



Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure		
	APD.SOP.6143 Limited English Proficiency Effective Date: November 20th, 2024	
Chief Darin Schierbaum	Signature by: DS	Date Signed: 11/20/2024

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD Staff,

The Policy and Standards Section is dedicated to providing the department, and its employees, with accurate, understandable and transparent policies. In order to publish policies that reflect the most up-to-date standards, the Policy and Standard Section regularly reviews all policies to ensure that they are reflective of the current mission and objectives of the Atlanta Police Department.

No significant changes were found during the review and renewal of APD.SOP.6143 Limited English Proficiency. We encourage you to read the policy below in its entirety to better understand:

- The importance of using an interpreter
- How you can become a Certified Interpreter
- How, and when, an interpreter is required
- Easy Access to the Language identification card

Thank you and stay informed!

Policy and Standards Section
Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit

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1. PURPOSE

The Atlanta Police Department recognizes the importance of communicating effectively with the people it serves. Language barriers may prevent people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) from accessing essential police services, understanding their rights, obligations, and cooperating with community policing efforts to improve public safety. Ineffective communication with LEP victims, witnesses, suspects, and community members may present the department with safety, evidentiary, and ethical challenges, therefore a Language Access Plan, known as iSpeakATL has been created to ensure that all individuals have full and fair access to language services 24/7.

2. POLICY

The Department's policy is to provide timely, meaningful access of departmental services to LEP persons, whom they encounter or upon request.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Chief of Police is responsible for the Department's written directive system. This responsibility includes the authority to issue, modify, and approve special orders, standard operating procedures, and manuals pertaining to language access services. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1b)
- 3.2 Division and section commanders are responsible for implementing applicable departmental directives within their respective commands. Commanders will ensure that at each worksite employees are aware of, and have access to, the written directives. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 12.2.1c)
- 3.3 Supervisors will document certified interpreters on the Roll Call Assignment Sheet with "INT" and the language the officer has been certified in. (Example: INT-SPAN for Interpreter who speaks Spanish).
- 3.4 The Hispanic Liaison within the Community Services Division (CSD) will make their services available to the Spanish speaking community groups within the City of Atlanta.
- 3.5 Employees will inform the Department of their foreign language skills by including this information on Employee Data Form.

4. ACTION

4.1 LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

- 4.1.1 When it is apparent that effective communication between a citizen and a Department employee may not occur due to language barriers, the employee will seek assistance from a certified interpreter or by contacting iSpeakATL for interpretation services.
- 4.1.2 When a Communications Call Taker receives a call and is unable to communicate with the individual effectively due to a language barrier, the Communications call taker will refer the caller to a certified interpreter working in the Communications Section. If there are no certified interpreters available for the required language, the dispatcher will call the Language Line (1-866-462-8641) and connect the caller with an interpreter by telephone.
- 4.1.3 The operator will advise the dispatcher that the caller is an LEP individual and indicate their primary language to the responding officer. The dispatcher will make every effort to dispatch a certified interpreter to the scene to assist the officer.

- 4.1.4 The Department will take reasonable steps to develop in-house language capacity in the Communications Section. The Department will determine its Communications Section's staffing needs, and work with the Department of Human Resources to recruit and hire qualified staff with foreign language skills.

4.2 OFFICERS REQUESTING INTERPRETATION SERVICES

- 4.2.1 When Officers encounter a language barrier, they will attempt to identify the individual's primary language with the use of a Language Identification Card (LIC) found at the bottom of this SOP. Once the primary language has been identified, the Officer will request an available interpreter or contact iSpeakATL by phone for interpretation assistance.
- 4.2.2 Officers should only use the general public for interpreting in an informal, non-confrontational context, and only to obtain basic information at the request of the LEP individual. Officers should not use minors to provide interpreter services, unless absolutely necessary.

4.3 CERTIFIED INTERPRETERS

- 4.3.1 The commissioner of human resources, or designee, will be responsible for the authorization and approval of the Spanish Proficiency assessment.
- 4.3.2 Sworn employees, from the rank of Police Officer Recruit to Police Captain, and civilian employees working in Communications may be eligible to receive bilingual incentive pay upon passing an authorized and approved Spanish proficiency exam and retesting every two years. (Section 114-140 - Bilingual incentive pay)
- 4.3.3 Employees in need of interpretation services by a certified interpreter will contact iSpeakATL for assistance, if there are no interpreters available on shift.
- 4.3.4 If an employee requests an interpreter on scene, a Communications Supervisor will request an available Certified Interpreter from the current Roll Call Assignments Sheets to assist.
- 4.3.5 During the investigation, the officer will conduct the interview speaking through the interpreter. Under no circumstances will the interpreter independently question an LEP individual.
- 4.3.6 If the officer believes that the assigned certified interpreter has a conflict of interest, biased either in favor of or against the LEP individual, or other legitimate reasons for refusing their services, a supervisor will be notified and determine whether the situation warrants requesting a different certified interpreter. The officer will document the certified interpreter change in their report.
- 4.3.7 Under exigent circumstances, such as, but not limited to, obtaining descriptive information about a fleeing suspect or identifying an injured person, an officer may use the most reliable temporary interpreter available.

4.4 CONDUCTING INTERROGATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

- 4.4.1 Failure to protect the rights of LEP individuals during arrests and interrogations presents risks to the integrity of the investigation. Miscommunication during interrogations or interviews may have a substantial impact on evidence presented in any criminal proceedings. Only certified interpreters may conduct interrogations and interviews on suspects and witnesses.
- 4.4.2 An interpreter is permitted to read Miranda, Implied Consent, and all other vital documents to the individual in their primary language.

