

Walk ins:

When an individual with LEP enters your office seeking assistance:

1. Show them a language chart that lists the more common languages in our region and explain in their language that interpreter services are available free of charge. (Print the **Language Identification Poster** from the CLAS Toolkit website page.)
2. Have them point to the language they understand and prefer to use for communication.
3. If you cannot identify their language, call Language Link who will speak to the individual with LEP and determine the specific language assistance they need.
4. After identifying the correct language of preference go to [WASCLA Tools for Health](#) and print an “**I Speak Card**”. They can carry the card to identify their language to others in our system who may be working with them.

After Hours and Phone Messages:

When an individual with LEP calls your agency after-hours seeking assistance:

1. The designated company answering after-hour calls should provide interpreter services. Verify the procedure they follow.
2. Phone messages should provide an option to listen to an English or Spanish recording. For Spokane County, it is also recommended to have a message recorded in Arabic (press 1 for English, press 2 for Spanish, press 3 for Arabic).
3. If only a simple phone message is available, please inform callers that the recommended crisis numbers will provide interpreter services.

Intakes and Assessments:

Some individuals may seem to speak English well enough that they don't need an interpreter, but this assumption can lead to errors. Ask everyone the following:

Do you speak a language other than English at home?

If the answer to this question is "Yes," the language should be noted and the next question asked.

How well do you speak English?

1. Very well
2. Well
3. Not well
4. Not at all

What language do you prefer to receive your medical services?

What language do you prefer to receive written materials?

If written materials are requested in a language that is not on hand, documents should be submitted to a translation company and provided to Individuals as needed. Written documents that require immediate access by an Individual with LEP, can be read out loud to the Individual in their preferred language by an interpreter. Individuals who are not literate in their language of choice may prefer an audio format or other option. Document the Individual's acceptance of the material provided.

If the individual or surrogate decision-maker answers with a language other than English on the first question and anything other than "very well" (number 1), they should be designated as LEP (limited English proficient).

Their designation should be recorded in the intake/assessment records and an interpreter provided. If the individual refuses an interpreter, highly encourage them to reconsider for their own safety and benefit.

Auxiliary aids and services:

"Offer language assistance to individuals who have other communication needs." CLAS STANDARD 5

According to Section 1557, the civil rights provision of the Affordable Care Act, agencies are responsible for ensuring effective communication and providing auxiliary aids free of cost to individuals who request

them. Consult with individuals who are making the requests and give primary consideration to fulfilling their communication related needs. Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis. An exception may be made when the request would constitute an undue burden under the law. In this case, alternative options should be considered. The following is a list of ADA suggested aids that agencies should provide:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Note takers
- Transcription services
- Written materials
- Telephone handset amplifiers
- Assistive listening devices
- Assistive listening systems
- Telephones compatible with hearing aids closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning
- Text telephones (TTYs)
- Videotext displays
- WIFI availability for individuals to access needed apps like videophone apps
- Audio recordings
- Brailled materials and displays

- Optical readers, screen reader software, magnification software
- Large print materials

Crisis Planning:

It is recommended that individuals with LEP or those who require auxiliary aids have a written crisis plan in place to prevent misunderstanding and negative outcomes. The plan should list their preferred language, a specific interpreter if required, and any significant cultural preferences that are important for their well-being, and/or the specific auxiliary aids they prefer for communication.

“Inform individuals of the availability of language services.” CLAS STANDARD 6

The following charts inform individuals of the availability of language services and how to access them.

- **Assistance in Any Language** (includes the 12 most common language of Washington State).
- The **SCRBH Nondiscrimination Notice** notifies individuals of the availability of language services and auxiliary aids at no cost in 15 languages (which includes the 12 most common languages of Washington and 3 more common languages in the Spokane Regional Service Area).

Print the Assistance in Any Language Poster and the SCRBH Non-Discrimination Notice from the main menu of the CLAS Toolkit webpage.

