



LANGUAGE ACCESS INITIATIVE



Building a Fairer and More Inclusive State for All

Annual Report
January 10, 2026



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1. Executive Summary

Background

In January 2024, Governor Philip Murphy enacted [P.L. 2023, c. 263](#) (“the Law”), making New Jersey (“NJ”) one of the few states in the nation with a comprehensive statewide language access mandate.

Under the Law, “each State government entity in the Executive Branch that provides direct services to the public” is required to:

- Translate vital documents and information in at least the seven most common non-English languages spoken by individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) in the State, based on the data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey.
- Provide interpreting services between the entity and the individual, in the individual’s primary language, with respect to the provision of services or benefits.
- Prepare information posters for use and display at each service location in an area that is highly visible to the public seeking services or benefits.
- Develop and publish a Language Access Plan (LAP) outlining how language assistance needs and services are provided and tracked; a training plan for staff, quality assurance methods used, a list of translated documents and available languages; internal compliance monitoring, etc.
- Update their LAPs at least every three years.
- Engage with stakeholders to inform the development and improvement of LAPs.
- Submit a yearly implementation report to the Statewide Language Access Manager.
- Appoint a senior-level employee to serve as a Language Access Coordinator (LAC) to oversee development and implementation of LAPs.

Language Access Annual Report

In accordance with the Law, an annual report must be developed and submitted to the Governor and Legislature. This first Language Access Annual Report ("Report") offers a foundational assessment of the State's progress in implementing the Law to better serve individuals with LEP as of December 2025. It provides an overview of entity efforts, serving as a critical tool for evaluating progress, addressing challenges, and advancing the implementation of language access requirements statewide. The Report highlights the infrastructure and achievements of State government entities identified as covered under the Law for their direct public-serving missions ("Covered Entities") and uses their language access plans to assess and understand advancements. While not exhaustive, it underscores the State's commitment to expanding efforts to improve language access statewide. Additionally, the Report identifies systemic challenges and outlines recommendations to enhance access to state programs, services, and benefits for all residents, regardless of language.

Over the past year, the State has strengthened its infrastructure and implemented a coordinated, inter-agency strategy facilitated by the Governor's Office in partnership with the NJ Department of Human Services ("DHS"), the Office of the Attorney General ("OAG"), and the Office of Information Technology ("OIT") (collectively referred to as the "Lead Implementing Agencies"). This strategy is designed to embed language access and service design into State programs, services, and activities, ensuring that all New Jersey residents can access government services, regardless of their language. DHS has taken a leadership role in these efforts, working closely with Lead Implementing Agencies to convene regular meetings and promote a whole-of-government approach. These collaborative efforts have been focused on effectively implementing the Law while supporting entities as they work to ensure that language is not a barrier to accessing essential government services.

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At the same time, the Lead Implementing Agencies have been diligently working to ensure that Covered Entities have the necessary resources, support, and guidance to implement the law effectively and successfully. This includes efforts by the OIT to develop enterprise-wide technological solutions that improve access to translation tools for Covered Entities. The Office of the Attorney General has provided ongoing legal support to help Covered Entities understand and comply with legal requirements. Additionally, DHS has designated the Office of New Americans (“DHS ONA”) to lead the advancement of these efforts and support statewide implementation.

This report highlights these initiatives using initial quantitative and qualitative data available at the moment of drafting this report, including implementation progress, identified gaps, and recommendations.

This document highlights significant progress in key areas, including language access planning, staff capacity-building, identification of vital documents and translation, and plan development and publication. It also emphasizes ongoing challenges that yield varied levels of implementation progress across entities, such as limited staffing, and vendor and resource capacity.

The report concludes with recommendations designed to streamline implementation across entities, improve operational consistency, and ensure equitable access to government services. These recommendations focus on robust resources, strengthening infrastructure, modernizing processes, broadening training initiatives, improving monitoring mechanisms, and embedding accessibility principles into everyday decision-making and service delivery practices.

2. The NJ Language Access Law in Context

New Jersey is among the most racially and linguistically diverse states in the nation. Nearly 1.2 million residents aged 5 years and older have LEP, including over 1 million foreign-born residents, and approximately 170,000 U.S.-born residents. Overall, close to 31% of New Jersey's population speaks a language other than English at home.

According to American Community Survey ("ACS") data, the most commonly spoken languages by individuals with LEP include:

Figure 1: Top Languages Spoken by Individuals with Limited English Proficiency in New Jersey (ACS 2022)

Rank	Statewide	North	Central	South
1.	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish
2.	Portuguese ¹	Portuguese	Gujarati	Vietnamese
3.	Korean	Korean	Chinese	Portuguese
4.	Gujarati	French Creole or Haitian Creole	Portuguese	Chinese
5.	Chinese (Incl. Mandarin, Cantonese) ²	Arabic	Polish	Filipino, Tagalog
6.	French Creole or Haitian Creole	Chinese	Russian	Korean
7.	Arabic	Polish	Mandarin	

¹ The language requirements should be interpreted as referring to Brazilian Portuguese, based on the characteristics of the majority of the Portuguese-speaking community living in New Jersey.

² While this table provides information on the spoken languages used by individuals of Chinese heritage, written translation must be provided in both Simplified and Traditional Chinese.

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8.	Polish	Gujarati	Arabic	
9.	Russian	Russian	Punjabi (Eastern and Western)	
10.	Vietnamese	Filipino, Tagalog	Korean	
11.	Italian	Italian	French or Haitian Creole	
12.	Filipino, Tagalog	Vietnamese	Italian	
13.	Mandarin	Bengali	Urdu	
14.	Bengali	Turkish	Vietnamese	
15.	Turkish	Hindi	Cantonese	

Together, these languages – and many more – reflect the scale and diversity of New Jersey’s multilingual communities and highlight the need for comprehensive and coordinated language access strategies. Ensuring clear communication across languages is critical for NJ State government to fulfill its mission and its ability to serve all residents, as well as for non-English speaking individuals and those with LEP to fully participate in public life and access vital government services and information.

Recognizing this, New Jersey took decisive action to remove long-standing barriers and work to equip all State entities to meet the diverse language needs of New Jersey’s population. In 2021, consistent with the NJ Department of Human Services, Office of New Americans’ (“DHS ONA”) mission to increase accessibility to State programs available to new Americans, including those who have LEP, DHS ONA partnered with Rutgers University’s Institute for Families and School of Social Work to assess community needs and develop an initial language access plan. This collaboration laid important groundwork for improving language access and advancing practices across the State to ensure that newly immigrated families, refugees, and individuals with LEP, as well as those with vision and/or hearing impairments, received the information and services they need in their preferred language. Since then, the ONA has been providing technical assistance and support on language accessibility to fellow State

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entities, including conducting a preliminary assessment of current State-contracted vendors for translation services. The ONA has also done extensive research on best practices and models from across the country to inform this effort in anticipation of a statewide initiative.

In January 2024, Governor Murphy enacted New Jersey Public Law 2023, Chapter 263 ([P.L. 2023, c. 263](#)), legislation championed by State Senate Majority Leader Teresa Ruiz, Senator Nellie Pou, Senator Nilsa I. Cruz-Perez, Assemblywoman Ellen J. Park, and Assemblyman Sterley S. Stanley. The Law applies to State government entities that provides direct services to the public (“Covered Entities”).

