficiency. We believe language should never be a barrier to the support that is needed.

- **Our Commitment:** We'll take all reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to limited English proficient (LEP) individuals. We recognize that clear communication is our responsibility.
- **LEP Rights:** LEP's have the right to appropriate language services at no cost, regardless of the preferred language. LEP's should never be asked to provide their own interpreter to receive our services.
- **Our Role:** Our staff will be trained to identify and record language needs at the first point of contact. We'll work with LEP's to determine the best way to support communication needs.
- **Professional Interpretation:** We'll provide professional interpreters and translation services. For privacy reasons, we will not use informal interpreters like family, friends, or minor children.

Pursuant to NRS 232.0081(1), the NSCB has established employees as the agency's Language Access Coordinators (LAC) to develop and biennially revise the Language Access Plan (LAP). The LAC's report to David Behar, Executive Officer, whose plan is to ensure Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals have access to language services.

**NSCB Language Access Coordinators:** Susan Broili-Kamesch, Licensing Administrator and Kenya McCampbell, Executive Assistant/Policy Analyst

# III. PROFILE OF NSCB'S LEP CLIENTS

The NSCB's function consists of licensing contractors who perform construction work in the state of Nevada.

Nevada is home to a diverse population and while the NSCB does not currently track the languages spoken by its 18,000+ licensees, U.S. Census data shows 70% of residents speak only English at home, 20% speak Spanish, 5.9% speak Asian or Pacific Islander languages, and 1% speak other languages. To ensure equal access to services, the NSCB has developed a comprehensive LAP. This plan will include identifying multilingual contractors and provide translation and interpretations services.

Per SB318, NSCB will specifically report:

1. Type of services received by the relevant groups.
2. Preferred languages of the LEP clients.
3. Literacy levels of the LEP clients in their preferred language and in English.
4. Ability of the relevant groups to access agency services electronically.
5. Number and percentage of clients who are indigenous.
6. Number and percentage of clients who are refugees.

In particular, the NSCB will consider indigenous people, refugees, and LEP communities. There may well be some overlap between these groups. In each case the NSCB will report the total number of clients served in these groups. Additionally, to the extent possible, the NSCB will provide a breakdown of these groups in terms of tribe, country of origin, or preferred language as appropriate.

## **Data Collection**

Those with initial contact with Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals, through phone calls and walk-ins, will collect data on LEP interactions. This data will be stored in the NSCB shared drive and updated annually. The information will be submitted to the Language Access Coordinator at the Governor's Office for New Americans every two years.

## **Tracking**

The NSCB will maintain a log of LEP assistance, tracking the number of LEPs requiring assistance and the type of assistance provided.

The NSCB is committed to tracking the languages preferred for communication among our LEP clients so that we can better provide meaningful, timely access to our services and programs without regard to any language impediments. The following is a data table summarizing relevant client data for the NSCB.

		English Only Speakers (at home)	Spanish only Speakers (at home)	Asian and Pacific Islander Speakers (at home)	Other Languages (at home)
<b>Nevada Active Licensed Contractors</b>	18,059	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>* Nevada's Total Population</b>	3,104,614	70%	20.6%	6.0%	1.0%

\*Source: United States Census Bureau

# IV. NSCB LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES AND PROCEDURES

NSCB will report the following per SB318:

1. Procedures for identifying “vital” information and procedure for providing documents with vital information to LEPs, according to language and the service to which the information is related.
2. Oral/Sign language services offered by language and type of service.
3. Comparison of the number of employees who work with LEPs vs. the number of employees who speak multiple languages, both generally and by language.
4. Description of any positions designated “dual-role.”
5. Procedures and resources for LEP community outreach.
6. Resources for employees regarding cultural competency.

The NSCB offers instructions in English and Spanish, both in print and online, as a guide to provide information to consumers who hire and want to become licensed contractors .

Additionally, the LACs are prepared to collaborate with the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division, which manages all vendors contracted under RFQ 99SWC-S1847. These vendors provide spoken and sign language interpretation, as well as document translation services, should the need arise.

The NSCB has secured the language access services described below to enable our LEP clients to access our services and programs more fully. In every case, the NSCB ensures that all language service providers are fully competent to provide these services.

## **Oral/Sign Language Services**

The NSCB has secured services from MiTio which uses interpreters to provide sign language and non-speaking English languages.

The NSCB has employees in Southern Nevada and Northern Nevada on site who speak Spanish should LEPs need immediate assistance.

### **Written Language Services**

The NSCB uses the following procedures to identify vital written information used in the provision of its services and programs, including both paper and electronic communications. The procedures for identifying vital written communication between the NSCB and individuals as well as the procedure for identifying vital communication targeting the broader public are both presented.

Based on the above vital documents' identification procedure, the NSCB has identified the following documents that will be translated into the "safe harbor" languages indicated.

- Consumer Complaint Forms - Spanish
- Criminal Complaint Forms - Spanish

The above documents will be prepared using the following written language service:

- Las Vegas Interpreters Connection

### **Community Outreach and Engagement**

The NSCB is committed to ensuring that the larger LEP community is aware of and able to access all available language services. In doing so, The NSCB has taken steps to publicize the availability of its language services in the community. Additionally, the NSCB has provided notification of its services at all relevant points of contact. Additionally, the NSCB has provided resources for its staff to improve their cultural competency and ability to work with diverse groups.

