

# 2015 Language Access Plan

## **Appendix A:**

### **Minneapolis Language Access Services, 2015**

# **Services Offered In Minneapolis City Departments For People With Limited English Proficiency**

RESULTS FROM ENGAGING CITY DEPARTMENTS REGARDING LANGUAGE SERVICE DELIVERY

Prepared by the Minneapolis Neighborhood and Community Relations Department

## I. Overview

In 2015, the Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) Department revisited the 2004 Limited English Proficiency Plan; updating it to reflect current enterprise practices and renaming it as the Language Access Plan. The Accessibility Liaison Network convened early June 2015 and assisted in identifying program managers and staff overseeing City services delivery. City staff was engaged to discuss current language practices in their operations. Furthermore, to identify departments needs in improving service delivery in alternative languages.

Information collected and assessed during this process drives the next steps to how language services are delivered enterprise-wide. NCR will work with departments and members of the Accessibility Liaison Network to implement training to City staff about available multilingual service tools and resources at their disposal. Additionally, NCR's Access and Outreach staff will provide consultation on engagement strategies to effectively communicate with Minneapolis' LEP communities.

Note that this report gives only a snapshot of the city enterprise and its language practices in 2015. Not all City divisions and programs were engaged about their program and service delivery to LEP residents. Conversations held were not an evaluation of the quality or comprehensiveness of City services. To give a thorough snapshot of the enterprise, departments with frequent LEP resident contact and/or responsible for managing space where LEP residents can access City services were interviewed. These are departments such as 311 (the City's customer service interface) or the Minneapolis Development Review Customer Service Center (staffed by Regulatory Services and the Community Planning and Economic Development department).

Findings include:

- City is in compliance with meeting LEP requirements;
- Need for clarification, training and consultation for staff on when to utilize interpreting and translation tools to communicate with LEP residents; and
- Need to track and monitor utilization of City services based on the language of residents.

## II. Methodology

In June 2015, NCR convened the Accessibility Liaison Network as part of the Americans with Disabilities Act evaluation and Limited English Proficiency Plan update. The network identified program managers and key staff to discuss the operations and delivery of their respective programs, services and/or activities. Establishing dialogues around accessibility, NCR held conversations around service delivery to LEP residents.

The format of the conversation covered:

- Identifying LEP-related services;
- Mechanisms to track and gather data of service utilization by LEP residents;

- Identifying resources, tools and/or services used to communicate with LEP residents; and
- Opportunities for the department or NCR to improve interactions with LEP residents.

### **III. Findings**

#### **Identifying LEP-related services**

Department managers and staff were asked to list programs, services and activities which have contact with and are used by LEP residents. Staff used the listed components below to identify LEP operations.

- The program, service or activity is federally funded;
- Financial implications for the resident;
- Involves a decision-making process;
- Volume: the program or service operating in a geographic area with dense LEP populations or frequent usage of programs/services.

A by-product of this process was multiple staff inquiring about where and how to increase interactions of LEP communities. The conversation revolved around the notion of access and equity for LEP residents to fully and effectively participate. Therefore, this process additionally allowed departments to identify where proactive engagement strategies should and/or are considered to interface with LEP residents.

Department	Programs and Services
311	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City information and services</li> </ul>
911	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency call center</li> </ul>
Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property inspections</li> <li>• Property tax programs</li> <li>• Property valuation reviews and appeals</li> </ul>
City Attorney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide legal opinions</li> <li>• Criminal prosecution and victim and witness contact</li> </ul>
Convention Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host and manage Convention Center’s public and private events, meetings and national conventions</li> </ul>
City Clerk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elections and voter services</li> <li>• Boards and commissions</li> <li>• Legislative support</li> <li>• Records and information management</li> </ul>
Civil Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate complaints of discrimination in Minneapolis</li> <li>• Review complaints against the Minneapolis Police Department</li> </ul>
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide communication assistance to City departments so the people of Minneapolis are aware of and have access to City news, information and services</li> <li>• Manage top-level enterprise content for City’s website</li> <li>• Produce original video productions for internal and external audiences</li> <li>• Provide limited graphic design support</li> </ul>
Community Planning and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable and rental housing assistance programs</li> <li>• Building inspections</li> <li>• Business license and permit counter issuance</li> <li>• Code compliance</li> <li>• Community and long range planning</li> <li>• Construction inspections</li> <li>• Economic development assistance</li> <li>• Employment and training</li> <li>• False burglar alarm user fees</li> <li>• Plan review</li> </ul>
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Billing for water/sanitation and manage call-in and walk-in centers</li> </ul>
Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EMS</li> <li>• Fire education</li> <li>• Fire prevention</li> <li>• Fire suppression</li> <li>• Rescue</li> </ul>

Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative support</li> <li>• Emergency preparedness</li> <li>• Environmental services</li> <li>• Food, lodging, pools</li> <li>• Healthy living and start</li> <li>• Healthy homes and environment</li> <li>• Lead and healthy homes</li> <li>• Maternal and child health assurance</li> <li>• Public health accreditation and quality improvement</li> <li>• School based clinics</li> <li>• Teen pregnancy prevention</li> <li>• UCARE skyway senior center</li> <li>• Youth violence prevention</li> </ul>
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage employee hiring process</li> </ul>
Information and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital inclusion engagement</li> <li>• Management of City website</li> <li>• Supervision of telecommunication administrators for the City’s general phone lines</li> </ul>
Regulatory Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal Care and Control</li> <li>• Appeals and assessment hearing</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Fire inspections</li> <li>• Housing inspections</li> <li>• Traffic and parking enforcement</li> </ul>
Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime prevention</li> <li>• Investigations</li> <li>• Precinct-level services</li> <li>• Records information</li> <li>• Property and evidence</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> </ul>
Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solid waste and recycling services, clean City programs</li> <li>• Water and sewer services</li> <li>• City-owned parking facilities (on-street and off-street/ramps), traffic systems, skyways, vehicle impound lot, permits for block events</li> <li>• Snow and ice control, street sweeping, sidewalks</li> <li>• Gopher State One-call for Minneapolis</li> <li>• Public construction and maintenance projects; including public notice, community involvement</li> <li>• Special assessment processes</li> </ul>

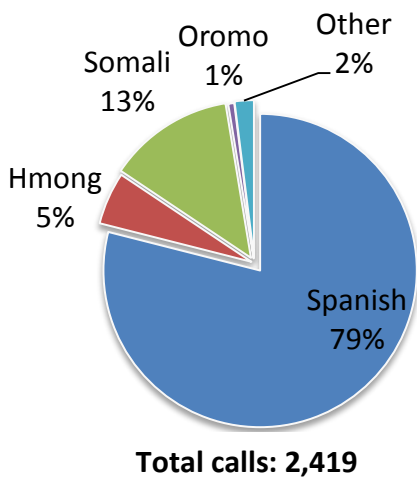
## Mechanisms to track and gather data of service utilization

From a high-level operations perspective, the City of Minneapolis has improved its methods for collecting data on LEP service utilization. One indicator is the use of contracted language vendors by departments. NCR manages the majority of the City's contracted language vendors, with the exception of the Health Department, Police, and 911 (who manages their own contracts). NCR works with departments in processing and scheduling requested interpreting and translation services.

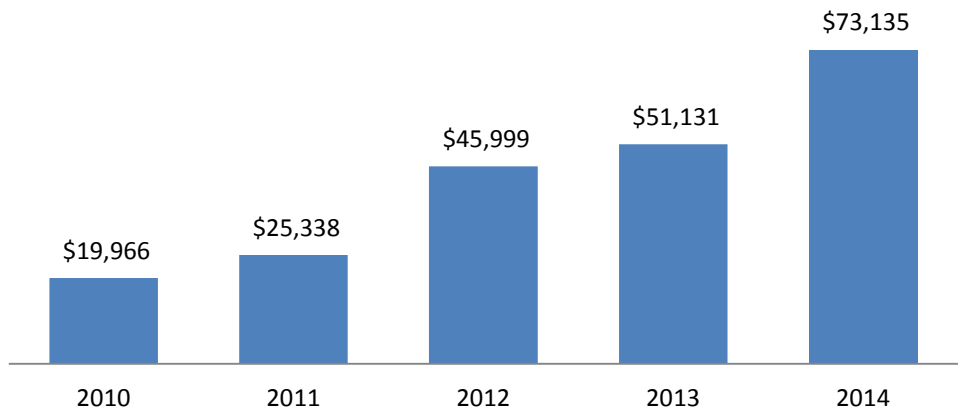
Data available for review:

- Total amount spent by department;
- Interpretation, translation, and/or American Sign Language services;
- When services were used; and
- Costs, duration and language of phone interpretation.

