**Language Access Implementation Plan**

**2021**

1. **Agency name and agency language access coordinator**

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| **Agency name** | **NYC Department of Youth and Community Development** |
| **Name of the agency’s Language Access Coordinator (LAC) and all office titles held by this individual.** | **Andrew Miller, Senior Director, Intergovernmental Affairs and Executive Communications, EEO Counselor and Language Access Coordinator** |
| **Link to the agency’s Language Access Implementation Plan (LAIP) posted on the agency’s website.** | https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/about/news-and-media/reports-plans.page |

1. **Agency mission and background**

The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) invests in a network of community-based organizations and programs to alleviate the effects of poverty and to provide opportunities for all New Yorkers and communities to flourish. DYCD supports New York City youth and their families by funding a wide range of high-quality youth and community development programs. DYCD funds a wide range of innovative, practical and quality programs that positively impact youth and communities, including:

* Immigrant services programs assist participants with accessing government benefits; application assistance (including assistance with matters relating to citizenship and immigration status): employment; healthcare; social services: and civics classes in preparation for citizenship.
* Afterschool programs, including the nationally known Beacon programs; COMPASS, the largest municipally funded afterschool initiative in the country; and the Cornerstone Initiative in public housing developments
* Youth workforce development programs including the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), Train & Earn, Intern & Earn, Learn & Earn, and Work, Learn & Grow
* Runaway and homeless/LGBTQ youth outreach, drop in centers, and shelters
* Family support services, including the Fatherhood Initiative
* Literacy programs
* Technical assistance and capacity building for community-based organizations

DYCD is committed to building and expanding on partnerships that generate innovative and practical programs for youth, their families, and communities.

To ensure that all New Yorkers are aware of these services DYCD directly administers Community Connect to provide information and assistance to callers in over 180 languages. Additionally, discoverDYCDallows users to search in multiple languages for DYCD-funded programs, by borough, neighborhood or zip code, and provides contact information, activities offered, and a mapping feature with navigation.

1. **Agency language access policy and goals**

DYCD’s overarching goal for language access is to provide equal access of LEP individuals into DYCD’s array of services. This is accomplished by ensuring that they can locate services in their primary language on-line with the agency’s website and DiscoverDYCD and by calling Community Connect where live interpretation services are provided.

DYCD’s language access goal will be met through the following objective:

* Providing live interpretation services to LEP callers to **Community Connect**(formerly Youth Connect), a resource and referral service for communities and families of New York City. Community Connect aims to increase awareness of opportunities and services available to New Yorkers. When you contact our toll-free hotline, you are connected with an Engagement Specialist that not only provides top-notch customer service but provides the public with the most updated information. We are a one-stop shop resource for all ages. DYCD Community Connect is the connective thread of the agency which provides information and assistance to callers in over 180 languages.
* Free Interpretation services at DYCD offices. While most visitors to DYCD’s two office locations, 123 William Street and 2 Lafayette are representatives of community-based organizations funded by the agency, the availability of interpretation services is available to all visitors. Upon entry, visitors are greeted by agency receptionists and who with the assistance of a sign advertising free interpretation services in many different languages, connects the visitor to Language Line, which provides on-demand interpretation services with their over14,000 professionally-trained interpreters are fluent in more than 240 languages.
* Ensuring that resource information on the DYCD website can be translated into the required languages.
* Ensuring universal enrollment form and other commonly used forms are available in the 10 designated languages
* Translating commonly distributed documents in the 10 designated Citywide languages
* Ensuring that “plain language” is used whenever possible
* Translating community needs assessment forms in 10 designated Citywide languages
* Ensuring DYCD staff and the public are aware of DYCD’s Language Access policies so that that the public can access Community Connect, DiscoverDYCD and the agency’s website.

New Yorkers are made aware of DYCD’s services through its website (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/index.page>), the discoverDYCD portal

(<http://www.dycdportal.nyc/discoverdycd/home>) and Youth Connect (1-800-246-4646 or 646-343-6800).

1. **Agency Language Access Accomplishments and Progress Goals from the Previous LAIP Accomplishments:**

DYCD is proud of its efforts to ensure that every New Yorker can access DYCD’s services. We are constantly striving to make it simpler to find programs in communities across the city. With COVID-19 and the City’s worst economic crisis in 45 years, this was a year unlike any other. Going on PAUSE due to the pandemic meant meeting our core responsibilities while teleworking. DYCD’s IT team quickly had the agency up and running remotely including Community Connect. This helped ensure that LEP New Yorkers can get the most up-to-date information on programming. DYCD is committed to ensuring that all New Yorkers are able to learn about and enjoy services available to them.

