



LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

State Agency: Office for People With Developmental Disabilities

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This document is our agency’s **Language Access Plan**.

A **Language Access Plan** explains how we provide services to people who have limited English proficiency.

This **Language Access Plan** includes information about:

	The population with Limited English Proficiency (“LEP”) in our service area.
	How we notify the public about language access services.
	Our resources and methods for providing language access services.
	How we train our staff to provide language access services to the public.
	How we monitor language access services and respond to complaints.



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PART 1 – Our Agency’s Services

We prepared this Language Access Plan (“Plan”) to comply with New York State Executive Law Section 202-a, which establishes New York’s Statewide Language Access Policy. This Plan explains how we make sure that people with Limited English Proficiency (“LEP”) have meaningful access to agency services, programs and activities.

In this Plan, individuals with LEP are understood as people who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

Our agency’s services to the public include:

The NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) is responsible for coordinating services for New Yorkers with developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism spectrum disorders, Prader-Willi syndrome and other neurological impairments. We provide services to the public directly and through a network of approximately 450 nonprofit service providing agencies.

Supports and services, which include Medicaid funded long-term care services such as habilitation and clinical services, as well as residential supports and services for over 40,000 people, are primarily provided in community settings across the state. In addition to these Medicaid services, OPWDD also provides New York State-funded family support services, which are designed to assist families in providing care for their loved ones who live full-time in their family home, and employment supports, which include ongoing job coaching, job matching, and vocational training.

OPWDD is committed to ensuring language access services for all individuals with LEP that are seeking and receiving services from OPWDD, including their family members, advocates, and guardians. It is a mission priority for OPWDD, through the Executive Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, to enhance and expand its language access services. This will help provide a better quality of life for people with developmental disabilities who have limited English proficiency, as well as people who don’t use speech.



PART 2 – The Population with Limited English Proficiency in Our Service Area

The Statewide Language Access Policy requires state agencies to translate vital agency documents into the top 12 most commonly spoken non-English language among New Yorkers with limited English proficiency. Our agency uses U.S. Census data (including data from the American Community Survey) to determine the top 12 languages most commonly spoken by individuals with LEP in New York State.

The top 12 languages spoken by individuals with LEP in New York State are:

#	Language	Estimated Number of Speakers with LEP (ACS 2018-2022)
1	Spanish	1,198,032
2	Chinese	377,524
3	Russian	124,422
4	Yiddish	90,199
5	Bangla	74,342
6	Haitian Creole	51,947
7	Korean	48,581
8	Arabic	42,907
9	Italian	41,155
10	French	34,304
11	Polish	33,122
12	Urdu	29,983

New York’s language access law also provides agencies, in consultation with the Office of Language Access, the option to add up to four more languages of translation beyond the top 12. The assessment about whether to include additional languages must be based on factors that are identified in the language access law. Our agency, in consultation with the Office of Language Access, has made the following determination with regard to the addition of languages beyond the top 12:

At this time, OPWDD has not identified the need to add languages beyond the top 12, but will continue to monitor services, requests, and other relevant information to reassess if needed. OPWDD will continue to translate vital documents in the top 12 languages, as mandated by the NYS language access law. Additionally, we provide translation and interpretation services in other languages, beyond the top 12, as needed or requested by individuals with LEP that are seeking and receiving OPWDD services.



Our agency tracks encounters of individuals with LEP in the following ways:

OPWDD tracks internal and external encounters of individuals with LEP as follows:

- Front Door - OPWDD’s Front Door process is the initial point of contact for anyone looking to access services. A person’s primary language can be identified by info-line staff during first contact or by the local Developmental Disabilities Regional Office (DDRO) Front Door staff at intake.
- Tracking and Billing System (TABS), CHOICES, and Eligibility Assessment and Authorization Tool (EAA) – data systems used by staff to help determine language needs of people enrolled in the OPWDD service delivery system.
- Interpretation and translation requests tracking – through OPWDD's selected language services contractors we track all interpretation requests (telephone, virtual, and in-person) and written translation requests made by individuals with LEP and/or their family/representatives.
- Provider agencies – OPWDD delivers services to individuals through a network of approximately 450 nonprofit service providing agencies that are required to provide language access support.
- Community outreach – OPWDD partners with community-based organizations to do targeted outreach to communities with LEP (these include Open House outreach events, 5.07 Strategic Planning Forums, and other presentations).