Governor Phil Murphy emphasized the importance of diversity and inclusion, stating:

In New Jersey, our greatest strength lies in our diversity. These bills recognize that our state’s immigrant families and diverse communities enrich our cultural, social, and economic identity. I am proud to sign legislation that supports New Jerseyans in achieving the American Dream, accessing government services, and being appropriately represented in data and analytics that may inform our work.³

Majority Leader Ruiz highlighted the significance of removing language barriers, particularly during times of crisis:

This legislation will remove the language barrier faced by so many of our communities by ensuring all state entities are prepared to assist our residents regardless of what language they speak. Now that Governor Murphy has signed this bill into law, when people are in need, and especially when they are in crisis, they will be able to connect to the resources available to them. This was highlighted all the more during the pandemic where we saw various obstacles preventing individuals from accessing real-time government information and routine government services. This is a step to close that crucial accessibility gap.⁴

³ New Jersey Department of Human Services (2024). *Governor Murphy Signs Immigrants’ Rights Legislation to Strengthen Workers’ Rights and Recognize the Diversity of New Jersey*. Retrieved January 1, 2026, <https://www.nj.gov/humanservices/news/pressreleases/2024/approved/20240112b.shtml>.

⁴ *Idem*.

3. New Jersey Language Access Law Requirements

Under the Language Access Law, each State government entity in the Executive Branch that provides direct services to the public is required to:

Translate Vital Documents and Information

Each State government entity must translate its vital documents (further defined below) and information into the seven (7) languages most commonly spoken by individuals with LEP in New Jersey. The expectation was to translate vital documents into the top five (5) languages by December 12, 2025, and then the additional two (2) languages in the year thereafter. Translation for public health emergencies or states of emergency declared by the Governor must be immediate.

Provide Interpreting Services

Each State government entity must provide interpreting services with respect to the provision of services or benefits in the constituent's primary language.

Each State government entity has the option to provide interpreting services in the manner specified in the entity's language access plan, which may include in-person by a qualified interpreter, interpreting by phone, and/or video-remote interpreting services.

Designate a Language Access Coordinator (LAC)

Each State government entity must designate a senior-level employee as a Language Access Coordinator. This individual will be responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the entity's language access plan, as well as ensuring compliance with the provisions of the law.

Develop and Publish a Language Access Plan (LAP)

Each State government entity must develop, publish, and update every three (3) years a Language Access Plan in consultation with Lead Implementing Agencies that reflects how the entity will comply with the provisions of the law, and post the plan on the entity's webpage.

LAPs should be created in consultation with community or stakeholder entities, and shall include:

- When and by what means will the government entity provide or is already providing language assistance services.
- How the government entity intends to keep track of the limited-English proficient population requesting interpretation and translation services, and how the government entity determines the need for language assistance services for the LEP population.
- A report on the frequency of requests for language assistance services, how the requests were met, whether language assistance services were requested in languages other than the required seven, and how the government entity intends to notify the LEP populations of the available language assistance services.
- How the government entity documents the actual provision of language assistance services to individuals with LEP.
- A training plan for government entity employees who will be involved in the implementation of this act which includes, at minimum, annual training on the language access policies of the government entity, how to provide language assistance services, and follow any applicable State and federal confidentially protocols.
- A plan for how the agency will ensure the provision of language assistance services of the highest quality and in a culturally competent manner.

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- The manner and means by which the public may contact the entity's language access coordinator regarding language access issues.
- The titles of all available translated documents and the languages into which they have been translated.
- A website and document content describing the translation services, processes, and documents required by this act; and
- A plan for annual internal monitoring of the government entities in compliance with the Law.

Public Notice

Each State government entity must prepare an informational poster to be prominently displayed at every service location in a highly visible area accessible to the public seeking services or benefits. The poster must outline the available language interpretation and translation services and inform individuals of their right to access these services under the Law.

Statewide Coordination & Oversight

The Law requires the Commissioner of Human Services, Attorney General, and Chief Technology Officer to provide guidance to the heads of Covered Entities and their respective LACs on implementation of the Law.

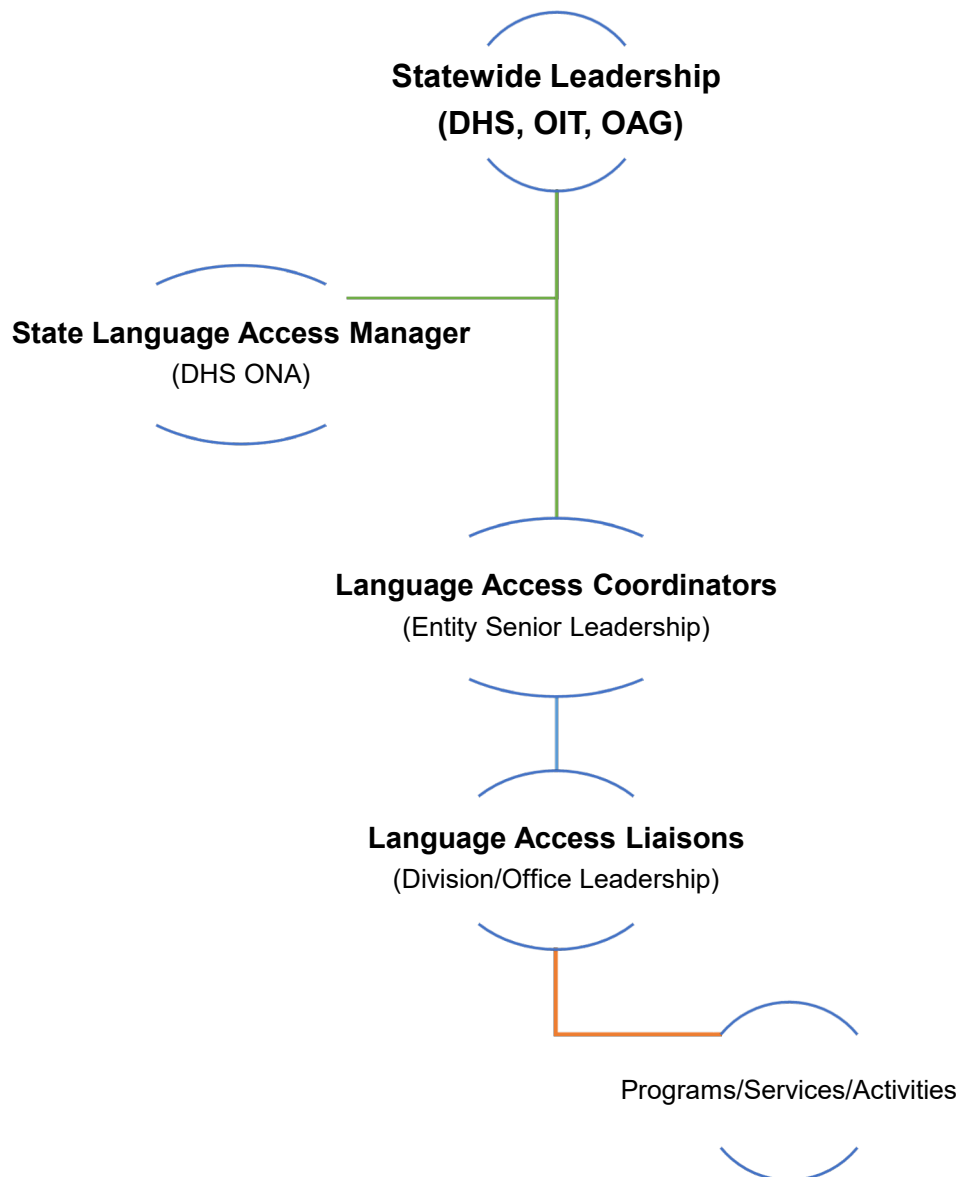
Annual Reporting

Collect and report required data to the Lead Implementing Agencies to develop and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature. The report will evaluate each entity's performance in implementing the provisions of the Law, provide recommendations for improvement, and list Covered Entities that require a corrective plan. The first report is due on January 10, 2026.

4. Statewide Implementation, & Oversight Structure

This graphic illustrates the framework for statewide implementation, outlining the roles, and coordination mechanisms for language access efforts.