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| **Language Access Goals** | **Update** |
| Identify a Language Access Coordinator | DYCD’s Senior Director of Intergovernmental Affairs serves as the Language Access Coordinator. |
| Providing interpretation services to LEP callers to Youth Connect to access services and ask questions to Youth Connect Resource Specialists | Community Connect has remained operational and available to the general public and is available to provide live interpretation services in over 240 languages through Language Line. |
| Ensure that resource information on the DYCD website can be translated into the required languages | Includes translation into all 10 required languages plus many others for over 180 language options. It provides information to young people, parents and community-based organizations about DYCD-funded services and how to access funding opportunities. DYCD launched discoverDYCD, a web platform that enables the public to search for and apply to DYCD Programs throughout New York City. After finding a program of interest, prospective applicants can choose to create a discoverDYCD account to apply to programs directly. Completing one online application enables an applicant to apply to multiple DYCD Programs. Like the agency website it is available in over 180 languages. |
| Ensure universal enrollment form is available in the 10 designated languages | Completed and is available through DYCD funded providers and on-line. |
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| Translating commonly distributed documents in the 10 designated Citywide languages | DYCD is constantly reviewing its most commonly distributed forms and translates them in the 10 designated languages plus Yiddish. |
| Ensuring that “plain language” is used whenever possible | The Language Access Coordinator and the Press Officer have attended a Plain Language presentation conducted by Language Line. These individuals review agency correspondence and materials. |
| Translating community needs assessment forms in 10 designated Citywide languages | Completed and used in recent NDA needs assessment in 41 communities across the city. |
| Ensuring DYCD staff and the public are aware of DYCD’s Language Access policies | Plan is posted on the agency website and shared with agency personnel. |

1. **LEP Population Assessment (Application of the US Department of Justice Four Factor Analysis)**

The United States Department of Justice states that agencies “should apply a four-factor test to decide what steps to take to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities to their programs and activities for LEP persons.”

The four factors include:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service area. According to U.S. Census Bureau, New York City residents who speak English less than “very well” are most likely to speak: Spanish, Chinese, Russian, French Creole, or Yiddish:

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| Spanish or Spanish Creole | 888,764 |
| Chinese | 319,622 |
| Russian | 114,804 |
| French Creole | 48,698 |
| Korean | 46,226 |
| Yiddish | 28,698 |
| Italian | 27,803 |
| Arabic | 26,695 |
| Polish | 26,465 |
| French | 22,841 |
| All others | 306,477 |

1. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program

The New York City Department of Education, over 42% of students enrolled in New York City public schools communicated in a language other than English at home. This information is helpful to DYCD as many participants in our services are public school students and attend programs located in DOE buildings.

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| NYC DOE Home Languages |  |
| English | 57.3% |
| Spanish | 23.39% |
| Chinese | 6.84% |
| Bengali | 2.35% |
| Arabic | 1.79% |
| Other | 8.33% |

To better assess the frequency of participants in DYCD funded programs the Universal Application which is available in all required languages. Form asks three specific Language Access questions to help DYCD identify Language Access needs of participants and communities. DYCD will share this data in future reports.

* How well does the applicant speak English? (Select One): ☐ Fluent/Very well ☐ Well

☐ Not well ☐ Not well at all

* Applicant’s Primary Language (Select One): ☐ English ☐ Albanian ☐ Arabic ☐ Bengali ☐ Chinese\* ☐ French ☐ Fulani ☐ German ☐ Gujarati ☐ Haitian Creole ☐ Hebrew

☐ Hindi ☐ Hungarian ☐ Italian ☐ Japanese ☐ Korean ☐ Kru, Ibo, or Yoruba ☐ Mande ☐ Punjabi ☐ Persian ☐ Polish ☐ Portuguese ☐ Romanian ☐ Russian ☐ Spanish

☐ Tagalog ☐ Turkish ☐ Urdu ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Yiddish ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*including Cantonese and Mandarin

* Other Languages Spoken by Applicant (Select all that Apply): ☐ English ☐ Albanian