### **Procedures and Resources for LEP Community Outreach**

The NSCB has participated in public outreach events such as hosting bilingual workshops, promoting events on Spanish-language television stations (Univision, Telemundo, and RJ En Español).



### **Providing Notice of Language Assistance Services**

Should assistance be needed, a sign has been posted in our front lobby informing LEDs we are able to help at no expense to them.

### **Cultural Competency Resources**

The NSCB provides the following resources to its staff to improve their ability to work with diverse groups.

- <https://www.nvcontractorsboard.com/>
- <https://www.nvcontractorsboard.com/resources/contratista-folletos-y-guias/>
- <https://www.nvcontractorsboard.com/resources/verificacion-para-mejoras-del-hogar/>
- <https://www.nvcontractorsboard.com/resources/consejos-para-contratar/>
- <https://www.nvcontractorsboard.com/resources/consejos-para-contratistas-de-nevada/>

# V. IMPLEMENTING NSCB'S LANGUAGE ACCESS SERVICES



The NSCB has established an internal policy and procedure for implementing the agency's LAP and will include the following:

1. How to obtain both oral/sign and written language services.
2. How to respond to LEP clients via phone, writing, or in person.
3. How to ensure the competency of all language services available in the NSCB.
4. How to track LEPs served, preferred language, and literacy level in that language and English.
5. How to communicate LEP language needs to superiors.
6. How to meaningfully inform LEPs of service availability.

The NSCB is committed to providing our LEP clients full access to our services and programs. Towards this end, the NSCB requires its staff to follow the procedures described below to ensure meaningful access to available language services. Moreover, the NSCB is committed to 100% compliance with these procedures and provides the staff with the training described below to help ensure that all staff are familiar with these procedures and recognize their importance to the NSCB's mission.

## **Language Access Procedures**

### **Identifying Client Language Needs and Preferred Language**

The following procedures should be followed by the NSCB staff:

#### **Initial Contact and Identification**

When customers contact us via phone or in-person, our customer service agents will identify if the individual has Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and requires assistance communicating in a language other than English.

#### **Offering Language Services**

We will inform LEPs that free language services are available and ask their preferred language for communication.

#### **Documentation**

The customer service agent will document the following in our tracking system:

- Client information
- Date and time of the interaction
- The language in which the LEP required assistance
- The method used to provide language assistance (in-house or external resource)



### **Accessing Appropriate Oral/Sign Language Services**

The following are examples of what will be part of the NSCB's LEP plan:

- NSCB staff will seek competent bilingual staff to provide services in the client's preferred language without the need for an interpreter.
- Available NSCB bilingual staff will be used for in-person and telephone interpreting to support other staff.
- Staff will seek assistance from the American Sign Language and/or Las Vegas Interpreters Connection to provide services to communicate should staff with bilingual abilities are not available.

### **Accessing Appropriate Written Language Services**

According to the NSCB's state policy on the determination of "vital" documents, the following procedures should be followed to access qualified written language services. This applies both to written information intended for broad distribution as well as written communications between the NSCB and individual clients.

When the vital documents are translated, our Agents will provide LEPs with the necessary forms and determine their language preference.

### **Language Services Quality Assurance**

The NSCB is committed to ensuring that all language service providers it uses are qualified and competent to provide those services. The following procedures are in place to (1) establish provider qualifications and (2) track provider performance.

The NSCB has utilized vendors provided by the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division where all vendors provide on-site spoken and sign language interpretation along with document translation services.

### **Staff Training Policies and Procedures**

The NSCB believes that the appropriate provision of language services is vital to the fulfillment of its mission. Towards that end, the NSCB ensures that its staff are familiar with its language access policies and the above procedures for providing said services.

All NSCB staff will be provided and trained on the LAP Policies and Procedures.

# VI. EVALUATION OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NSCB'S LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

In accordance to SB318, the NSCB will solicit public comment in-person by way of using a Language Access Services Intake Form to collect data. The NSCB will use this information to update the agency's LAP Policy and Procedure.

**The NSCB will report:**

1. Estimates of additional funding required to meet the NSCB clients' language access needs.
2. Targets for hiring multilingual employees.
3. Adequate credentialing and oversight of interpreting and translation.
4. How language services represent the preferred languages of the NSCB's LEP clients.
5. Recruitment/retention efforts to ensure adequate language services.

The NSCB is committed to monitoring the performance of the above policies, procedures, and resources to ensure that its LAP is responsive to the needs of both the NSCB and the people it serves. At a minimum, the NSCB will review, evaluate, and update its LAP biennially.

**Processes for Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Parties Responsible for LAP Maintenance:**

Susan Broili-Kamesch, Licensing Administrator  
Kenya McCampbell, Executive Assistant/Policy Analyst

### **Criteria and Methods for LAP Evaluation:**

The NSCB will track its LAP's performance using the criteria indicated below. The methods for gathering/tracking the relevant data for these criteria are likewise described.

- The NSCB will track and monitor the LAP.
- Record the types of language services requested and the frequency.
- Track time spent with LEPs by multilingual staff and outside vendors.
- Track interpreter and translation services costs.

### **Evaluation Outcomes and Proposed Changes**

**Performance Monitoring Data/Proposed LAP Revisions/Proposed Budgetary Implications/Suggested Legislative Amendments:** The NSCB has recently implemented a Language Access Plan (LAP). As this is a new initiative, we do not currently have data to share. We will collect and update this information, providing a complete picture in our next submission.