

Brevard County Sheriff's Office Limited English Proficiency Plan 2025



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I. Introduction

It is the policy of the Brevard County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiencies (LEP) not be discriminated against nor denied meaningful access to, and participation in, the programs and services provided by the agency. In order to ensure meaningful access and participation for LEP persons, all BCSO staff shall notify such persons that language services are available to them at no cost and shall take reasonable steps to see that language services are provided according to the provisions of the Brevard County Sheriff's Office LEP Plan and Policies as described below.

The LEP Plan and Policies that follow, complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. The LEP Plan and Policies are also in compliance with the Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" requiring Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. It is expected that agency plans will provide for such meaningful access consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency. The Executive Order also requires that the federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

A. Plan Summary:

The Brevard County Sheriff's Office has developed this Limited English Proficiency Plan to help identify reasonable steps for providing language assistance to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) persons who wish to access services provided by the BCSO. As defined in Executive Order 13166, LEP persons are those who do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

This plan outlines how the BCSO will identify a person who may need language assistance, the ways in which assistance may be provided, staff training that will be conducted, and how to notify LEP persons that assistance is available.

In order to prepare this plan, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office used the four-factor LEP analysis which considers the following factors:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served by the Brevard County Sheriff's Office.
2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Brevard County Sheriff's Office services.
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or services provided by the Brevard County Sheriff's Office to the LEP population.
4. The resources available and cost to the recipient.

A summary of the results of the four-factor analysis is outlined in the plan below.

B. Definitions:

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals:

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. LEP individuals 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).

Primary Language:

An individual's primary language is the language in which the individual most effectively communicates.

Interpretation:

The act of listening to communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.

Translation:

The replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

Vital Document:

Paper or electronic written material that contains information that is critical for accessing the Agency's programs or activities or is required by law.

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 compared to programs or services provided to English proficient individuals.

Four-Factor Assessment:

This is an assessment tool used by the recipient of federal funding to determine the extent of its obligation to provide LEP services. These four factors are:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program or grantee.
2. the frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program;
3. the nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people's lives; and;
4. the resources available and costs to the grantee/recipient.

Meaningful Access: Four Factor Analysis

II. Meaningful Access

A. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served by Brevard County Sheriff's Office.

The Brevard County Sheriff's Office will assess the language needs of the population that it serves. To identify the language and number of LEP persons the BCSO may encounter, the following data will be reviewed:

- US Census Bureau Data/Year 2020
- Community Agency Data
- Interviews with BCSO employees to determine frequency of contacts with LEP persons and what languages have been encountered.

The first step toward understanding the profile of the individuals that could participate in the BCSO process is a review of the US Census Data.

US Census Bureau Data:

Demographics of the Brevard County Area:

According to the 2020 US Census Data, the total population of Brevard County is 606,612. In Population by Race/Ethnicity, from 2010 to 2020, "*Two or More*" had the highest population growth showing an upward growth of 323.3%. "*Other*" had the second highest population increase of 116.9%. The population growth from 2010 to 2020 also showed a 40.2% growth in the race category of "*Asian*." In the Ethnicity category of "*Hispanic or Latino*" Brevard County showed a population growth from 43,941 to 67,907 persons from 2010 to 2020, which represents a 54.5% increase and 11.2% of the total population.

As of 2020, 8.6% of Brevard residents were foreign born. Those born in Latin America comprise the largest population at 25,973 Brevard County residents or 50.7% of foreign-born residents. Other places of birth for foreign-born residents include: Africa 2.6%, Asia 22%, Europe 18.6%, North America 5.4%, and Oceania 0.7% of foreign-born population.

As of 2020, in homes with children 5-17, 92.4% of all residents spoke English as their first language, while 4.5% spoke Spanish, 1.7% spoke Indo-European, 1.1% spoke Asian/Islander, and 0.3% of the population spoke Other. In total, 10.6% of the population spoke languages other than English at home.

