

Frequently Used Language Access Terms and Definitions

Bilingual Fluency - The ability to speak and understand two languages easily and accurately. Bilingual fluency does not always mean that a person can serve as an interpreter or translator. Note that some bilingual persons are native speakers but have never attended school for the non-English language.

Certified Interpreter - A certified interpreter is an interpreter who has passed a valid and reliable certification exam administered by an independent entity such as the [Supreme Court of Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts](#). Private companies that give tests to their contract interpreters may then call those interpreters certified, but most people outside those companies do not recognize such credentials. Individuals who complete certificate programs in interpreting may be qualified, but they are not certified.

Certified Translator - Certified translators are linguists who have passed some kind of exam which assesses their ability to accurately translate from one language into another. The exam is usually given by a professional organization, such as the [American Translators Association](#) or by a state or local government. A degree in translation from a university, while impressive, is not the same thing as a translation certification. It is important to note that translation exams, unlike interpreting exams, are one-directional. Meaning, that if you are certified in translation from English into Spanish, you are not certified in translation from Spanish into English unless you have taken a separate certification exam for that combination as well.

[American Translators Association](#) certification is one of the industry's most respected credentials for translators and is the only widely recognized measure of competence for translation in the U.S.

Critical Information - This information may have life and death implications, such as emergency response messages, or may be essential to effective operation of State services.

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Sight Translation - The interpretation of written materials an interpreter reads and simultaneously translates into the spoken target language. Sight translation appears to be easy but can actually be more difficult than simultaneous translation because the interpreter still has to simultaneously translate the written word to the target language and can often struggle to translate the meaning and not just the words of the text. It is used in courtrooms when interpreters translate a witness's statement into the target language, in medical services when a consent form is translated, and handwritten or other forms.

Interpretation - The oral delivery of a spoken message from one language to another without changing the original message or meaning. There are various types of interpretation, including: simultaneous interpretation, consecutive interpretation, summary interpretation, and whispered interpretation.

- **Simultaneous** - While the speaker is talking, an interpreter is simultaneously listening and comprehending the next sentence to a target audience. Headsets are often used in group settings and when multiple languages are being interpreted in a room.
- **Consecutive** - The speaker stops every 1-5 minutes(usually at the end of every paragraph or complete thought) to allow interpretation of what was said.
- **Summary** - The interpreter provides a summary of the statements in the original language. It differs from simultaneous interpretation in that statements are not interpreted verbatim.
- **Whispered** - The interpreter sits or stands next to the intended (usually small) audience and interprets simultaneously in a whisper. This mode is often used in situations where the majority of the group speaks one language, and a limited number of people do not speak that language.

Language Access - Effective strategies to engage and communicate with residents, acknowledging language is not a barrier. Residents have opportunities for meaningful access to participate in State Agency's services, programs, and activities.

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Limited English Proficiency - A person with limited English proficiency is unable to speak, read, write, or understand the English language at a level that permits them to interact effectively with State Agencies. Individuals who communicate through American Sign Language are included in this definition. On the Census, a LEP person is someone who self-assesses as speaking English less than "very well". May also be called English Language Learner.

Meaningful Access - An agency provides meaningful access to its programs when the language assistance provided is accurate, timely and effective and is at no cost to the LEP individual. It is also the ability of an LEP to access, apply and receive resources without significant restrictions from language barriers.

Primary Languages - Primary languages are languages other than English spoken at home by the largest number of people who live in the State of Nevada.

Real-time Captioning - A service similar to court reporting in which a transcriber types what is being said at a meeting or event into a computer that projects the words onto a screen. This service, which can be provided on-site or remotely, is particularly useful for people who are deaf or have hearing loss but do not use sign language. Also known as computer-assisted real-time transcription or CART.

Safe Harbor - A "safe harbor" means that if a recipient provides written translations under the outlined circumstances, such action will be considered strong evidence of compliance with the recipient's written-translation obligations. Per [federal guidance](#), a safe harbor has been created for grantees to ensure with greater certainty that they comply with their obligations to provide written translations in languages other than English. These safe harbor provisions apply to the translation of written documents only. They do not affect the requirement to provide meaningful access to LEP individuals through competent oral interpreters where oral language services are needed and are reasonable.

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Translation - The conversion of communication from one language to another in written form. An accurate translation is one that conveys the intent and essential meaning of the original text. Accurate sometimes does not mean literal.

Video Relay Service (VRS) - A free or subscriber-based service for people who use sign language and have videophones, smart phones, or computers with video communication capabilities. For outgoing calls, the subscriber contacts the VRS interpreter, who places the call and serves as an intermediary between the subscriber and a person who uses a standard voice telephone. The interpreter tells the telephone user what the subscriber is signing and signs to the subscriber what the telephone user is saying.

Vital Documents - Documents that provide essential information for accessing basic State services and benefits. Examples include applications, consent, and complaint forms, notice of rights, notice of activities, and notices advising of the availability of free language assistance.

Vital Public Information - Vital public information is any information developed or used that is necessary for obtaining access to services or benefits that are federally funded, or required by law.

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) - A fee-based service that uses video conferencing technology to access an off-site interpreter to provide real-time sign language or oral interpreting services for conversations between hearing people and people who are deaf or have hearing loss. The new regulations give covered entities the choice of using VRI or on-site interpreters in situations where either would be effective. VRI can be especially useful in rural areas where on-site interpreters may be difficult to obtain. Additionally, there may be some cost advantages in using VRI in certain circumstances. However, VRI will not be effective in all circumstances. For example, it will not be effective if the person who needs the interpreter has difficulty seeing the screen (either because of vision loss or because he or she cannot be properly positioned to see the screen, because of an injury or other condition). In these circumstances, an on-site interpreter may be required.