PART 3 – Public Outreach About the Availability of Language Access Services

Our agency informs individuals with LEP about their right to free language assistance services in the following ways, using at least the top 12 languages shown in Part 2 of this Plan:

- Individuals with LEP are directly informed by our staff

In which ways? DDRO Front Door staff inform individuals with LEP about their right to free language assistance services during the intake process. If the person’s first contact is with OPWDD’s info-line, staff managing public phone lines are trained to triage language support needs. This helps ensure that people are receiving information about OPWDD services in their primary language from initial contact and beyond. Staff are directed to utilize the language access resources available to assist with informing individuals with LEP of their rights.



- Signs posted about language assistance services
 - In areas operated by the agency and open to the public
 - Other (describe)
- Information is published on our agency’s website in at least the top 12 languages spoken by individuals with LEP in New York State
- Outreach and presentations at schools, faith-based groups, and other community organizations

What are the populations with LEP targeted? OPWDD’s Strategic Planning Public Forums are offered in partnership with community organizations targeting Chinese and Spanish speaking populations with LEP. Outreach materials, including OPWDD’s Strategic Plan, are available in the top 12 languages and we provide free interpretation services into any requested language. Through these forums individuals with LEP are informed about their right to free language assistance services.
- Local, non-English language media directed at individuals with LEP in their languages

What are the populations with LEP targeted? Upon request, OPWDD provides information about language access rights and services to local, non-English media targeting populations with LEP from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Additionally, through targeted media campaigns, OPWDD offers information about language access services to individuals with LEP. Our *Look Beyond* awareness campaign features media with Spanish and Chinese language components. The *#MorethanWork* recruitment campaign features media in the top 12 languages.
- Social media posts directed at individuals with LEP in their languages

What are the populations with LEP targeted? OPWDD’s social media campaigns, including the *Look Beyond* awareness campaign and the *#MorethanWork* recruitment campaign, feature posts targeting populations with LEP in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish, Urdu, and Yiddish.
- Telephonic voice menu providing information in non-English languages

In which languages? The OPWDD info-line has a voice menu in English and Spanish. Additionally, staff who manage public phone lines are provided with and trained on instructions for using telephonic interpretation services via the selected contractor. This allows them to inform individuals with LEP about their right to free language assistance services in any language needed.
- Other (describe)



PART 4 – Provision of Language Access Services

A. Determining the Need for Services

During *in person* encounters, our agency uses the following tools to determine whether an individual has LEP, and what their primary language is:

- “I Speak” posters or visual aids that provide information about free interpreting services in multiple languages
- Reception staff make those determinations based on training and experience
- Bilingual staff members, where available, assist in identifying the language of individuals with LEP
- Other (describe): OPWDD works with partner organizations to triage cases for individuals with LEP, which includes determining the individual’s primary language and overcoming barriers to accessing services.

On *telephone calls*, our agency uses the following tools to find out if an individual has LEP, and what their primary language is:

- Reception staff make those determinations based on training and experience
- Bilingual staff members, where available, assist in identifying the language of individuals with LEP
- Telephonic interpreting service
- Other (describe): OPWDD works with partner organizations to triage cases for individuals with LEP, which includes determining the individual’s primary language and overcoming barriers to accessing services.

Our agency’s protocols for assessing whether an individual needs *oral interpreting* services in different service situations is as follows:

- During office in-person encounters:
 - Staff use language access resources, including “I Speak” posters and other visual aids located in the Developmental Disabilities Regional Offices (DDROs) and Developmental Disabilities State



Operations Offices (DDSOs).

- Staff have access to detailed instructions on using telephonic interpretation services via selected contractor.
- OPWDD uses bilingual staff, where available.
- Self-reporting by the individual can also take place, which would prompt staff to elicit language access services and contact their language access liaison.
- Referrals from partner organizations (e.g., NYS Office for New Americans, community-based organizations) may indicate the person’s primary language and need for language access services.

