

The following document outlines SBS' Language Access Implementation Plan for Local Law 30

I. Agency mission and background

The NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS) helps unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building vibrant neighborhoods across the five boroughs.

We are focused on equity of opportunity that leads to economic self-sufficiency and mobility.

The agency interacts with the public in a variety of ways directly and through contracted vendors including:

Careers

We prepare and help New Yorkers to find jobs and help businesses find the talent they need by:

- Developing job search skills through resume and interviewing workshops
- Training local residents to acquire skills in growing fields
- Connecting jobseekers to employers with open positions

The Workforce1 Career Centers interact with the highest volume of individuals served by the agency. These customers are seeking jobs or job-related services such as training, career-advisement, workshops, and job search-related supports.

Businesses

We help businesses start, operate, and grow in New York City by:

- Helping minority and women-owned businesses (M/WBEs) get City-certified and compete for contracts
- Connecting entrepreneurs to free resources ranging from business courses to legal services
- Explaining government rules and regulations
- Helping entrepreneurs apply for funding to launch or grow a business

The NYC Business Solutions Centers are second in the volume of individuals accessing SBS services and in the amount of one-on-one support and interactions customers require. These centers assist entrepreneurs starting businesses, customers who often need more intensive support than established businesses and have fewer resources that they can draw upon internally.

M/WBE, LBE and EBE Certification & related services provide access and support for business that aim to bid for and obtain City contracts; therefore it is essential that access to this program be available to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals. The additional programs and services listed serve increasingly larger and/or well-established businesses rather than individuals; or their services have, as an objective, improvements in customer-produced output that are English-only in nature; in this case, capitalizing on City, State and Federal Government contracting opportunities, which require that proposals be submitted in English

Neighborhoods

We work with community-based organizations to build vibrant neighborhoods where New Yorkers can shop, work, and live by:

- Overseeing the largest network of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in the country, which delivers more than \$134 million in additional services throughout the five boroughs
- Offering training, tools, and one-on-one assistance to local community-based organizations
- Administering grant programs to strengthen and revitalize commercial districts
- Working with community partners to identify local commercial district needs and plan targeted solutions

II. Agency language access policy and goals

SBS' policy and goal is to obtain the highest possible quality of customer service, adhering to the spirit and the letter of Local Law 30, with the highest degree of operational flexibility and the lowest possible ongoing cost of operations. Given SBS' presence in neighborhoods across the city and the proportion of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons in New York City, we must ensure that they can access our services despite language barriers. We will have successfully implemented our plan when providing LEP supports alongside English language offerings will be the new operating normal at SBS. We plan to measure and evaluate our progress to ensure that we are successful, as described in subsequent sections of this Language Access Plan.

III. LEP population assessment

The SBS plan incorporates the following analysis, which is a combination of the Four Factor Analysis and data collected from services provided from the agency.

1. Department of Justice Factor 1: *The number of LEP persons served or encountered in the eligible service area*

In anticipation of implementing our original Language Access Plan, SBS completed an analysis of the linguistic profile of LEP persons in the community districts in which SBS' central office and brick-and-mortar locations are located to determine the number and proportion of LEP individuals in those areas, as well as their preferred languages. We currently leverage data from the [American Community Survey](#) to inform our decisions.

2. Department of Justice Factor 2: *The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program*

SBS has LEP language support request tracking already in place at all Workforce1 Career Centers. There is a regular influx of LEP persons into all of our walk-in facilities, which would likely only increase with the implementation of LEP supports, multiple-language web content, and service descriptions.

3. Department of Justice Factor 3: *The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program*

SBS has created Language Access Plan "Snapshots" for each of the program divisions and services outlined in the Agency Mission and Background section, with service-specific analysis as to LEP supports available, linguistic profile analyses performed, Essential Public Documents inventoried, etc. The Language Access Plan "Snapshots" allowed us to rank agency's services according to priority level for implementation of the Language Access Plan. SBS' Language Access Plan was built from these service-specific analyses, so that we can implement it in a targeted and effective way, understanding the baseline we have to work with and the service structure and constraints for each of the agency's services.

4. Department of Justice Factor 4: *Resources available to the Agency*

- SBS Staff Foreign Language Skill Locator tool – internal database, searchable and accessible via SBS' intranet, that contains foreign language skills and proficiency levels of SBS staff
- Walk-in facilities' staff existing foreign language skills
- Signage and "I Speak" cards

- City-wide Volunteer Language Bank
- Vendor contracts for phone interpretation, in-person interpretation, and document translation

In addition, after evaluating the customer requests from across the agency, we have determined the top 10 languages most requested within our customer base in order of frequency are as follows:

- Spanish
- Russian
- Mandarin-Chinese
- Cantonese-Chinese
- Korean
- Haitian (French) Creole
- Fujianese-Chinese (Fuzhou)
- French
- Polish
- Bengali

Based on the above analysis, no supplemental languages to the designated citywide languages are necessary to provide services.

