



Tulsa Area Workforce Development Board, Inc.
Proudly serving Creek, Osage, Pawnee and Tulsa Counties in Oklahoma

Limited English Proficiency Plan

Program Year 2017 – Program Year 2019

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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this Limited English Proficiency plan is to provide assurances and demonstrate that customers of Workforce Tulsa are being provided meaningful access to program information, benefits and services to those customers who may be limited in their English Language Proficiency. This plan will be updated every three years to refresh the assurances contained in this plan, address change in methods, update any changes in the LEP population, and include stakeholder and beneficiary feedback.

It is understood that the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) is charged with the duty to ensure that each local workforce development board (LWDB) complies with all relevant federal requirements involving applicants/recipients of program information, benefits, and services who have limited English Language Proficiency (LEP).

II. Authority

- U. S. Department of Labor, Civil Rights Center, Directive No. 2006-03
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (29 USC § 3248)
- Department of Labor Training and Employment Notice 28-16
- Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 38
- Office of Oklahoma Workforce Development (OOWD) Oklahoma Workforce Development Issuance (OWDI) #17-2017, Limited English Proficiency.
- Workforce Tulsa Limited English Proficiency Policy

III. Definitions

- A. Babel Notice:** a short notice included in a document or electronic medium (e.g. web site, application, “app” email) in multiple languages informing the reader that the communication contains vital information, and explaining how to access language services to have the contents of the communication provided in other languages (29 CFR Section 38.4(i)).
- B. Employment-related training:** training that allows or enables an individual to obtain skills, abilities, and/or knowledge that are designed to lead to employment (29 CFR Section 38.4(t)).
- C. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individual:** an individual whose primary language for communication is not English and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, and/or understand English. An LEP individual may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g. speaking or understanding), but still be LEP for other purposes (e.g. reading or writing) (29 CFR Section 38.4(hh)).
- D. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan:** A written language access plan which assists in ensuring that LEP individuals have meaningful access to WIOA Title I-financially assisted programs and activities (29 CFR Section 38.9 Appendix).
- E. Meaningful Access:** Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the LEP individual. For LEP individuals, meaningful access denotes access that is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior as compared to programs or activities provided to English proficient individuals.
- F. Primary language:** An individual’s primary language is the language in which an individual most effectively communicates, as identified by the individual.
- G. Vital Documents:** Forms or documents designed and utilized by the LWDB that are critical for accessing federally funded services or benefits or are required by law. Vital documents can include but are not limited to applications for WIOA programs, consent forms designed by the LWDB letters designed by the LWDB requesting eligibility documentation.

IV. LEP Population

Workforce Tulsa has determined that the language(s) other than English that is most likely to be encountered by employees of the Workforce Tulsa is Spanish. The methodology used to make this determination is as follows:

The U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, and the OOWD provided area language data. Workforce Tulsa staff encounters with customers are consistent with the data from these reports. Any LEP language group that comprises at least 5% of persons eligible for or likely to be affected by the LWDBs services or benefits must be included as one of the county languages. Workforce Tulsa will monitor the LEP population of those served or those who could be served during its scheduled Equal Opportunity monitoring.

If it is determined that other LEP language groups are seeking benefits/services or are potentially eligible to receive benefits/services within the counties of Creek, Osage, Pawnee, or Tulsa, Workforce Tulsa will adjust its methods and services to serve the new population accordingly. Any new LEP populations will be reflected in the revised LEP plan.

V. Methods of Providing Services to LEP Population

Comprehensive centers in the Workforce Tulsa area may utilize the following methods of providing services.

- Bi-lingual Employee(s)
- Staff Interpreter(s)
- Interpreter Services
- A Personal Interpreter
- Technology Software

VI. Interpreter Services

Workforce Tulsa, at no cost to the LEP individuals or families, provides interpreter services to all LEP individuals or families applying for or participating in programs or receiving services/benefits through Workforce Tulsa, by the means designated in section V. of this plan. The interpreter services are provided in an efficient and timely manner so as not to delay a determination of eligibility for an individual or family, receipt of eligible services/benefits or participation in a WIOA program beyond that of an English-speaking individual or family.