☒ At initial contact in the field:

- The local DDRO Front Door staff gather vital information during initial conversations with the individual and/or family, through researching the individual’s history and through available information in the Tracking and Billing System (TABS), CHOICES, and Eligibility Assessment and Authorization Tool (EAA).
- Staff use language access resources, including “I Speak” posters and other visual aids located in the DDROs and DDSOs.
- OPWDD uses bilingual staff, where available, such as at community tabling and outreach events.
- Self-reporting by the individual can also take place, which would prompt staff to elicit language access services and contact their language access liaison.
- Referrals from partner organizations (e.g., NYS Office for New Americans, community-based organizations) may indicate the person’s primary language and need for language access services.

☒ When speaking on the telephone:

- DDRO Front Door staff receives detailed guidance on Front Door processes, including phone messaging scripts that inform people of their right and the availability of language access services.
- OPWDD uses bilingual staff, where available.
- Individuals calling the OPWDD info-line and other lines might self-report their primary



language and/or their limited English proficiency. Staff who manage public phone lines are provided with and trained on instructions for using telephonic interpretation services via selected contractor.

- Referrals from partner organizations (e.g., NYS Office for New Americans, community-based organizations) may indicate the person’s primary language and need for language access services prior to the call.

For pre-planned appointments of individuals with LEP:

- DDRO Front Door staff research the individual’s history and through available information on the Tracking and Billing System (TABS), CHOICES, and Eligibility Assessment and Authorization Tool (EAA).

- Referrals from partner organizations (e.g., NYS Office for New Americans, community-based organizations) may indicate the person’s primary language and need for language access services at these appointments or meetings.

Our agency records and maintains documentation of language assistance needs of individuals with LEP as follows:

OPWDD records and maintains documentation of the language assistance needs of people with developmental disabilities, family members, or designees with LEP through the agency’s Tracking and Billing System (TABS), CHOICES, and Eligibility Assessment and Authorization Tool (EAA). Other internal data keeping resources are also used by OPWDD staff (e.g., language assistance plan, translation request form, interpreter request form, etc.).

B. Oral Interpreting Services

Our agency has made the following resources available for oral interpreting requests:

Bilingual staff members who work directly with individuals with LEP

Number of staff and languages spoken: OPWDD currently has 11 staff employed in multiple titles with Spanish language qualifications (parenthetic) and 1 in a Manual Communication (ASL) parenthetic title.

Bilingual staff members who provide oral interpreting services on a volunteer basis

Number of staff and languages spoken:

Telephonic interpreting service

Number of contractors and languages spoken: OPWDD contracts with one primary contractor for statewide telephonic interpreting services. The contractor provides service in the



top 12 most commonly spoken non-English languages in NYS, as well as other languages, including rare languages, for hundreds of languages.

Contracts or other arrangements with school and community organizations

Number of contracts or other arrangements and languages spoken: On occasion (e.g., public forums and other outreach events) OPWDD works closely with community organizations to provide support with oral interpreting requests. This support is in addition to professional interpreting services provided through a selected contractor.

Other (Describe)

Video-remote interpreting services (VRI) and in-person interpreting services. OPWDD contracts with one primary contractor for statewide VRI services and region-based in-person interpreting services. The contractor provides service in the top 12 most commonly spoken non-English languages in NYS, as well as other spoken languages and American Sign Language.

Our agency protocols for informing individuals with LEP that free interpreting services will be provided and that they do not need to provide their own interpreters is as follows:

During office in-person encounters: OPWDD staff are trained to inform individuals and their family/representatives about the availability of free interpreting services. Staff has access to language access resources, including signage and other visual aids in the top 12 languages, that explain the right of individuals with LEP to free interpreting services. Signage is posted in OPWDD operated offices and other areas frequented by the public.

At initial contact in the field: OPWDD staff are trained to inform individuals and their family/representatives about the availability of free interpreting services. Information can be provided by bilingual staff in the field, if available, and/or through an interpreter. If needed, telephone interpreting services are readily available for staff in the field to use to facilitate communication.

When speaking on the telephone: OPWDD staff are trained to inform individuals and their family/representatives about the availability of free interpreting services. Information can be provided by bilingual staff, if available, or through an interpreter. If needed, telephone interpreting services are readily available for staff to use to facilitate communication.

For pre-planned appointments of individuals with LEP: OPWDD staff are trained to inform individuals and their family/representatives about the availability of free interpreting services. Staff has access to language access resources, including signage and other visual aids in the top 12 languages, that explain the rights of individuals with LEP to free interpreting services. Signage is posted in OPWDD operated offices and other areas frequented by the public. If the person’s primary language has been identified prior to the pre-planned appointment, staff can request an interpreter (in-person, video-remote, or telephonic) to facilitate communication.