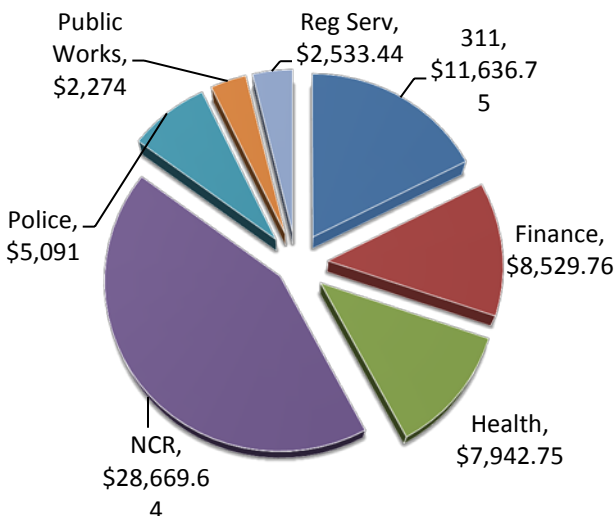
### # of Language Line calls (2014)



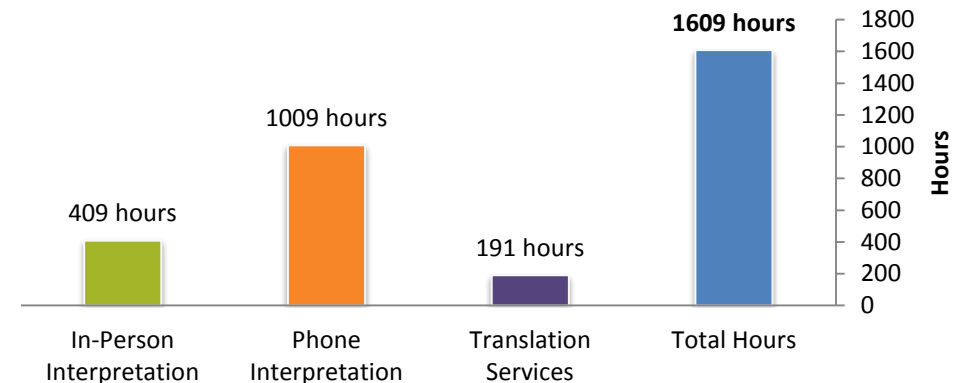
### Contracted language services expenditure (5-years)



### Contract language service expenditures (top 8 depts.)



### Contracted language service hours (2014)



## **Resources, tools and services used to communicate with LEP residents**

### *I-speak cards*

A majority of City departments features an “I-speak” card at the front counter for residents to identify needing a language accommodation.

### *Bilingual staff*

As with the previous 2004 plan, employing bi-lingual staff continues to be the most commonly used method of communicating with LEP residents. Interviews demonstrated bilingual staff as the most convenient method. This often occurs during at-counter or unplanned interactions where there is no time to request interpreters.

### *Phone interpretation services*

In 2013 and 2014, nearly half of the City departments used phone interpretation services. The majority of phone interpretation was used by NCR, 311, Utility Billing and Police. Other staff primarily used phone interpreters in the field when engaging with LEP residents.

### *Requested interpretation and translation services*

Annually, use of interpretation and translation contracts continues to increase (as mentioned in the previous section).

### *NCR’s Access and Outreach staff*

The Access and Outreach staff works as liaison connecting under-represented communities with City departments, programs and services. Through a consulting capacity, AO work with departments to advise on strategies to engage and connect with Minneapolis’ diverse communities.

## **Opportunities for the City to improve interactions with LEP residents**

Staff interviewed expressed a need for more training and education. Conversations revealed a gap of knowledge of when and how to deliver language services, available tools and services at their disposal, and/or how to access them. Trainings must include culturally appropriate strategies to disseminate and convey information across Minneapolis’ LEP communities. At-counter and direct-service delivery oriented support and protocols for unplanned interactions.

The City can improve its practice of tracking service utilization and interactions at a division and program level. There are many encounters and interactions not recorded and accounted for; such as, bilingual staff assisting LEP residents. Although reviewing language contracts are good methods, at best, it’s an overview and not a detailed portrait. There are no reporting fields to demonstrate quality and effectiveness of these interactions. Furthermore, only a select few departments review use of language contracts.