IV. Provision of language access services

In general, SBS provides language access in the three following ways. Please see below for additional details and processes.

- Signage at Public Service Locations
 - SBS will ensure that appropriate signage has been installed in all center locations serving the public
 - If any new centers are opened in the five boroughs, programs will be required to ensure proper signage at all locations.
- Interpretation Services
 - SBS has requested that contracted vendors recruit bilingual staff at the walk-in centers to meet the needs of the community in which they serve.
 - SBS has access to a Telephone Interpretation Vendor: Voiance is the current phone interpretation provider when a staff member is not available.
 - In-Person Interpretation Vendor: When holding community meetings, press events, and other larger scale in-person interactions, we rely on both bilingual staff and an in-person interpreter provided by our vendor, Geneva Worldwide.
- Translation of Written Material
 - Essential Public Documents: This is an ongoing need as our services evolve to meet the needs of the market and community.
 - Marketing Materials/Notice of Services Provided: This is an ongoing need as our services evolve to meet the needs of the market and community.

Translation:

- Each division in the agency has identified the most commonly distributed collateral by volume and has prioritized translation of these by the frequency of need in languages other than English. All documents and the translated versions are available for download and use on SBS' internal web.
- The identification of essential public documents for translation as well as marketing materials will be an ongoing need as our services evolve to meet the needs of the market and communities served.

- As an example, collateral used for SBS' Compliance Consultations for retail, food service, and personal care businesses were translated into seven languages based on the population of business owner's languages spoken.
- Other divisions have prioritized documents for translation in a similar fashion.
- For new translations, the agency has a process outlined below for the additional documents to be converted into other languages:
 - Through the division's Language Access Coordinator, SBS staff will work with the Communications team to identify outreach purpose, the intended target audience, and how the document will be distributed.
 - The following items must be identified for all documents, posts, or presentations to be translated:
 - SBS Division or Center requesting translation
 - From which language(s) to which language(s)
 - Deadline or due date for finished product
 - Number of words to be translated
 - All documents, posts, or presentations to be translated must incorporate the principles of plain language using guidance from the Mayor's Office of Adult Education/Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs publication *Easy-To-Read NYC Guidelines for Clear and Effective Communications*, [Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer](#), and [plainlanguage.gov](#).

Interpretation:

- SBS provides different options for assisting LEP customers, including resources through the SBS Language Bank, the Citywide Volunteer Language Bank, and through contracted vendors. Below are the three ways customers can be assisted:
- For walk-in customers at center locations:
 1. Customer indicates his or her preferred language from the *Free Interpretation Service Available* poster. If the preferred language is not available on the poster, please call our telephonic interpretation vendor.
 2. Once the preferred language has been indicated, complete an "I Speak..." card on the customer's behalf. The customer should carry the "I Speak..." card with him/her and show it at any New York City government agency.
 3. If further assistance communicating with the customer is required, use the SBS Language Bank which can be accessed on SBS' internal web
- For In-Person Interpretation: Professional interpreters are available through our vendor Accurate Communication. Teams seeking interpretation should complete the request form and email it along with anything that will help provide context like a presentation, brochure, flyer, to the division's dedicated Language Access Coordinator.

Emergency Preparedness and Response:

SBS has incorporated an Emergency Preparedness Plan to ensure that LEP customers are able to access language services during an emergency. This plan includes ensuring that documents are translated, signage in public locations is conspicuous, appropriate multilingual signage and LEP identification tools are available at emergency sites, interpreters can be contacted and utilized, and other translation resources and vendors are available in the event of an emergency.

V. Training

Agency Staff: Each division at SBS has a lead Language Access Coordinator who works directly with program managers. The Language Access Coordinators will ensure that relevant staff within each division is fully aware of SBS' language access policies and procedures.

The Language Access Coordinator will conduct trainings minimally once each year with the relevant staff within the division, and ad hoc training can be provided to new staff as they are on-boarded. Relevant

staff will include any individuals overseeing programming or contracts with vendors that provide direct services to the public. Aside from SBS and City policy and standard procedures, training will include topics such as City demographics, resources to evaluate the demographics for targeted populations or geographies, and historical data on programs to inform the best approach to ensure access is readily available. All trainees will be made aware of the internal web that SBS provides to help individuals to self-serve and have access to all language access resources. These include the following resources, among others:

- “I Speak...” cards and “Free Interpretation” posters to download
- SBS Language Bank
- City Language Bank
- How to access professional interpretation and translation services
- Walk-In Center Resources
- Mayor's Office of Adult Education/Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs publication Easy-To-Read NYC Guidelines for Clear and Effective Communications, [Mayor's Office of the Chief Technology Officer](#), and plainlanguage.gov

The SBS Language Access Plan primary contact will ensure that Language Access Coordinators have the materials and resources needed and will join trainings as necessary, and that trainings are happening as planned.