Figure 2: State Language Access Infrastructure



Lead Implementing Agencies

Department of Human Services (DHS)

Given the history and expertise in Language Access, the Office of New Americans (DHS ONA) serves as DHS's representative among the Lead Implementing Agencies. DHS ONA has established an internal infrastructure to provide ongoing support to the statewide implementation efforts by providing technical assistance to state entities that provide direct services to the public. DHS ONA also facilitates overall coordination and strategic planning efforts among Lead Implementing Agencies, Covered Entities, and staff to ensure effective implementation of the Law. This work is carried out in close coordination and collaboration with DHS leadership, Lead Implementing Agencies, Governor's Office, and LACs.

The State Language Access Manager sits within DHS ONA and is responsible for providing strategic support to all Covered Entities by issuing guidance, delivering training, and offering ongoing technical assistance to support the effective and consistent implementation of the Law. This includes supporting entities in operationalizing requirements, promoting best practices, facilitating cross-agency uniformity, and strengthening capacity to enhance service delivery and access to individuals with LEP.

Office of the Attorney General (OAG)

OAG ensures alignment with the requirements of the Law and provides ongoing and critical consultation to Lead Implementing Agencies and Covered Entities that are represented by the Division of Law to ensure proper interpretation and application of the Law's requirements.

Office of Information Technology (OIT)

Provides technological support for language access systems, including posting information on public state websites, developing and maintaining internal documentation websites with resources accessible across state entities, and leveraging translation and interpreting services through technology solutions.

Covered Entities

Pursuant to the NJ Language Access Law a “State government entity” is defined as “any State department or agency in the Executive Branch and any commission, board, bureau, division, office, or instrumentality thereof providing direct services to the public.”⁵

Direct services to the public mean the services, benefits, programs, activities, and information made available to the general public by a State government entity and/or that are managed, conducted, provided or administered by a State government entity to serve the public interest. These include services that require State employees to interact directly (via real time encounters, including face-to-face, over-the-phone, or video-remote) or indirectly (via asynchronous written communications, web or digital services) with the public.

Direct services may occur at various points of contact with the public and consist of those services that are essential for the public to access, participate, navigate, or benefit from programs administered by the State government entity.

⁵ P.L.2023, c.263, C.52:14-41, 2.a.

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Figure 3: Covered Entities

• Board of Public Utilities	• Department of Transportation
• Cannabis Regulatory Commission	• Department of the Treasury
• Casino Control Commission	• Department of Veterans Affairs
• Casino Reinvestment Development Authority	• Economic Development Authority
• Civil Service Commission	• Governor's Office
• Department of Agriculture	• Higher Education Student Assistance Authority
• Department of Banking and Insurance	• Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority
• Department of Children and Families	• Motor Vehicles Commission
• Department of Community Affairs	• New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority
• Department of Corrections	• New Jersey State Police
• Department of Education	• NJ TRANSIT
• Department of Environmental Protection	• North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
• Department of Health	• Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness
• Department of Human Services	• Secure Choice Savings Program Board
• Department of Labor & Workforce Development	• South Jersey Transportation Authority
• Department of Law & Public Safety	• South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization
• Department of Military Affairs	• Sports & Exposition Authority
• Department of State	• Turnpike Authority

Staff Designations

There are two types of roles that Covered Entities have considered designating to advance Department-level implementation of the Law.

Covered Entity-specific Language Access Coordinator (LAC)

A senior-level employee of the Department designated to oversee and coordinate Covered Entity-wide implementation activities. (Required)

In collaboration with the Covered Entity Leadership, the LAC responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Oversee and coordinate Covered Entity-wide language access implementation activities.
- Identify language accessibility gaps, areas of opportunity, and goals.
- Identify resources needed for implementation and related efforts to ensure meaningful access for individuals with LEP interacting or likely to interact with the Covered Entity.
- Draft, review, and update the Covered Entity's Language Access Plan (LAP).
- Develop, lead, and promote uniformity of policies, procedures, and best practices relating to language access within the Covered Entity.
- Collaborate directly with the State Language Access Manager, who will disseminate information through, and receive Covered Entity submissions from, the designated LAC.
- Disseminate guidance and provide training and technical assistance to the Covered Entity's divisions/offices provided by the State Language Access Manager (including trainings, shared resources, and tools) for the effective implementation of the Covered Entity's LAP.
- Oversee complaints and corrective action processes.

- Support the establishment of mechanisms for monitoring the Covered Entity's implementation of its LAP; and
- Compile information for progress reporting.

Division/Office-specific Language Access Liaison (LAL)

An employee of the division/office within the Covered Entity designated to coordinate a division's language access implementation activities and meet the division's language access goals. All LALs are housed in and report progress to division leadership, in consultation with LAC. (Recommended, especially for larger Covered Entities).

In collaboration with the Covered Entity's LAC, LAL's responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- Develop and review division/office plans and implementation goals in consultation with the Covered Entity's LAC.
- Collect and submit data on implementation and goals to the Covered Entity's LAC.
- Support the development of a division/office-level budget for implementation work and related efforts to ensure meaningful access for individuals with LEP interacting or likely to interact with the division/office.
- Ensure division/office staff are informed and, where appropriate (e.g., public-facing staff), trained in the Covered Entity and division/office's LAP.
- Support divisions/offices in accessing or troubleshooting language assistance services; and
- Ensure the division/office's plans and reports are up to date.

5. Notable Language Access Implementation Efforts– Lead Implementing Agencies

Lead Implementing Agencies have provided ongoing support to all Covered Entities, including efforts to:

- Provide guidance, technical support, and training for entities through the Department of Human Services (DHS).
- Develop and maintain technological infrastructure to support language access systems, including public, as well as internal websites and technology solutions provided by the Office of Information Technology (OIT).
- Ensure alignment with the requirements of the law, along with consultation on interpretation and application of its provisions through the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

Coordination and Cross-Agency Collaboration

- Facilitate inter-agency collaboration to design, discuss, and test strategies, resources, and tools for addressing challenges in implementation.
- Convene regular meetings with Lead Implementing Agencies to discuss progress, challenges, and best practices in implementing language access plans.

Material Development

- **Technical Assistance Materials:** Develop a comprehensive suite of materials designed to build capacity among LACs and frontline staff, including tailored materials for LACs to share with the LALs throughout their department to strengthen their understanding of the Law's requirements, service design, identification of vital documents, and the appropriate provisions of language assistance services. These resources are housed in internal hubs, serving as a centralized knowledge base for guidance documents, infographics, training, toolkits, templates, step-by-step guides, recorded webinars, scenario-based learning and implementation tools, including language assistance service guides, service logs, and data collection tools.
- **Language Access Plan Development:** Provide templates, toolkits, and guidance documents to streamline the development and implementation of language access plans.
- **Public-Facing Materials:** Create posters that explain that language interpreting and translation services are available and how to receive these services to comply with the Law's requirement of creating and displaying informational posters at service locations in an area that is highly visible to the public seeking services or benefits. The implementation of these materials also requires extensive technical support and training to ensure that the services advertised in posters are effectively delivered and that entities have the necessary resources to provide adequate support to LEP populations that engage with their services or information.

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Figure 4: Language Identification Poster

State of New Jersey
Phil Murphy, Governor | Tahesha L. Way, Lt. Governor

Logo place holder

Department Leadership

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES
ONA
OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS

Point to your language.

Free Interpreter services are available. Please ask someone at the front desk. An interpreter will be called today.

Auxiliary Aids/ Sign Language
*For sign language interpretation/ other auxiliary aids, entities must contact the Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) at ddhh.communications@doh.nj.gov. Requests will be met as soon as possible.

Arabic
العربية
أمرائي العتار، خدمات الترجمة الفورية متوفرة مجاناً من فستك امد امد مطلي. مكتب الاستقبال، وسيتار استنداء، ماترم اليوم.

