

Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

Limited English Proficiency Plan

Effective: May 22, 2024

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INTRODUCTION

This Limited English Proficiency Plan, a crucial tool in addressing the needs of individuals with limited English language skills, has been meticulously prepared to uphold Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, Inc. (CMPDD) 's responsibilities as a recipient of federal financial assistance. It is in strict adherence to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq, and its implementing regulations, which unequivocally state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

Executive Order 13166, titled Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, indicates that differing treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write, or understand English is a type of national origin discrimination. It directs each agency to publish guidance for its respective recipients, clarifying their obligation to ensure such discrimination does not occur. This order applies to all state and local agencies that receive federal funds.

PLAN SUMMARY

CMPDD, with a commitment to inclusivity, has developed this comprehensive Limited English Proficiency Plan. It aims to identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to all persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) who wish to access the services provided. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. This plan outlines how to identify a person who may need language assistance, how assistance may be provided, staff training that may be required, and how to notify LEP people that assistance is available.

To prepare this plan, the system used the four-factor LEP analysis, which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area whom CMPDD may serve.
2. The frequency with which LEP people contact CMPDD services.
3. The nature and importance of services provided by CMPDD to the LEP population.
4. The interpretation services available to CMPDD and the overall cost to provide LEP assistance. A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is in the following section.

FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to require CMPDD services.

CMPDD staff reviewed the 2020 U.S. Census data using the 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Table. It determined that of 22,614 persons in the seven-county service area, 3.6% of the population speak a language other than English. Of those persons, 39.7% have limited English proficiency; that is, they speak English "not well" or "not at all." this is only 1.6% of the overall population aged five years and over in the CMPDD seven-county service area. Of those persons with limited English proficiency, 12,524 speak Spanish, 5,257 speak Indo-European languages, and 4,833 speak other languages.

2. The frequency with which LEP people contact CMPDD services.

CMPDD staff reviewed the frequency with which its programs and office staff have or could have, contact with LEP persons. This includes public involvement meetings, committee meetings, phone inquiries, and office visits. To date, CMPDD has had no requests for interpreters or translated program documents, and CMPDD and office staff have had very little contact with LEP persons.

3. The nature and importance of CMPDD services to the LEP population.

There is no large geographic concentration of LEP individuals in the CMPDD service area. Of the majority of the population, 90.15% speak only English. As a result, few social, service, professional, and leadership organizations within the CMPDD service area focus on outreach to LEP individuals. The CMPDD programs and staff are most likely to encounter LEP individuals through office visits, phone conversations, committee meetings, and attendance at published program meetings.

4. The resources available to CMPDD and overall costs to provide LEP assistance.

CMPDD reviewed its available resources for providing LEP assistance and which of its documents would be most valuable to be translated if the need should arise. Language translation, if needed, would be provided through a telephone/internet interpreter for whom CMPDD would pay a fee or through written translation when and if the budget allows.

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

A person who does not speak English as their primary language and has a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English may be a Limited English Proficient and entitled to language assistance concerning CMPDD programs and services. Language assistance can include interpretation, which means the oral or spoken transfer of a message from one language into another, and translation, which means the written transfer of a message from one language into another.

Identifying an LEP person who needs language assistance:

- Post notice of LEP Plan and the availability of interpretation or translation services free of charge in languages LEP persons would understand at initial points of contact.
- CMPDD office staff will be provided with "I Speak" cards to assist in identifying the language interpretation needed if the occasion arises.
- All CMPDD staff will be periodically informed of their experience and frequency concerning any contact with LEP persons during the previous year.
- Examine records to determine if requests for language assistance have been received to determine whether language assistance may be needed at future meetings.
- Translation may not be able to be provided at every event, but it can easily be identified as needed for future events.

Language Assistance Measures - Although there is a meager percentage in the CMPDD service area of LEP individuals, that is, persons who speak English "not well" or "not at all," it will strive to offer the following measures:

1. CMPDD staff will take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to LEP clients with difficulty communicating in English.
2. The following resources will be available to accommodate LEP persons:
 - i. Volunteers or paid interpreters may be provided within a reasonable period as the budget allows.
 - ii. Language interpretation may be accessed for languages through a telephone interpretation service/internet.

STAFF TRAINING

The following training will be provided to all applicable staff:

- Provide information on the Title VI Policy and LEP responsibilities annually.
- Description of language assistance services offered to the public, in person, by telephone, and on website.
- Use of the "I Speak" cards.
- Documentation of language assistance requests.

TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS

- CMPDD evaluated the cost and benefits of translating documents for potential LEP groups. Considering the expense of translating the documents, the likelihood of frequent changes in documents, and other relevant factors, it is an unnecessary burden to have any documents translated at this time.
- Due to the tiny local LEP population, CMPDD does not have a formal outreach procedure. However, when and if the need arises for LEP outreach, CMPDD will consider the following options:

When staff prepares a document or advertisement or schedules a meeting for which the target audience is expected to include LEP individuals, documents, meeting notices, flyers, and agendas will be printed in an alternative language based on the known LEP population.

MONITORING

Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan- CMPDD will update the LEP Plan as required. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed and updated when data from the U.S. Census is available or when a higher concentration of LEP individuals is identified in the CMPDD service area. Updates will include:

- Determination of the current LEP population in the service area.
- The number of documented LEP person contacts experienced annually.
- How have the needs of LEP people been addressed?
- Determine whether the need for translation services has changed.
- Determine whether local language assistance programs have been adequate to meet the need.
- Determine whether CMPDD's financial resources can fund language assistance resources.
- Determine whether CMPDD fully complies with the goals of this LEP Plan.

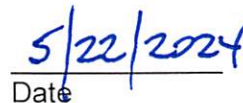
DISSEMINATION OF CMPDD LEP PLAN

Post notices on the CMPDD website notifying LEP persons of the LEP Plan and how to access languageservices.

ACCEPTANCE AND SIGNATURE

She was accepted and approved on behalf of Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, Inc.


Mike Monk, CEO


Date