Vendor Staff: For divisions at SBS that have contracted vendors that provide services, the Language Access Coordinator will ensure that with program managers within the division who manage these contracts are fully. The Language Access Coordinators will provide training to vendor staff on SBS’ language access policies and procedures as needed.

VI. Record keeping and evaluation

SBS will track services and maintain records of language services with its various Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools, which vary by program and division.

In addition, SBS will maintain a log of all translation and interpretation services utilized. 311 inquiries for Language Access will be tracked and logged with SBS’ internal database for all 311 inquiries. Complaints submitted electronically will be tracked and logged with the appropriate CRM system.

In addition, SBS looks forward to the work that will be done in the summer to evaluate language access principles at our physical locations across the City. Based on the feedback provided, SBS will evaluate what other adaptations or modifications should be implemented in these locations. All recommendations and modifications or changes to the plan will be captured as part of this Implementation Plan.

VII. Resource analysis and planning

SBS will leverage the following resources to implement the language access plan.

- Telephonic Interpretation: Language Line
- Document translation: Geneva Worldwide
- Interpretation: Accurate Communication
- SBS Language Bank: Database of SBS employees and proficiency with various languages who have agreed to help review documents and provide services
- Citywide Language Bank: Database of City employees and proficiency with various languages
- SBS communications and marketing team for plain language guidance and design and layout of collateral

- Various customer relationship management (CRM) systems (will be consolidated in FY19 into a single solution)

To identify and close gaps in access in service, SBS will follow this protocol:

1. Periodic examination of demographics data of customers served; as gaps in service and need are identified, use data to determine how additional services should be provided in new languages or documents require translation
2. Annual evaluation of complaints submitted to agency and determination if systematic action is required

SBS will continue to work towards the delivery of quality language assistance services, and take the following steps:

1. Evaluate the vendor performance annually and ad hoc as inquiries and complaints necessitate.
2. Provide additional ad hoc training as needed for SBS staff and/or contracted service vendors requiring additional assistance understanding
3. As mentioned previously, the work that will be done in the summer to evaluate language access at our physical locations will inform our work and provision of language access.

VIII. Outreach and public awareness of language access services

SBS provides services in multiple languages at its 21 Workforce1 Career Centers for jobseekers, and 7 NYC Business Solutions Centers for entrepreneurs. SBS also promotes programs for entrepreneurs and jobseekers in multiple languages across various SBS platforms:

- Social media channels including Twitter and Facebook
- Direct email marketing
- Advertising in ethnic media publications (as resources allow)
- Printed marketing materials
- Website

SBS also works directly with ethnic press to promote services that are available in multiple languages.

IX. Language Access complaints

SBS will monitor and respond to all public complains about Language Access through both 311 and any other inquiries through its website via “contact us” portals within three (3) business days.

Inquiries and complaints about Language Access will be received depending on the methodology of the inquiry or complaint. For calls via 311, SBS will receive the inquiry via email from 311Agency Analyst, which will be directed to the Language Access Coordinator overseeing the program or initiative in question and will work with program teams to address the issue. For inquiries submitted electronically, division Language Access Coordinators will be notified and work with program teams to address the query.

311 inquiries for Language Access will be tracked and logged with the appropriate CRM system, ultimately with the single solution.

All inquiries will be reported annually. For CY 2017 there were no complaints registered.

X. Implementation plan logistics

Michael Silver, Senior Policy Advisor is the Agency Language Access Coordinator for SBS. Contact information is below:

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The SBS implementation plan logistics are outlined in the table below:

Language access goal	Milestones	Responsible staff	Deadline
Post implementation plan on website	After finalization of LA plan	SBS Language Access Coordinator and Communications team	July 2018
Identify any essential documents not yet translated	Each division LA Coordinator to identify	SBS Language Access Coordinator and Communications team	July 2018
Translate any essential documents not yet translated		SBS Language Access Coordinator and Division Language Access Coordinators	December 2018
Update signage at walk-in centers as needed	As any new vendors are finalized, signage at any new locations will meet guidelines.	SBS Language Access Coordinator and Division Language Access Coordinators	December 2018
Establish training dates for each division	Each division to set schedule	SBS Language Access Coordinator and Division Language Access Coordinators	August 2018
Complete annual training for each divisions	By the end of each Fiscal Year	SBS Language Access Coordinator and Division Language Access Coordinators	June 2019
Evaluation of vendors and services	Every 6 months	SBS Language Access Coordinator, Division Language Access Coordinators, vendors	October 2018 and April 2019
New programs and essential documents translated	As new programming is established, funded, and launched	Division Language Access Coordinators and Communications team	Ongoing