In homes with adults 18+, 88.9% of all residents spoke English as their first language, while 6.4% spoke Spanish, 2.7% spoke Indo-European, 1.5% spoke Asian/Islander, and 0.5% of the population spoke Other. In total, 10.6% of the population spoke languages other than English at home.

The BCSO will continue to monitor the release of census data as it becomes available to adjust the implementation of this LEP plan as needed and/or required.

See Table I below for the most current United States Census Bureau July 1, 2023, Population Estimates - Brevard County:

TABLE I:

<u>Race</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total Population	643,979	100.0
<u>One Race:</u>		
White (alone)	529,351	82.2
Black or African American (alone)	72,126	11.2
American Indian and Alaska Native (alone)	3,220	0.5
Asian (alone)	18,031	2.8
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (alone)	644	0.1
<u>Two or More Races</u>		
Hispanic or Latino	80,497	12.5
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	461,089	71.6

B. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with Brevard County Sheriff’s Office services.

The Brevard County Sheriff’s Office will use various methods to identify and determine the number of LEP persons with whom they have contact.

To determine the frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with BCSO programs, a record is created, utilize County 911 And Communications Center databases to track interactions with individuals with LEP that include information on the language spoken and the method of communication or language assistance used .

Current and past LEP person encounters will be periodically analyzed by agency designees to determine the language services requested and the agency’s ability to provide language services.

The data collected will be utilized to determine the effectiveness of BCSO’s current services offered to LEP persons.

C. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or services provided by the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office to the LEP population.

The BCSO provides crisis intervention, short-term counseling and referrals, criminal justice information, court support and emergency assistance for limited shelter, food and basic physical needs to crime victims. It is also the responsibility of the agency to notify known, contactable victims of the pending release, including community work release, of sentenced prisoners incarcerated in the Brevard County Jail Complex. For many people, being a victim of, or witness to a crime may be their first experience with the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

It is the policy and practice of the agency to ensure that no one shall be discriminated against nor denied meaningful access to, and participation in, the programs and services provided by the BCSO. The agency will continue to provide appropriate services to the LEP persons to ensure that they have full and complete understanding of the services, rights and benefits to which they are entitled.

D. The resources available and cost to the recipient.

The BCSO, with all available resources, shall notify LEP persons that language services are available to them at no cost and shall take reasonable steps to see that language services are provided according to the provisions of the Brevard County Sheriff's Office LEP Plan and Policies.

The BCSO will continue to use available resources to provide appropriate language assistance to the LEP persons. Qualified interpreters, bilingual staff, language line services and referrals to community liaisons proficient in the language of LEP persons will be utilized to effectively serve the LEP community.

The BCSO will continue to use available resources to print and distribute vital documents in different languages as need arises to ensure meaningful access for the LEP persons. The agency currently translates documents into Spanish. The BCSO will consider additional languages upon request or as deemed necessary for effective outreach.

The BCSO will maintain a current list of all bilingual employees available on its intranet portal. BCSO personnel in the field in need of interpretation services will attempt to identify an available on-duty bilingual employee who will assist with the call for service or self-initiated call. If no on-duty bilingual officer/employee is immediately known to the officer, the officer will contact the BCSO Communications Center who has 24/7 access to language assistance services. The BCSO employee will provide their name, department ID, Incident number and language for translation to the Communications Center. The Communications Center will contact a language assistance service request the interpreter for the needed language and connect the employee once the interpreter is on the line.

III. Language Assistance

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

The following are the services the BCSO provides to LEP persons:

A. Oral Language Assistance:

The BCSO will provide oral language assistance, including oral interpretation services by qualified interpreters, bilingual staff, telephone service lines interpreters via a language line service and referrals to community liaisons proficient in the language of LEP persons. These services will be offered free of charge whether in person or via telephone. At the point of first contact with an LEP person, the BCSO employee will determine whether the person has a limited English

proficiency by determining his or her primary language and then implement the appropriate language assistance service.

