

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LANGUAGE ACCESS REQUIREMENTS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LANGUAGE ACCESS?



Eliminate or reduce barriers to access

Language access policies and directives help ensure King County agencies are making reasonable efforts to eliminate or reduce access barriers for Limited English Proficient persons.



Increase capacity and competency

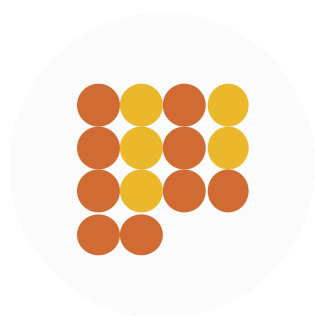
Implementing a language access plan enables King County agencies to increase its capacity and competency to serve Limited English Proficient persons.



Reaffirm King County's values

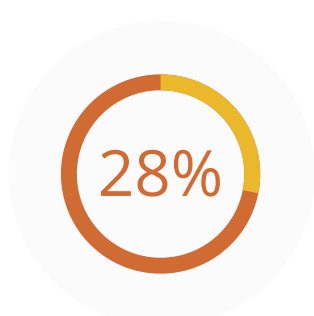
Providing Limited English Proficient persons with meaningful access to programs, services, and activities isn't just required by law, it also reaffirms that King County is a safe, welcoming, and inclusive community for all.

WHY DOES LANGUAGE ACCESS MATTER?



Growing immigrant population

Over 507,000 or **23%** of King County residents were born outside the U.S. Between 2010 and 2019, the foreign-born population grew by **36%**. (Source: ACS)



Linguistic diversity

Nearly 600,000 or **28%** of King County residents over age 5 speak a language other than English at home. Nearly **40%** of these residents report they do not speak English very well or at all. (Source: ACS)



Language development

During 2019-2020, **139,238** Seattle Public School students were identified as English Learners. In total, English Learners served by the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program spoke **231 home languages**. (Source: OSPI)

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?



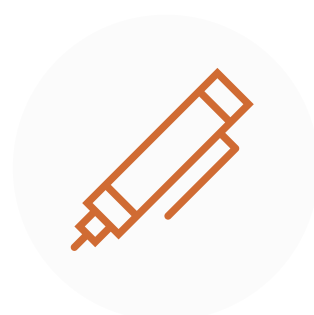
Develop a language access plan

All King County agencies must develop a language access plan that ensures Limited English Proficient persons can meaningfully access its program, services, and activities. Every plan must outline translation needs based on the [top six languages](#) identified by the Office of Equity and Social Justice and county demographer.



Provide notification of language assistance

Under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), all King County agencies that provide medical services are required to post or provide notices of nondiscrimination and tag lines that alert Limited English Proficient persons to the availability of language assistance services.



Provide free translation and interpretation

Where an application or form requires completion in English by a Limited English Proficient person, King County shall make reasonable efforts to provide oral interpretation and an acknowledgement form. Limited English Proficient persons must not wait unreasonably longer for assistance than persons who do not require interpretation.



Implement alternative forms of communication

King County agencies must provide alternative forms of language assistance services, such as, real-time captioning (CART), assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities.



Develop an inclusive emergency response plan

State and federal laws require recipients—including emergency management organizations—take reasonable steps to ensure Limited English Proficient persons can meaningfully access emergency life-safety notifications and disaster recovery programs.



Establish a complaint resolution process

King County agencies must provide Limited English Proficient persons a way to submit feedback or report an incident. A person who has been injured or otherwise sustained damages as a result of a violation of this chapter may [file a complaint](#) with the King County Office of Civil Rights.

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS?



Please visit the [Language Access webpage](#) for more resources on how you can better serve immigrants, refugees, and Limited English Proficient members of the public. If you have additional questions, please contact your agency's K.C.C. 2.15 language access liaison or the Office of Equity and Social Justice directly.