Bengali
বাংলা
আপনার ভাষা কেন্দ্রীয় অ সেবিং মিনা বিনামূল্যে সোভাষী পরিষেবার ব্যবস্থা রয়েছে। অনুগ্রহ করে ফ্রন্ট ডেস্কের কাউন্সে জিজ্ঞেস করুন। আজ একজন সোভাষী ডাকা হবে।

Cantonese
廣東話
請指向您的語言。我們可以提供免費口譯員服務。請諮詢前台工作人員。我們會聯絡口譯員。

广东话
請指向您的語言。我們可以提供免費口譯員服務。請諮詢前台工作人員。我們會聯絡口譯員。

Chinese
中文
請指向您的語言。我們可以提供免費口譯員服務。請諮詢前台工作人員。我們會聯絡口譯員。

Farsi
فارسی
به زبان خود اشاره کنید. خدمات مترجم رایگان در دسترس است. لطفاً از مسئول پذیرش درخواست کنید. یک مترجم امروز فراخوانده خواهد شد.

Filipino/Tagalog
Ituro ang iyong wika. Mayroong mga libreng serbisyo ng Tagapagsalin. Magtanong sa front desk. May matalawag na tagapagsalin ngayon.

French
Français
Indiquez votre langue. Des services d'interprétation gratuits sont disponibles. Veuillez vous adresser à la réception. Un(e) interprète sera appelé(e) aujourd'hui.

Gujarati
ગુજરાતી
તમારી ભાષા તરફ અનુવીનિર્દેશ કરો. નિ:શુલ્ક હેઠળ કુશળિયા સેવાઓ ઉપલબ્ધ છે. કૃપા કરીને ફ્રન્ટ ડેસ્ક પર કોઈને પૂછો. એક કુશળિયાને અજો બોલાવવામાં આવશે.

Haitian Creole
Kreyòl Ayisyen
Chèche lang natirèl ou. Gen sèvis Entèprelasyon Gratis ki disponib. Tanpri mande yon resespansyon devan biwo a. N ap jwenn yon entèprete jodia.

Hindi
हिन्दी
अपनी भाषा की ओर इशारा करें. नि:शुल्क दुभाषिया सेवाएँ उपलब्ध हैं। कृपया फ्रंट डेस्क पर मौजूद किसी व्यक्ति से पूछें। आज दुभाषिया बुलाया जाएगा।

Italian
Italiano
Indica la tua lingua. Sono disponibili servizi di interpretariato gratuiti. Per favore chiedi a qualcuno alla reception. Oggi verrà chiamato un interprete.

Korean
한국어
귀하의 언어를 가리키시면 무료 통역 서비스를 이용하실 수 있습니다. 안내 데스크 직원에게 문의하십시오. 오늘 통역사를 호출해 드리겠습니다.

Mandarin
普通话
請指向您的語言。我們可以提供免費口譯員服務。請諮詢前台工作人員。我們會聯絡口譯員。

Pashto
پښتو
چاپي ژبې ته اشاره وکړئ. د ژباړې وړ دواختونه موجود دي. مهرباني وکړئ د خدمتو په چوکۍ کې له یو څوک سره د یو وخت لیدل شوی.

Polish
Polski
Wskaz swój język. Dostępne są bezpłatne usługi tłumacza ustnego. Prosimy zapytać o to pracownika recepcji. Zadzwonimy do tłumacza ustnego w dniu dzisiejszym.

Portuguese
Português
Aponte para o seu idioma. Há serviços de intérprete gratuitos. Pergunte a alguém da recepção. Chamaremos um(a) intérprete hoje.

Punjabi
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ
ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਕਰੋ। ਮੁਫਤ ਦੁਆਬਾਸੀ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹਨ। ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਫਰੰਟ ਡੈਸਕ 'ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਅੱਜ ਇੱਕ ਦੁਆਬਾਸੀ ਨੂੰ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ।

Russian
Русский Язык
Укажите на свой язык. Предоставляются бесплатные услуги устного переводчика. Пожалуйста, обратитесь к кому-нибудь на стойке регистрации. Переводчик будет вызван сегодня.

Spanish
Español
Indique cual es su lengua. Hay servicios de intérprete gratuitos disponibles. Por favor pregunte a alguien en la recepción. Hoy se llamará a un intérprete.

Swahili
Kiswahili
Tambua lugha yako. Huduma za Ukalimani za bure zinapatikana. Tafadhali uliza mfu kwenye dawati la mapokezi. Ukalimani atapigiwa simu leo.

Turkish
Türkçe
Konuştuğunuz dili belirtin. Ücretsiz Tercümanlık hizmetleri mevcuttur. Lütfen resepsiyonda bulunan bir görevliye danışın. Bugün bir tercüman çağırılacaktır.

Ukrainian
Українська Мова
Оберіть свою мову. Надаються безкоштовні послуги усного перекладу. Будь ласка, зверніться до когось на реєстрації. Сьогодні вам викличуть перекладача.

Urdu
اُردو
اپنی زبان نشانے تحت مترجم کی خدمات دستیاب ہیں۔ براہ کرم فرنٹ ڈیسک پر موجود کسی سے پوچھیں۔ آج ہی مترجم کو بلا لیا جائے گا۔

Vietnamese
Tiếng Việt
Hãy chỉ vào ngôn ngữ của quý vị. Chúng tôi cung cấp dịch vụ Thông dịch viên miễn phí. Vui lòng hỏi ở quầy lễ tân. Một thông dịch viên sẽ được gọi ngay hôm nay.

Training

Through monthly Community of Practice (CoP) meetings, DHS promotes the improvement of skills, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among LACs. These efforts provide a platform for entities to receive Lead Implementing' guidance, access tools and resources, exchange best practices, address challenges, and obtain customized support to strengthen their language access strategies.

As of the date of this report, DHS has facilitated five 90-minutes CoP meetings, and eight 90-minute technical assistance sessions to address specific issues raised by LACs as needed.

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Figure 5: Language Access CoP 2025 Training Topics

1. Recognizing The Importance Of Cross-language Communication In The Delivery Of Government Services.
2. Developing And Strengthening Language Access Plans.
3. Identifying Barriers Faced By Individuals With Limited Proficiency In English In Public-facing Services.
4. Effectively Engaging And Building Trust With Communities With LEP.
5. Translation 101.
6. Identifying And Prioritizing Vital Documents.
7. Designing Services & Touchpoints That Support Access Across The Service Lifecycle.
8. Understanding, Selecting And Utilizing Language Assistance Services.
9. Tracking, Documenting And Evaluating The Provision Of Language Assistance Services.
10. Building Systems And Process Responsive To Individuals' Needs, Regardless Of Language.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Support

- **Policy Guidance:** Equip senior-level staff with knowledge and support to lead language access implementation. This includes providing LACs with the guidance, resources, skills and tools necessary to coordinate efforts at the division/office level and effectively implement and sustain language access initiatives. Supporting LACs in strengthening LAL's ability to assess division and office policies, practices and protocols, identify gaps and barriers, coordinate across agency, vendors and grantees, and track language access efforts. LACs are encouraged to implement peer-learning opportunities to build capacity and use as platforms for LALs to embed language access in day-to-day operations ensuring access across all programs and activities.
- **One-on-One Consultations:** Offer individualized consultations to address unique challenges faced by each LAC.

- **Office-Hour Sessions:** Host approximately seven 90-minute technical assistance sessions to address specific issues, including service delivery gaps and data collection challenges.

Monitoring and Accountability

- **Performance Metrics:** Work with LACs to support them in establishing measurable goals and performance indicators for language access tracking and monitoring.
- **Annual Reporting:** Assess LAPs and additional data to understand entities' structure and resources related to language access implementation.
- **Implementation Reviews:** Collaborate among Lead Implementing Agencies to address adherence to language access requirements and identify areas for improvement.

Community Engagement and Feedback

Engaged with individuals representing or working with LEP to gather feedback on the effectiveness of language access services.