4.5 TRANSLATING OF DEPARTMENTAL FORMS

All relevant Atlanta Police Department forms as determined and authorized by the Chief of Police will be translated and made available in an individual's primary language through the City of Atlanta's iSpeakATL program.

4.6 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

iSpeakATL is a free, competent and effective language access service available to the public and employees 24/7.

4.7 MONITORING SERVICES

4.7.1 The CLU and Hispanic Liaison will review all translated APD Forms that the department issued in the previous calendar year, determine their validity and relevance to the general public, and contact iSpeakATL to oversee the issuance of newly translated documents if required. The findings of the review will be reported annually to the Community Services Division (CSD) Commander.

4.7.2 If an incident occurs where language assistance service is provided, the officer will document the use of these services in the incident report.

5. DEFINITIONS

Bilingual: The ability to read, write, and speak two languages proficiently.

Interpretation: The listening to a communication in one language and converting it orally or written to another language while retaining the same meaning.


Limited English Proficiency (LEP): designates individuals whose primary language is not English and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or comprehend English.

Primary Language: An individual's native language in which they most effectively communicate.

6. CANCELLATIONS & RENEWAL

APD.SOP.6143, Limited English Proficiency Plan, issued December 17, 2018.
Renewal date: November 20, 2028

7. REFERENCES



The poster is for the "USE THE COA LANGUAGE LINE!" service. It features a grid of 16 diverse people's faces at the top. The text "Hablo!" is next to one face, and "说" (Shuo) is next to another. The poster is from the Mayor's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs and iSpeak ATL. It provides instructions on how to use the service: 1. Determine the Preferred Language, 2. Dial 866-462-8641, 3. Enter 80128093#, 4. Press a language code. A list of language codes is provided: 1 - Spanish, 2 - Mandarin, 3 - Cantonese, 4 - Arabic, 5 - Vietnamese, 6 - Haitian Creole, 7 - Russian, 8 - French, 9 - All Other Languages. It also includes a video thumbnail with the text "Open attachment to watch video" and a footer stating "Meaningful access to critical city services for people who are limited English proficient is required by law."

NEED INTERPRETATION?
USE THE COA LANGUAGE LINE!

HERE'S HOW!

Steps Outlined Below:

1. Determine the Preferred Language
2. Dial 866-462-8641 to connect to an Interpreter
3. Enter 80128093# when prompted
4. Press one of the following Language Codes:

1 - Spanish	6 - Haitian Creole
2 - Mandarin	7 - Russian
3 - Cantonese	8 - French
4 - Arabic	9 - All Other Languages
5 - Vietnamese	

FREE TO USE FOR ALL CITY DEPARTMENTS

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE EMAIL ISPEAKATL@ATLANTAGA.GOV

Meaningful access to critical city services for people who are limited English proficient is required by law.

LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION CARD (LIC)

	<p>If you need an interpreter, please point to your language</p>
<p>Arabic: عربي إذا كنت في حاجة إلى مترجم، أشر إلى اللغة المطلوبة</p>	<p>Korean: 한국어 통역서비스가 필요한 언어를 선택하십시오.</p>
<p>Bengali: বাংলা আপনার যদি একজন দোভাষীর প্রয়োজন হয়, সেখানে অনুগ্রহ করে আপনার ভাষা উল্লেখ করুন</p>	<p>Mandarin: 普通话 (Simplified) 國語 (Traditional)</p>
<p>Burmese: မြန်မာ စကားပြန်လိုရင် သင့်ဘာသာစကားကို လက်ညှိုးထိုးပြပါ။</p>	<p>Nepali: नेपाली यदि तपाईंलाई दोभाषे आवश्यक परेमा, कृपया आफ्नो भाषामा संकेत गर्नुहोस्</p>
<p>Cantonese: 粵語 (Simplified) 粵語 (Traditional)</p>	<p>Polish: Polski Jeśli potrzebują Państwo tłumacza, proszę wskazać na swój język.</p>
<p>Farsi: فارسی اگر به مترجم احتیاج دارید لطفاً با انگشت زبان خود را نشان دهید.</p>	<p>Portuguese: Português Se precisa de um intérprete aponte para o nome da língua que fala.</p>
<p>French: Français Si vous avez besoin d'un interprète, indiquez votre langue.</p>	<p>Punjabi: ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਦੁਆਬੀਏ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਲ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਕਰੋ।</p>
<p>Haitian Creole: Kreyòl Ayisyen Si w bezwen yon entèprèt, montre ki lang ou pale.</p>	<p>Russian: Русский Если Вам нужен переводчик, укажите свой язык.</p>
<p>Italian: Italiano Se avete bisogno di un interprete, puntate alla vostra lingua.</p>	<p>Somali: Soomaali Hadaad u baahan tahay qof kuu turjuma, tilmaamo luqadaada</p>
<p>Japanese: 日本語 通訳をお捜しの場合、必要な言語を指し示してください。</p>	<p>Spanish: Español Si necesita un intérprete, señale su idioma.</p>
<p>Karen: ကညီ နမ့်လိာ်ဘၣ် ပုၤကတိၤက့ၣ်သံတံၢ်အသိၣ်, ဝံသးစ့ၤနဲၣ်သိၤဆူန့ၣ်က့ၣ်သိၣ်အလီၢ်</p>	<p>Vietnamese: Tiếng Việt Nếu cần thông dịch viên xin hãy chỉ vào ngôn ngữ của quý vị.</p>



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