☐ Arabic ☐ Bengali ☐ Chinese\* ☐ French ☐ Fulani ☐ German ☐ Gujarati

☐ Haitian Creole ☐ Hebrew ☐ Hindi ☐ Hungarian ☐ Italian ☐ Japanese ☐ Korean

☐ Kru, Ibo, or Yoruba ☐ Mande ☐ Punjabi ☐ Persian ☐ Polish ☐ Portuguese

☐ Romanian ☐ Russian ☐ Spanish ☐ Tagalog ☐ Turkish ☐ Urdu ☐ Vietnamese

☐ Yiddish ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Not applicable (only one language spoken by applicant)

\*including Cantonese and Mandarin

Additionally**,** In 2016, DYCD introduced a robust Community Needs Assessment (CNA) to hear directly from New Yorkers and document their views on what is needed to improve the well-being of their own communities. The findings demonstrated that programs and services in the categories of education, employment/career advancement, and basic needs are the top priorities, and these just happen to be the resources that would especially benefit low-income New Yorkers. The City has invested tremendous resources to begin to address these priorities, including expanding DYCD services and programs.

DYCD expanded on previous needs assessment efforts by introducing:

* Multiple surveys that combine common questions regarding service needs and gaps along with questions tailored to specific stakeholder groups: adults, employers, faith-based leaders, public school principals, program directors, CSBG-funded program participants, and key informants (elected officials and Community Board leaders).
* Use of newly released publications and studies to identify the causes and conditions of poverty in New York
* Adult Survey was translated in the required 10 languages and Yiddish. It included questions about the languages spoken at home. It revealed that in addition to the required languages, New Yorkers spoke other languages at home. The NDA reports can be found at www1.nyc.gov/site/dycd/involved/boards-and-councils/CNA.page. In addition to paper distribution, DYCD developed a series of web-based survey platforms.
* These findings helped shape Request for Proposals issued by DYCD in 2021 in an array of programs including Immigrant Services, ESOL, Adult Literacy, Senior Services, High School Educational Support, Healthy Families and Economic Development. The upcoming NDA programs will target low-income communities and provide strategies that address the needs of older youth, seniors, the working poor, immigrants, and struggling families through education and employment services, literacy services, and assistance to individuals and families in accessing community and social services. Programs will also promote community development through addressing safety and crime issues and supporting business development.

1. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program: The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) invests in a network of community-based organizations and programs to alleviate the effects of poverty and to provide opportunities for New Yorkers and communities to flourish. DYCD strives to improve the quality of life of New Yorkers by collaborating with local organizations and investing in the talents and assets of our communities to help them develop, grow and thrive. To be able to access services all New Yorkers, including LEP, must be able to easily locate programs in their community with a smart device or on the telephone.
2. The resources available to the Department, and costs associated with different language service options: DYCD has a contract with Language Line to translate documents and provide telephonic interpretation for Community Connect callers and visitors to DYCD offices. The Language Access Coordinator works with multiple units to facilitate the translation of documents. Should the translations need corrections, they are returned to the vendor for corrections. The LAC works with the Press office and unit heads to identify the most commonly distributed documents to have them translated in plain language. Staff are made aware of the agency’s translation resources at various management meetings.
3. Evaluation of Service Population LAS Needs: DYCD regularly reviews data provided by the Department of Education, the U.S. Census Bureau, the Community Needs Assessment and data relating to DYCD enrollment to evaluate the LAS needs of the service population, or likely service population to determine which languages should be provided supplemental to designated citywide languages.

**VI. Provision of Language Access Services**

DYCD is committed to ensuring that all New Yorkers are able to learn about and enjoy services available to them. DYCD’s overarching goal for language access is to allow access and utilization by LEP individuals into DYCD’s array of services. DYCD services are provided through contracts through non-profit providers who are selected through a competitive process. Cultural competency and understanding of the needs of specific neighborhoods, including languages spoken by the communities they serve plays an important role in this process.

DYCD directly administer its website, an on-line application called discoverDYCD and Community Connect, a toll-free confidential hotline. All of these services offer translation or interpretation services.