Procurement & Vendor Availability Statewide

The State has contracts with several vendors that provide translation and/or interpreting services. These include vendors that may provide human-based translation and/or that may use automated translation technology. DHS engaged in an analysis to evaluate vendors' readiness to meet language access requirements with the goal of ensuring that selected vendors have the capacity, expertise, and resources to provide high-quality language assistance services.

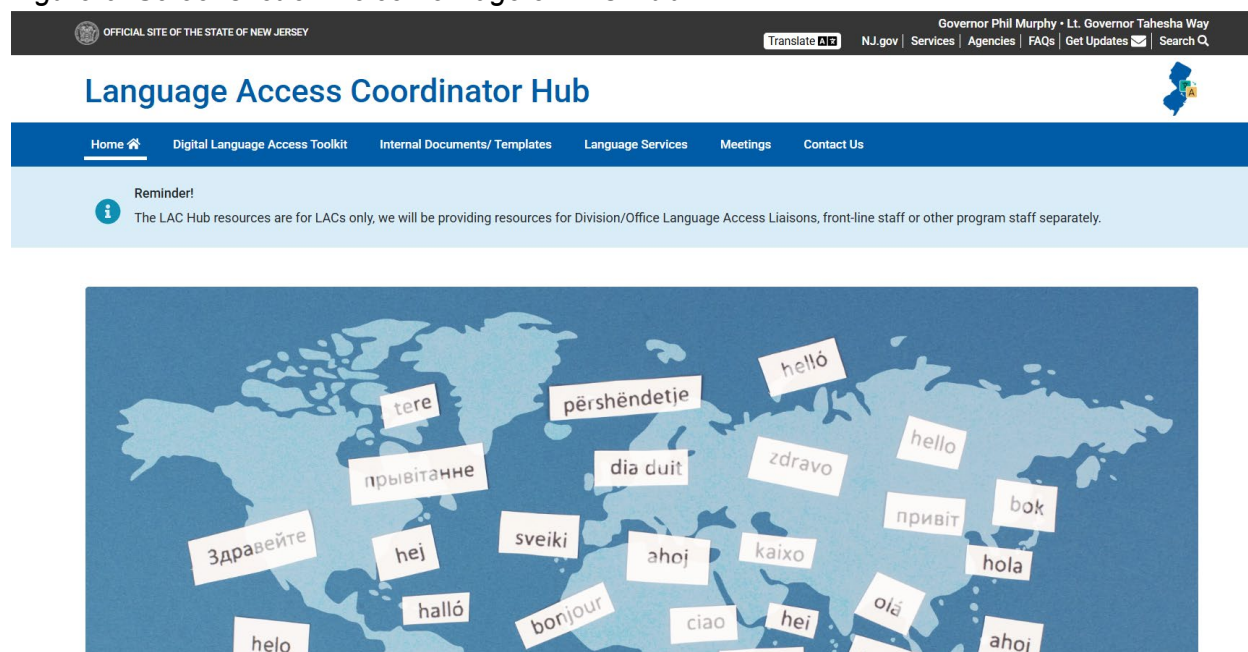
Compliance and Application of the Law

Develop statewide guidance to help Cabinet members implement the Law statewide and coordinate as Lead Implementing Agencies, providing legal guidance and support on the applicability of the Law. In addition, the Division of Law, which is supervised by the Attorney General, serves as legal counsel to a number of state entities and in that capacity provides legal advice to the agencies regarding their legal duties under the law.

Language Access Coordinator Hub

Launch and maintain a Language Access Hub in the [my.NJ](#) portal for Language Access Coordinators to access recordings and materials shared during Community of Practice and Office Hours meetings, as well as additional resources, templates, and cheat sheets.

Figure 6: Screenshot of Welcome Page of LAC Hub



OIT has worked with NJ's technology partners to develop and deploy three solutions to assist with language access and translation.

1. A "Translate" website widget has been developed and deployed on nj.gov websites built on the Enterprise Content Management Platform (CMS). In addition to assisting entities outside of the CMS integrate the widget into their websites. The button allows residents and site visitors to view the page in their requested language, on-demand with a simple click. When selected, the website is translated by AI models within the Enterprise Public Cloud service provided by OIT.
2. A Document Translation Application has been made available to assist with vital document translation. The application is powered by AI models within the Enterprise Public Cloud and allows for important human-in-the-loop review and editing before final approval. The application supports both PDF and Microsoft Word document formats. Approved entity personnel have authenticated access to upload, review, edit, and approve AI-based translations in support of their Language Access efforts.
3. A workflow and forms automation tool, used by 25 entities, has been developed to assist with the translation of webforms.

These tools aim to lower costs, streamline processes, improve timely communication, and ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

OIT and DHS are working in collaboration to share relevant best practices through LACs for using each automated translation tool to optimize accuracy and facilitate quality control in accordance with the requirements of the law.

6. Language Access Implementation – Covered Entity Progress

Language Access Plans

Thirty-four (34) of the Covered Entities have successfully developed or updated their Language Access Plans, demonstrating a commitment to improving accessibility. They are actively engaged in assessing, developing, or refining internal policies, practices, and protocols, while creating comprehensive implementation to align with the requirements of the Law.

A directory of Covered Entities and Language Access Plans is available on the Office of New Americans/ Language Access page:
www.nj.gov/humanservices/njnewamericans/.

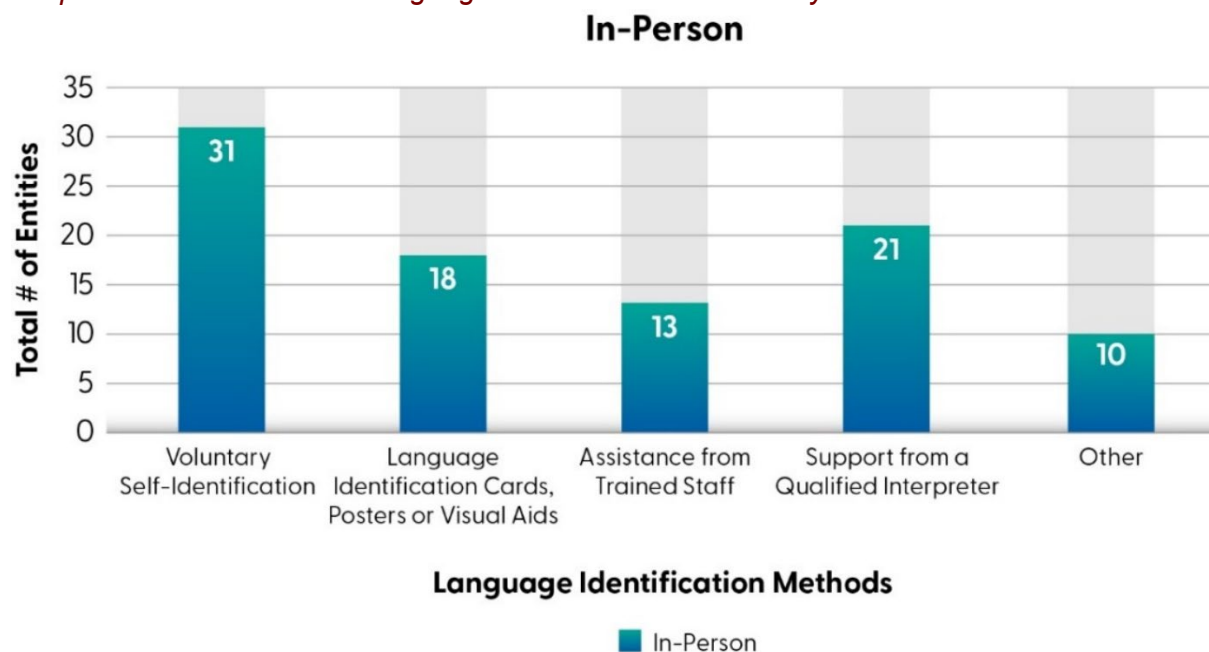
The following data represents a snapshot of the information collected through Covered Entity LAPs, highlighting current practices and services implemented to ensure accessibility for individuals with LEP. State entities are continuing to work towards adding/evaluating services.