1. Face to Face:

Qualified Interpreter:

BCSO, when necessary, will provide a qualified interpreter free of charge to assist with providing services to the LEP person.

Bilingual Staff:

A list of Brevard County Sheriff's Office staff who fluently speak, read, write and/or understand languages other than English, and who are willing and able to act as interpreters has been identified. BCSO employees who may encounter LEP persons are aware that this list is available on the intranet portal.

2. Telephone Encounters:

To ensure meaningful access and participation for LEP persons, the BCSO employees will contact the Communications Center to initiate a conference calls between the LEP person and trained interpreter of the needed language. The BCSO employee will identify themselves, brief and summarize to the interpreter what they wish to accomplish, give any special instructions, and begin the conference call. The BCSO employee, with assistance from the trained interpreter, will help the LEP person with his or her needs. This service is always provided free of charge.

B. Translations of Materials:

Language Assistance will be provided for LEP person through language translations and/or oral interpretations of some key materials, upon request or as deemed necessary for effective outreach. Currently, the BCSO provide the following translations:

Victim and Witness Rights Guide/Handbook:

The Victim and Witness Guide is provided in English and Spanish. When dealing with a LEP person, the BCSO employee will provide the Victim and Witness Guide to ensure the LEP person obtains full understanding of the services provided by the agency, as well as their rights and benefits.

Forms

BCSO provides critical affidavits and forms in both English and Spanish. When dealing with a LEP person, the BCSO employee will provide available translated affidavits and forms to ensure the LEP person obtains full understanding of the services provided by the agency, and of their rights and benefits.

C. Marketing and Outreach:

Marketing and outreach information disseminated via the external BCSO website (www.brevardsheriff.com) allows the public viewers, via a drop-down menu, to translate and view the website's content in 109 different languages. This website and translation option provides the LEP person and/or groups with access to detailed information about the agency and Brevard County.

IV. Notifying LEP Persons

It is important to notify LEP persons of services available free of charge in a language that is understood. The agency will continue to provide booklets and materials in translated languages to alleviate any language barriers that may interfere with LEP person receiving effective service from the agency. BCSO will also continue to assist LEP persons by utilizing bilingual staff, qualified interpreters, and language line services.

V. LEP Training for Agency Employees

In order to establish meaningful access to information and services for all affected persons, BCSO employees who may encounter LEP persons will receive appropriate training on addressing the needs of LEP persons. The training will include:

- Information on the Title VI Policy and LEP responsibilities.
- Executive Order 13166
- LEP plan compliance
- Types of language services
- Vital translated documents
- How to handle a potential Title VI/LEP complaints.

VI. Plan Monitoring

BCSO shall monitor implementation of the LEP Plan and Policies on an ongoing basis, revising policies and procedures as needed and shall review its effectiveness. This review shall consider information from the following sources and criteria as well as other appropriate factors:

- Changes in demographics, including new language groups and changes in the proportion of existing language groups.
- Frequency of encounters with LEP persons.
- Determine whether language assistance programs have been effective and sufficient to meet the needs of LEP persons.
- Availability of new resources including technology.
- Determine whether the Brevard County Sheriff's Office fully complies with the goals of this LEP Plan.
- Determine whether complaints have been received concerning the agency meeting the needs of LEP persons.

VII. Plan Dissemination

Internal Dissemination:

- A copy of the LEP Plan will be posted on the agency's internal website for all employees to view.
- Employees may obtain a copy of the plan upon request.

External Dissemination:

- A copy of the LEP Plan will be posted on the agency's external website for the public to view.
- The public may obtain a copy of the plan upon request.

VIII. Notice of Rights

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from discriminating against or otherwise excluding individuals on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any of their activities. Section 601 of Title VI, 42 U.S.C. §2000d, provides: No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Consistent with Federal law and Florida Statutes it is the policy of the Brevard County Sheriff's Office to ensure that persons with Limited English Proficiencies (LEP) not be discriminated against nor denied meaningful access to, and participation in, the programs and services provided by the Agency.