Other (describe):

Our agency’s protocols for obtaining interpreting services in a timely manner is as follows:

OPWDD’s language access protocols provide staff with guidelines and resources for obtaining interpreting services, including telephonic, in-person and video-remote services, through selected contractors in a timely manner. In the case that a selected contractor is not able to provide the requested service in a timely manner, staff is instructed to reach out to OPWDD’s language access coordinator for support. Additionally, staff are trained to document the communication needs of individuals and their family/representatives during initial contact. An accurate record of language access needs ensures continuity of care for the individual and helps provide timely language access services.

If an individual with LEP insists on having a family member, friend, or other person interpret, our protocols for deciding whether to accept or decline such an arrangement is as follows:

Individuals with LEP who come into contact with our agency will be informed of the availability of free interpreting services. Generally, an individual with LEP may not have a family member, friend, or a minor interpret. However, during emergencies an individual with LEP may be permitted to have a family member or friend interpret. OPWDD strongly discourages the use of minor children for any type of interpretation. OPWDD language access protocols require the use of qualified interpreters for official business such as, but not limited to, clinical or medical encounters, informed consent, legal matters, or other services related to treatment. A nonqualified interpreter such as a bilingual staff, friend or family member may be used for routine business such as community outings, recreational activities, or simple instructions. Where the interaction with an individual with LEP occurs at the agency’s office, and the agency permits them to have an interpreter of their choosing, the LEP individual must fill out a written consent/waiver form. Where an individual with LEP is engaged in official business with the agency, the agency will always provide an independent interpreter.

Our agency provides information to all staff members who have contact with the public about how to obtain oral interpreting services. Our protocol in this regard is as follows:

OPWDD’s language access protocols provide staff with contact information and guidelines for accessing language access services through our selected contractors, including oral interpreting services via telephone, video-remote or in-person. Staff are trained to use the instructions provided for the specific service being requested, which varies by contractor.

The agency’s Language Access Coordinator (“LAC”) maintains a list of oral interpreting resources that are available to staff. This resource list includes:

- Names and contact information for all resources

- Names and locations of staff members who are available to act as interpreters or provide services directly in the primary language of an individual with LEP
- Languages in which each interpreter or service is qualified
- Procedures for accessing each interpreter or service

Our agency records and maintains documentation of oral interpreting services provided to individuals with LEP at each encounter. Our protocol in this regard is as follows:

OPWDD staff are trained to document the communication needs of individuals and their family/representatives during initial contact and maintain records of oral interpreting services provided to individuals with LEP through internal data keeping resources used by OPWDD staff (e.g., interpreter request form). Additionally, selected language services contractors provide usage data monthly, this includes data on oral interpreting services requested and provided.

Cultural Competence and Confidentiality

Our agency makes sure interpreters are culturally competent¹ in the following ways:

OPWDD's language access team works closely with staff and selected contractors to make sure interpreters are culturally competent. OPWDD language access protocols instruct staff to provide as much detail as possible about the type of meeting and the person/people the interpretation is needed for when submitting requests. This helps the contractor properly assign interpreters based on linguistic and cultural needs. As needed, we also work closely with community partners to provide guidance and best practices on linguistic and cultural competence to our contractors and their interpreters prior to assignments.

Our agency makes sure interpreters follow state and federal confidentiality protocols in the following ways:

OPWDD utilizes approved interpretation contractors from the Office of General Service's language services contract, which outlines state and federal confidentiality protocols that contractors and their independent interpreters must adhere to.

Additionally, all OPWDD staff are trained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other confidentiality protocols.

¹ Cultural Competence is defined as *a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system or agency or among professionals that enables effective interactions in a cross-cultural framework*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health. 2000. Assuring Cultural Competence in Health Care: Recommendations for National Standards and an Outcomes-Focused Research Agenda. Extracted from: https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/Assets/pdf/checked/Assuring_Cultural_Competence_in_Health_Care-1999.pdf



C. Translations of Documents

At least every two years after the effective date of this Plan, our agency determines and reassesses vital documents² that must be translated. This process is accomplished in the following ways:

OPWDD determines vital documents that must be translated based on the following components:

- Any OPWDD document that requires an individual, family member or designee’s signature, such as an informed consent form.
- Any OPWDD document that provides key information about OPWDD supports and services.
- Any behavioral/health information issued by OPWDD, including but not limited to: eligibility, treatment plans, service plans, and/or goals.