The graphics below illustrate the strategies, resources, and efforts undertaken by Covered Entities to comply with language access requirements, including:

- Practices used to identify limited proficiency in English, assistance needs, and language preference
- Translation and interpreting Services
- Methods for providing public notice
- Staff training programs on language access requirements and best practices
- Quality assurance measures for language assistance services
- Monitoring and Reporting.

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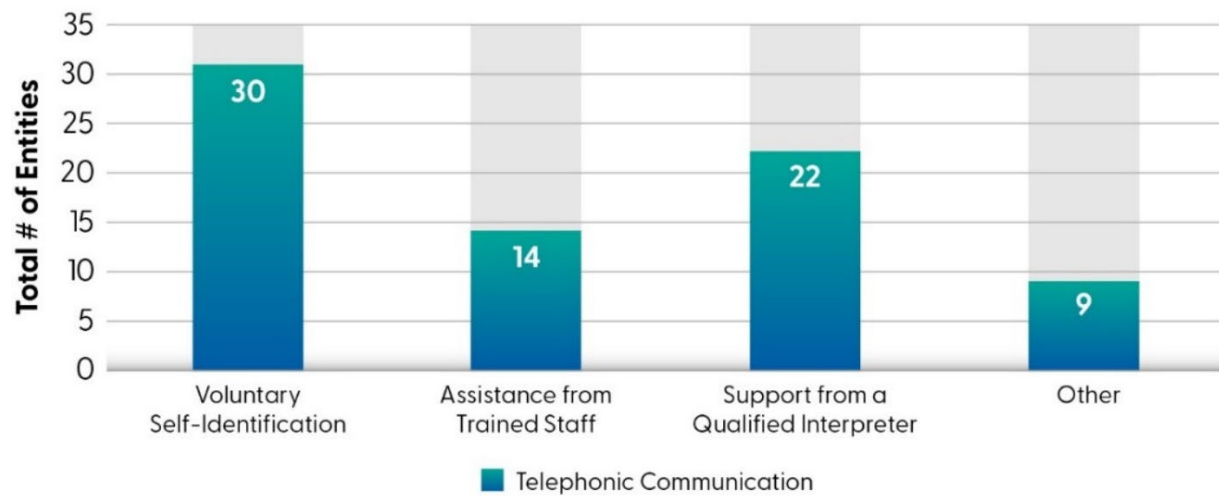
Graph 1: Use of In-Person Language Identification Methods by Entities



According to the reported data, all 34 Covered Entities that submitted a Language Access Plan use at least one method to identify LEP and language needs during in-person interactions, with many entities using more than one approach. Voluntary self-identification is the most commonly reported method, used by 31 entities. Multilingual language identification tools—such as cards, posters, or other visual aids—are used by 18 entities, while 21 entities report using interpreter support, and 13 rely on assistance from trained staff. Since entities may use multiple methods, these figures are cumulative, highlighting that in-person language identification most often relies on individuals identifying their own language needs, complemented by job aids tools and staff or interpreter assistance.

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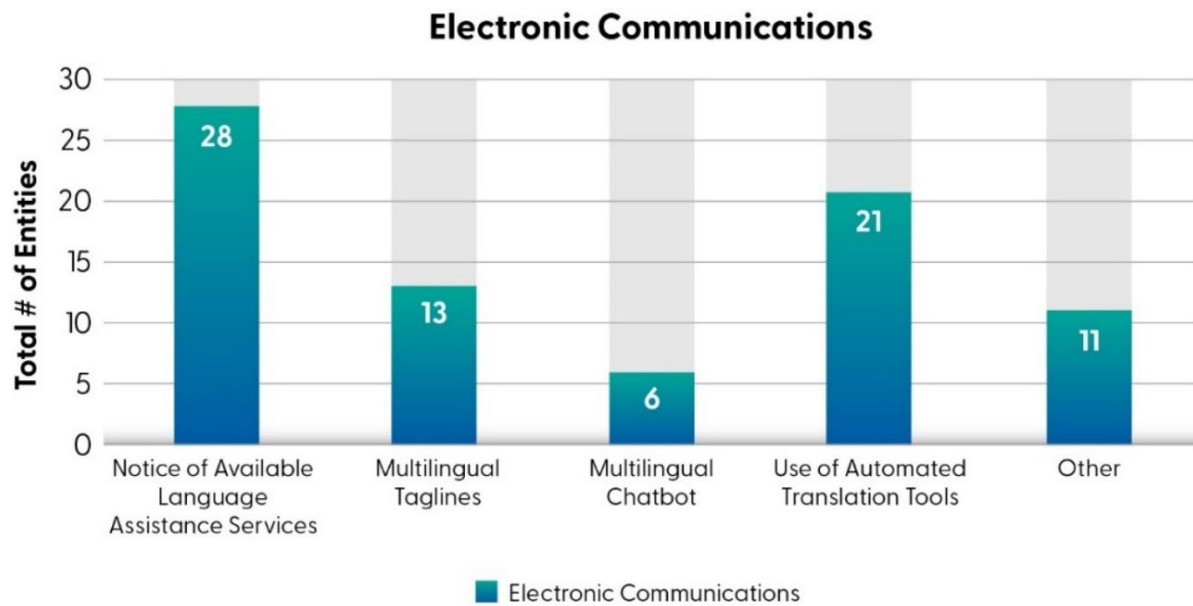
Graph 2: Use of Methods to Identify Language During Telephonic Interactions by Entities
Telephonic Communication



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities employ multiple methods to identify language needs during telephonic interactions. Voluntary self-identification is the most commonly reported method, used by 30 Covered Entities. Interpreter support is utilized by 22 entities, while 14 rely on assistance from trained staff. Since Covered Entities often use more than one method, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping practices across entities

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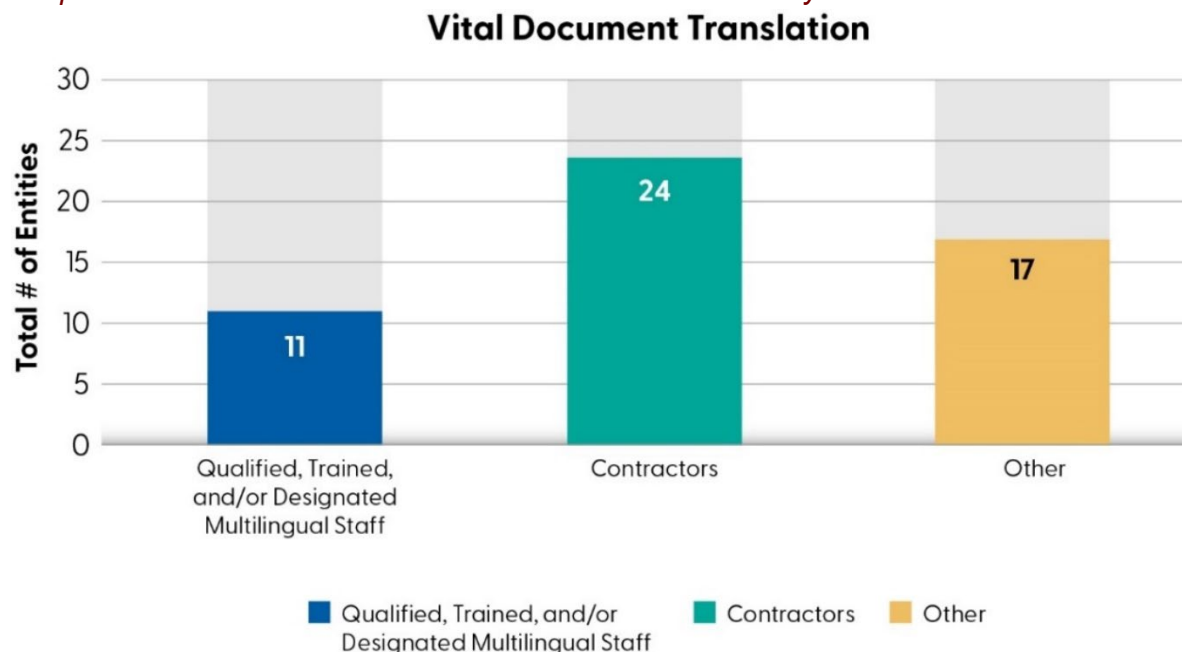
Graph 3: Use of Methods for Language Identification during Electronic Communication by Entities



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities utilize multiple methods to communicate the availability of language assistance services through electronic platforms. Website notices detailing available language assistance services are reported by 28 Covered Entities, automated translation tools by 21, multilingual taglines by 13, and multilingual chatbots by 6. Since Covered Entities often employ more than one method, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping practices across entities.