**Free interpretation services:**

* **Community Connect** is a resource and referral service for youth, families and community-based organizations (CBO) utilizing web-based strategies and a confidential toll-free hotline. Community Connect’s mission is to increase access to and visibility of New York City’s opportunities for young people by serving as one-stop shopping for all youth-and community resources in NYC.Community Connect and receptionists at DYCD main offices provide information and assistance to callers in over 180 languages.
* **Notification of free interpretation services:** In the event a visitor to DYCD’s offices needs language assistance DYCD receptionists utilize tools developed by the Mayor’s Office to assist agencies in the implementation of their language access services. These tools include standard signage and language identification tools. The signs have been updated to include 22 languages including those required by law.

**Translation Services:**

* **DYCD Website** includes translation into all required languages plus many others for over 180 language options. It provides information to young people, parents and community-based organizations about DYCD-funded services and how to access funding opportunities.
* **discoverDYCD**allows users to search in multiple languages for DYCD-funded programs, by borough, neighborhood or zip code, and provides contact information, activities offered, and a mapping feature with navigation. It provides enhanced search capabilities for New Yorkers to find DYCD resources in over 180 languages. DYCD also launched the sign-up feature which allows users to apply to many of DYCD-funded services directly from the web or smart phone in all required languages. The goal is for discoverDYCD to serve as the hub to develop pathways for our participants, enable access to other City services and benefits, directly capture participant feedback, and market events.
* **Translations of the most commonly distributed documents:** DYCD has supported the translation of the most commonly distributed documents including the Community Needs Assessment, universal applications, and parents’ consent forms through Language Line. The Language Access Coordinator works with the Senior Director of Strategic Communications & Stakeholder Engagement, the Office of Public Information and other senior staff in determining which commonly distributed materials need to be translated into the required languages and others including Yiddish and on the use of plain language. DYCD also surveys agency personnel on language skills to assist as well.
* **Emergency Preparedness:** DYCD’s website and Community Connect are constantly updated to reflect which programs are operational. This helps ensure that LEP New Yorkers can get the most up-to-date information on programming and other critical services.

1. **Training**

DYCD provided the agency’s Language Access Plan to all employees. The Language Access Coordinator meets with agency personnel including Community Connect to discuss the City’s Language Access laws and ensure that the agency continues to meet and exceed its requirements.

1. **Record keeping and evaluation**

DYCD keeps a record of the number of calls received by Community Connect and requiring interpretation services. Additionally, DYCD tracks all complaints filed thru 311, Community Connect and the Commissioner’s e-mail portal.

1. **Resource analysis and planning**

DYCD contracts with Language Line to handle calls received by Community Connect and visitors to agency reception areas to provide interpretation services. Additionally, DYCD has supported the translation of the most commonly distributed documents through Language Line including the Community Needs Assessment, universal applications, and parents’ consent forms. DYCD also surveys agency personnel on language skills to assist as well. DYCD will be reviewing the number of calls received through Community Connect and data collected on the Universal Application form to make refinements to its Language Access Plan.

The Language Access Coordinator meets regularly with Community Connect, the Public Information Officer and the Agency Chief Contracting Officer to ensure the agency has the resources necessary to support this plan.

1. **Outreach and public awareness of language access services**

DYCD broadly and consistently promotes Community Connect and DiscoverDYCD through social media, email blasts and advertises that information is available in over 180 languages. DYCD also issues press information to many publications including many in other languages and our large cadre of community-based organizations publishes the availability of services in their community.

1. **Language Access complaints**

Members of the public may make complaints concerning Language Access through 311, Community Connect, the DYCD Commissioner’s office or directly through the Language Access Coordinator. The Language Access Coordinator is responsible for keeping a log of all complaints, and ensuring that all are addressed in a timely fashion.

**XII. Implementation plan logistics**

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| Language access goal | Milestones | Responsible staff | Deadline |
| Continue enhancements to DiscoverDYCD including expansion of online enrollment | Ability of New Yorkers to find and sign up for a program on-line in their language. | IT | Ongoing improvements are constantly made. |
| Providing interpretation services to LEP callers to Community Connect to access services and ask questions to Community Connect Resource Specialists | All LEP callers are immediately connected to services through interpretation services through Language Line. | Community Connect | On-going |
| Translating commonly distributed documents in the 10 designated Citywide languages and others as needed in plain language. | Universal forms and other commonly distributed documents are available in the 10 required languages as needed. | Program staff, Language Access Coordinator and the Office of Public Information. | On-going |