Our agency’s process for making sure documents are written in plain language³ before they are translated into other languages is as follows:

OPWDD’s Office of DEI works closely with other OPWDD divisions and community partners to ensure that, as much as possible, documents published by our agency are written in plain language prior to translation. OPWDD has a contract with the Self Advocacy Association of New York State (SANYS) through which advocates translate important OPWDD documents into plain language. We continuously work on enhancing our documents to help make information more accessible to all individuals seeking and receiving OPWDD services.

Our agency has the following resources available for translation of documents:

Contractors for translation services

Number of contractors: OPWDD contracts with one primary contractor for translation services.

Contracts or other arrangements with schools and community organizations

Names of schools/organizations: OPWDD partners with community organizations, including the Chinese-American Planning Council, Sinergia, Inc., Autism Society Habilitation Organization (ASHO), SAPNA and others, as well as the NYS Office for New Americans to assess the quality and cultural validation of translated documents.

Translation of documents by bilingual staff members

² Vital Documents is defined as any paper or digital document that contains information that is critical for obtaining agency services or benefits or is otherwise required to be completed by law.

³ The [Plain Writing Act of 2010](https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/PLAW-111publ274) defines plain language as writing that is clear, concise, well-organized, and follows other best practices appropriate to the subject or field and intended audience. Extracted from: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/PLAW-111publ274>



Other (describe)

The agency’s Language Access Coordinator (“LAC”) maintains a list of translation resources that are available to staff. This resource list includes:

- Names and contact information for all resources
- Names and locations of staff members who are available to provide translations of documents
- Languages in which each translation service is qualified
- Procedures for accessing each translation service

Our agency translates documents that individuals with LEP submit in their primary languages in a timely manner. Our protocol in this regard is as follows:

OPWDD contracts with a language services contractor to complete all translation requests in a timely manner. The average turnaround time for documents that individuals with LEP submit in their primary languages for translation is 1-3 business days, this can vary depending on the language, type and length of document submitted.

The following non-exhaustive list of documents are currently translated or in the process of translation by our agency in the languages indicated. Documents with an asterisk (*) are determined by the agency to be vital documents.

- *AR: Arabic*
- *BA: Bangla*
- *CH: Chinese*
- *FR: French*
- *HA: Haitian-Creole*
- *IT: Italian*
- *KO: Korean*
- *PO: Polish*
- *RU: Russian*
- *SP: Spanish*
- *UR: Urdu*
- *YI: Yiddish*

OPWDD translated documents can be found on our website at <https://opwdd.ny.gov/language-access>.

Form #	Name	Top 12 Languages												Additional Languages
		AR	BA	CH	FR	HA	IT	KO	PO	RU	SP	UR	YI	
*1	About OPWDD Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*2	Age Out Placement Consent Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	BOS, BUR, KA, KAR, NEP, PORT, SWA, SOM, VIET
*3	Annual Accounting Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	



*4	Application for Participation in the OPWDD HCBS Waiver and Documentation of Choices	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*5	OPWDD FSS Family Reimbursement Application	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Hindi
*6	OPWDD Family Reimbursement Respite Verification Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Vietnamese and Hebrew
*7	Family Support Services Satisfaction Survey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Hebrew, Vietnamese, Burmese, Tigrinya
*8	Authorization Consent Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Pashto
*9	Benefits Eligibility Questionnaire	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*10	CANS-CAS Notification Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*11	Care Management Options FAQ	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Dari, Karen, Pashto, Vietnamese, Bosnian, Sinhala, Ukrainian, Uzbek, Hindi, Amharic, Burmese, Nepali, Somali
*12	CAS Satisfaction Survey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	ALB, FAR, PORT, VIET, SWA
*13	CCO Coverage Chart	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Bosnian
*14	Comprehensive Assessments Brochure: CAS/CANS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Nepali, Albanian, Farsi, Hebrew, Portuguese, Swahili, Vietnamese
*15	DDP2 Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*16	Eligibility Important Facts	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Hindi
*17	Eligibility Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*18	Eligibility Withdrawal Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*19	Employment Training Program Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	