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Graph 4: Vital Document Translation Methods Used Per Entity

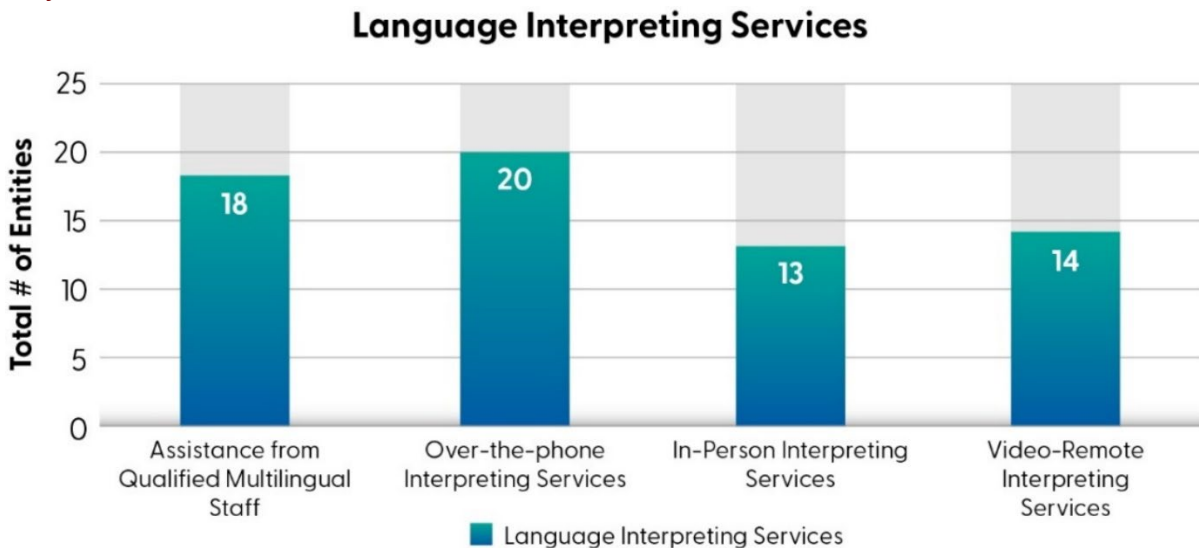


Based on the reported data, Covered Entities use multiple approaches to translate vital documents. Contractor-supported translation is used by 24 entities, 17 report using other processes, and 11 rely on qualified, trained, and/or designated multilingual staff. Since Covered Entities often use more than one approach, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping translation practices across entities. These methods support the translation of vital documents into the required seven languages and, often, extend availability to additional languages beyond those mandated. Also, data reveals significant variation in the volume and breadth of translated documents across entities. For instance, LAP inventories indicate higher overall translation counts, with some entities reporting extensive translation activity across a wide range of languages and document types, while others report more limited efforts focused on fewer languages. Covered Entities with broader service portfolios and higher public-facing engagement tend to translate documents into more languages and at higher volumes, whereas those with narrower functions report smaller, more targeted translation efforts. Overall, the data highlights that translation activity varies by entity mission, service population, and type of interaction.

Across all Covered Entities, Language Access Plan inventories reflect more than 1,300 translated documents. Covered Entities are actively translating vital documents into the top seven languages required by law—Spanish, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Korean, Arabic, and Gujarati. Many entities exceed these requirements by translating documents into additional languages, such as Polish, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese, which are widely available across multiple Departments. While the volume and range of materials in these languages vary, other languages—such as German, Dutch, Punjabi, Dari, Bengali, Urdu, Pashto, Swahili, Turkish, Telugu, Italian, Burmese, and Japanese—are also represented. This demonstrates a broader effort to meet the diverse needs of New Jersey's multilingual communities.

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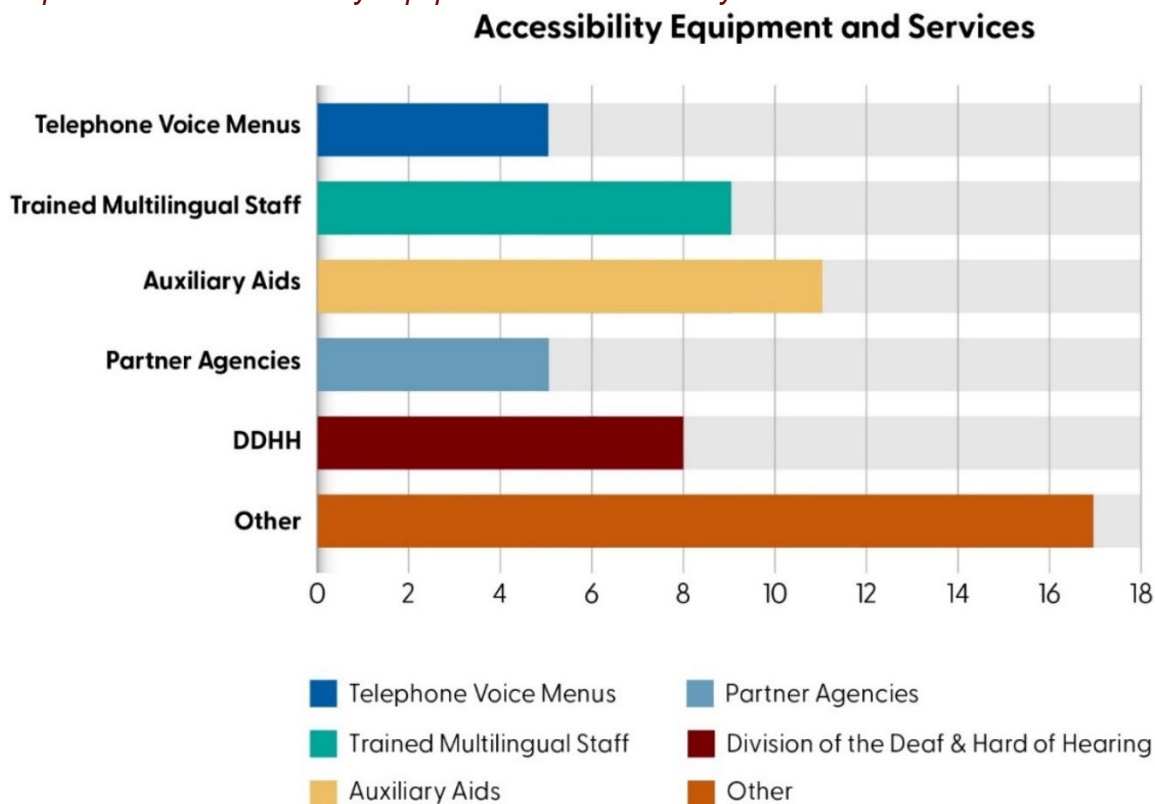
Graph 5: Resources Available For Spoken Or Sign Language Interpreting Requests Used Per Entity



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities employ multiple methods to provide language interpreting services. Over-the-phone interpreting is the most commonly reported method, used by 20 Covered Entities. Assistance from qualified multilingual staff is reported by 18 entities, while 14 utilize video-remote interpreting, and 13 rely on in-person interpreting services. Since Covered Entities often use more than one method, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping practices across entities.

