

Language Assistance Plan Policy



Purpose:

Oweesta Corporation is committed to ensuring effective communication with individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP) or other communication barriers. This Language Assistance Plan (LAP) Policy outlines our commitment to providing meaningful access to our programs and services for all individuals, regardless of language or communication abilities, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and entities associated with Oweesta Corporation who interact with individuals requiring language assistance services.

Definitions:

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

Language Assistance Services: Services provided to individuals with LEP or those who are deaf or hard of hearing to ensure effective communication, including interpretation and translation.

Qualified Interpreter: Proficient in both English and the non-English language, skilled in accurately interpreting spoken communication.

Qualified Translator: Proficient in both English and the non-English language, skilled in accurately translating written materials.



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Auxiliary Aids and Services: Assistive devices and services provided to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to ensure effective communication.

Policy:

1. **Identification of Language Needs:**
 - Oweesta Corporation will identify and assess the language needs of individuals accessing our programs and services.
 - Staff will use appropriate tools and resources to determine the language proficiency of individuals who may require language assistance services.
2. **Language Assistance Services:**
 - Language assistance services will be provided free of charge to individuals with limited English proficiency or other communication barriers.
 - Interpretation and translation services will be available in the necessary languages and modalities to facilitate effective communication.
 - Staff will be trained on how to access and utilize language assistance services effectively.
3. **Notice of Language Assistance Services:**
 - Information about language assistance services will be included in outreach materials, websites, and other communication channels.
4. **Quality Assurance:**
 - Oweesta Corporation will ensure the quality and accuracy of language assistance services provided.
 - Qualified interpreters and translators will be utilized to maintain accuracy and confidentiality in all communications.



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Complaints and Grievances

If individuals encounter difficulties accessing language assistance services or experience language-related discrimination, they may file complaints or grievances with:

Chief Programs Officer

In the interim, complaints can also be filed with:

Sandy Thompson

Communication Director

Email: sandy@oweesta.org

Complaints will be promptly investigated and addressed in accordance with Oweesta Corporation's grievance procedure.

Training and Awareness:

- Oweesta Corporation will promote awareness of language assistance services and the rights of individuals with limited English proficiency through ongoing education and outreach efforts.

Implementation:

- The Chief Programs Officer is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Language Assistance Plan Policy.
- Regular assessments and updates will be conducted to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations and to address evolving language needs within our community.

Steps for Improving Access

Oweesta Corporation is dedicated to enhancing access for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) and will annually assess its services to identify new opportunities for language access improvement.



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Policy Statement:

Oweesta Corporation will publish its LEP policy on the official website www.oweesta.org.

Translation and Interpretation Services:

Oweesta Corporation will engage third-party vendors for translation and interpretation services on an as-needed basis. The necessity for such services will be evaluated annually.

When staff encounters a person needing interpreter services, they are to access available translators or interpreters through the local Interpreter and Translator Directory to locate an available translator, spoken language interpreter, or sign language interpreter.

Help Desk:

In cases where messages are received in languages other than English through Oweesta Corporation's help desk lines, language assistance will be provided using services from a third-party vendor.

Information for the General Public:

Oweesta Corporation posts our Language Assistance Policy (LAP) and contact information on our website for the general public.

Review and Revision:

- This Language Assistance Plan Policy will be reviewed annually and revised as needed to reflect changes in laws, regulations, or organizational needs.





Approval:

This Language Assistance Plan Policy is approved by Chrystel Cornelius (CEO and President) and is effective as of 05/28/2024.



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