*20	Employment Training Program for employers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*21	Employment Training Program for students	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*22	Family Care Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Burmese, Karen
*23	Family Friendly Guide to Self-Direction	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Swahili
*24	Family Support Services Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Burmese, Karen, Sinhala, Uzbek, Bosnian, Kinyarwanda, Vietnamese, Somali, Hindi, Karen, Kirundi, Turkish, Amharic
*25	FD Video Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Swahili, Karen, Somali, Amharic, Hindi, Burmese, Bosnian
*26	Front Door Access to Services Guide	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Burmese and Hindi
*27	Front Door Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Kirundi, Swahili, Amharic, Burmese, Hindi
*28	Front Door Informational PPT	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	KA, NEP
*29	Front Door Welcome Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Kirundi, Karen, Pashto, Hindi, Burmese
*30	Getting a job and participating in your community	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*31	Grow your career at OPWDD Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*32	Guidance for Individuals and Families	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*33	HCBS Brochure (Plain Language)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*34	HCBS Occupancy Agreements Facts Sheet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*35	HCBS Waiver (Plain Language)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	



*36	HCBS Waiver Application Withdrawal Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*37	HIPAA Privacy Policy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	BOS, KA, NEP, PASH, PORT, SOM, SWA, VIET, KIN
*38	Hospital Admission Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*39	IBR - Early Intervention Evaluation Center Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*40	IBR - George A Jervis Clinic Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*41	IBR - Infant Development Research Program Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*42	IBR Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*43	Introduction to Self-Direction Info Session PowerPoint	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Swahili, Vietnamese
*44	Language Access Complaint Form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*45	Learning About Incidents Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	CRO, BUR, SWA, NEP
*46	Look Beyond Campaign Posters	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*47	Managed Care Plain Language Notice	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*48	Medicaid Compliance Booklet	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*49	Minority and Women Owned Businesses Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*50	MWBE Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*51	Notice of Determination (NOD) Letters	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*52	NYSTART/CSIDD Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Burmese
*53	OPWDD 2023 Strategic Plan Annual Report	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*54	OPWDD 2023 Strategic Plan Annual Report (Plain Language)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	



*55	OPWDD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*56	OPWDD 2023-2027 Strategic Plan (Plain Language)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*57	OPWDD 2024 Strategic Plan Forum Presentation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*58	OPWDD 2024 Strategic Plan Forum Presentation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*59	OPWDD Liability Notices	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*60	Parent/Guardian Transition Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*61	Provisional Eligibility Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*62	Request for Service Authorization	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*63	Right At Home Housing Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Burmese
*64	School Transition Planning Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Karen
*65	Self-Direction Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Burmese, Karen, Swahili, Vietnamese, Hindi
*66	Self-Direction MOU	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*67	Still Not Waiver Eligible Letter	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*68	Transitioning Planning: From School to Adult Life	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*69	Virtual Community Forums with GU and OPWDD Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*70	Voting Flyer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Karen
*71	Waiver Service Application Request for Compatible Medicaid	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*72	Waiver Service Application Request for Missing Information	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	



*73	Waiver Service Application Request for More Information	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
*74	What Should I do with my day Brochure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

OPWDD translates vital documents that are issued by/belong to OPWDD into the top 12 non-English languages spoken in NYS (and other languages based on request). Vital OPWDD documents include:

- Any OPWDD document that requires an individual, family member or designee’s signature, such as an informed consent form.
- Any OPWDD document that provides key information about OPWDD supports and services.
- Any behavioral/health information issued by OPWDD, including but not limited to: eligibility, treatment plans, service plans, and/or goals.

The OPWDD documents listed here are categorized as vital based on these categories and are currently or in the process of being translated into the top 12 (or more) languages. Translated documents can be found on our website at <https://opwdd.ny.gov/language-access>. Additionally, it is OPWDD’s policy to translate all documents, including ones that may not be considered vital, into any language requested by the individual with LEP and/or their family/representatives.