Workforce Tulsa makes this policy known to the LEP through the following methods (e.g. posters in other languages, Babel cards, etc.). Signs on the receptionist counter state, in the 12 most common spoken languages, that the interpreter services are available at no cost.

Workforce Tulsa addresses phone calls and voice mail from LEP individuals through initiating a three-way call using the interpretation phone number.

Workforce Tulsa addresses individuals that walk into its facilities in need of LEP services in the following manner:

1. When a LEP individual walks into the AJC for services, then indicates the language of choice using the "I Speak" card, the intake personnel will provide assistance and information with the assistance of a staff person that can serve as an interpreter a volunteer interpreter by telephone, or electronically through Google Translator. The individual must be informed that all interpretation services are free. Alternative interpreter services are available electronically at: <https://www.lep.gov/resources/resources.html>.
2. The LEP individual will be served in a location suitable to allow confidentiality, such as a conference room with a speakerphone or other suitable arrangement.
3. During the initial meeting, the LEP individual will be provided a language identification card ("I Speak" card) listing the language of their choice. The LEP individual may keep this language identification card in their possession to display to staff as they are processed through the WIOA process. Accepting and/or maintaining this language identification card is voluntary and will not impede the delivery of services.

4. In the event the intake personnel are unable to determine the LEP individual's language choice, they will immediately contact the One-Stop Operator to find alternative resources available to use with the LEP individual.
5. Each step of the initial assessment for services including and up to service delivery will include the language interpretation service. This includes email blast of information to all participants. This information will be provided in their choice of language.

Workforce Tulsa does not require, suggest, or encourage LEP individuals or families to use friends, family members, or minor children as interpreters. If an LEP individual or family insists that a friend or family member serve as interpreter, Workforce Tulsa will inform the customer that the family may stay but will not be able to serve as the interpreter. Only during rare occasions when there is no other strategy, such as interpretations over the phone, Workforce Tulsa will then, on a case-by-case basis, consider this avenue. Some factors that would need to be reviewed prior to the usage of this method are as follows: competence of the family or friend used as the interpreter, the appropriateness of the use in light of the circumstances, and ability to provide quality and accurate information. This is especially important if the interview could result in a negative effect on the individual or family's eligibility for benefits/services, potential or actual conflicts of interest, and confidentiality of the information being interpreted to determine whether Workforce Tulsa should provide its own independent interpreter for itself. In no case does Workforce Tulsa allow a minor child to act as interpreter for an LEP individual or family.

VII. Translation of Documents

Workforce Tulsa translates all center designed vital documents into each LEP language group that comprises at least 5% of persons eligible for or likely to be affected by the agency's services. Currently, the LEP language group meeting this criterion is Spanish.

Workforce Tulsa translates all outreach documents for each LEP group that equals 7% of persons eligible for or likely to be directly affected by the WIOA services. Currently, the LEP language group meeting this criterion is Spanish.

For any LEP individuals applying or receiving services from Workforce Tulsa where vital documents are not available in the LEP individual's language, Workforce Tulsa first uses Google Translator to provide the information immediately. If that process is not sufficient, then Workforce Tulsa provides a notice in the LEP individual's language that the LEP individual may bring any workforce system document into the Workforce Tulsa office and an interpreter will be provided free of charge to interpret the document for the LEP individual.

VIII. Dissemination of Information to Workforce Tulsa Personnel

Workforce Tulsa makes its personnel aware of its LEP policies, methods of providing services to LEP individuals and other information contained within this plan through the following:

The One-Stop Operator will conduct training annually and provide one-on-one training for newly hired staff members so that staff is knowledgeable about its obligation to provide meaningful access to information and services for LEP customers. The One-Stop Operator will ensure:

1. Staff members receive a copy of the LEP plan and are aware of where the current plan can be accessed electronically.
2. Staff knows about LEP policies and procedures
3. One-Stop Operator provide staff the names and contact information for all administrators authorized to procure interpreter services

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