The process for ensuring that translations are accurate and incorporate commonly used words is as follows:

OPWDD’s language access team works closely with the selected language services contractor to review translated documents prior to finalization. Through this review process, we check for accuracy, consistency, and formatting. When available, OPWDD also partners with community-based organizations that provide services to individuals with LEP to support in reviewing translated vital documents in a specific language. As much as possible, OPWDD aims to incorporate plain language, as well as other cultural and linguistic competence best practices, into the agency’s vital documents prior to translation. This is an ongoing process that we are regularly looking to improve to ensure that translated materials made available to individuals with LEP are accurate and easy to understand.



PART 5 – Staff Training

The person in the agency who is responsible for training staff in language access services is:

- Sofia Guerrero, Statewide Language Access Coordinator, with support from the OPWDD

Executive Office of DEI.

- OPWDD’s Talent Development & Training team oversees the mandatory Office of Employee Relations Language Access annual training.

The staff training includes the following components:

- ☒ The agency’s legal obligations to provide language access services
- ☒ The agency’s resources for providing language access services
- ☒ How to access and work with interpreters
- ☒ Cultural competence and cultural sensitivity
- ☒ How to obtain translation services
- ☒ Maintaining records of language access services provided to individuals with LEP

The methods and frequency of training are as follows:

OPWDD staff are required to complete the Language Access annual training managed by the NYS Office of Employee Relations provided through the SLMS platform.

Additionally, OPWDD’s Language Access Coordinator meets with the regional language access liaisons on a quarterly basis to provide updates and training on all components of the agency’s language access program. The language access team also arranges virtual trainings with staff from other OPWDD divisions/program areas on request.



PART 6 – Monitoring the Plan and Responding to Complaints

A. Monitoring

Our agency’s Language Access Coordinator (“LAC”) will monitor implementation of the Plan to make sure we are in compliance. Our protocols in this regard are as follows:

OPWDD is committed to ensuring language access for all individuals with LEP seeking and receiving services, including their family members, advocates, and guardians. OPWDD has protocols in place for staff regarding the provision of language access services, as well as resources available to help staff understand language access law and access these services. Additionally, OPWDD has language access protocols in place for our network of service providers that outline their requirement to provide language services to individuals with LEP.

It is a mission priority for OPWDD, through the Executive Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, to oversee, enhance and expand its language access operation by monitoring implementation of the Language Access Plan to ensure we are in compliance with NYS law.



B. Complaints

We provide information to the public in at least the top 12 most commonly spoken non-English languages in the state, advising members of the public of their right to file a complaint if they feel that they have not been provided adequate language access services or have been denied access to services because of their limited English proficiency. We do not retaliate or take other adverse action because an individual has filed a language access complaint.

We display information on the right to file a complaint, and the procedures for filing a complaint, in the following manner:

OPWDD displays information on the right to file a language access complaint and the procedures for filing a complaint on our website at <https://opwdd.ny.gov/language-access> and through signage posted at OPWDD regional offices. This information, along with the complaint form is available in the top 12 non-English languages in NYS. Members of the public can submit a complaint online at <https://languageaccess.ny.gov/en-US/?agency=OPWDD>. The complaint form is also available for download in PDF format on our website and copies made available at OPWDD regional offices on request.

We handle complaints made to the agency regarding the provision of language assistance services in the following manner:

All language access complaints must be forwarded to the OPWDD Statewide Language Access Coordinator (LAC) for investigation. This includes complaints received by designated Language Access Liaisons, staff at the DDSOs and DDROs, and community partners. The LAC is responsible for investigating all language access complaints. As needed, the LAC collaborates with other OPWDD staff, the Office of Language Access, and OPWDD selected language services contractors to investigate complaints. A determination with findings and recommendations, if appropriate, is submitted to the required staff, as well as the Office of Language Access, in a timely manner. Recommendations may include, but are not limited to: Staff training, provision of additional language access resources, the development of a language access plan or protocols tailored to a specific location, and others.

OPWDD staff are trained on the complaint process and provided with language access resources explaining the procedures for filing a complaint so they can support members of the public as needed.



PART 7 – Signatures



X *Willow F. Baer*

Willow F. Baer	Acting Commissioner	9/13/2024
Head of Agency	Title	Date

X *Sofia Guerrero*

Sofia Guerrero	Statewide Language Access Coordinator	9/13/2024
Agency LAC	Title	Date

X *Margarita Larios*

	Margarita Larios	09/24/2024
Executive Director, NYS Office of Language Access		Date