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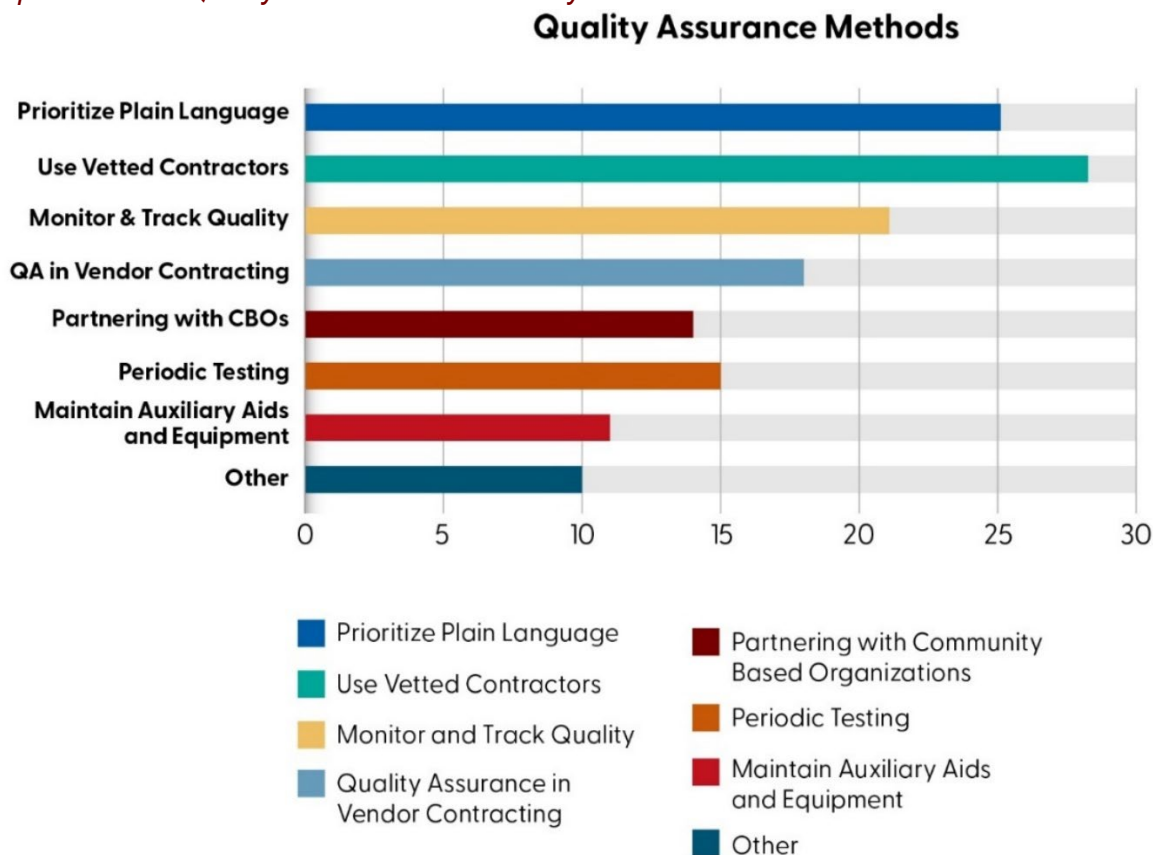
Graph 6: Use of Accessibility Equipment and Services by Entities



According to the reported data, Covered Entities employ a variety of accessibility equipment and services to support individuals requiring auxiliary assistance. Auxiliary aids are the most frequently reported support, used by 11 Covered Entities. Trained multilingual staff are utilized by 9 entities, while support through partner entities and telephone voice menus are each reported by 5 entities. Additionally, 8 Covered Entities report using services provided by the Department of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH). Notably, 17 Covered Entities selected “other,” indicating the use of additional, unspecified accessibility equipment or services. As Covered Entities often rely on multiple options, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping strategies to ensure accessibility support.

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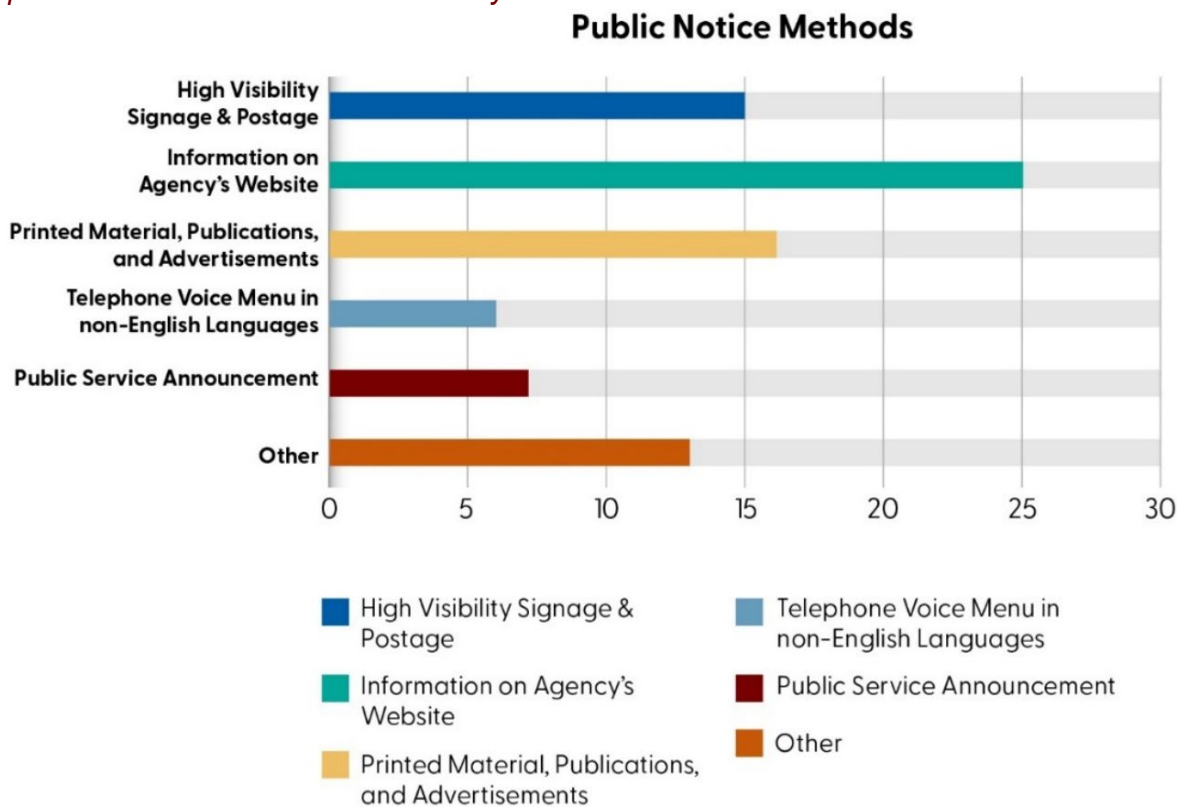
Graph 7: Use of Quality Assurance Methods by Entities



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities employ multiple methods to support quality assurance in language access services. The most commonly reported practices include using vetted contractors, cited by 29 Covered Entities, prioritizing plain language, reported by 25, and monitoring and tracking quality, reported by 21 entities. Additionally, 18 Covered Entities incorporate quality assurance requirements into vendor contracts, 15 conduct periodic testing, 14 partner with community-based organizations, and 11 maintain auxiliary aids and equipment. Ten entities selected “other,” indicating the use of additional, unspecified quality assurance approaches. Since Covered Entities often utilize multiple methods, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping quality assurance practices across entities.

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Graph 8: Use of Public Notice Methods by Entities

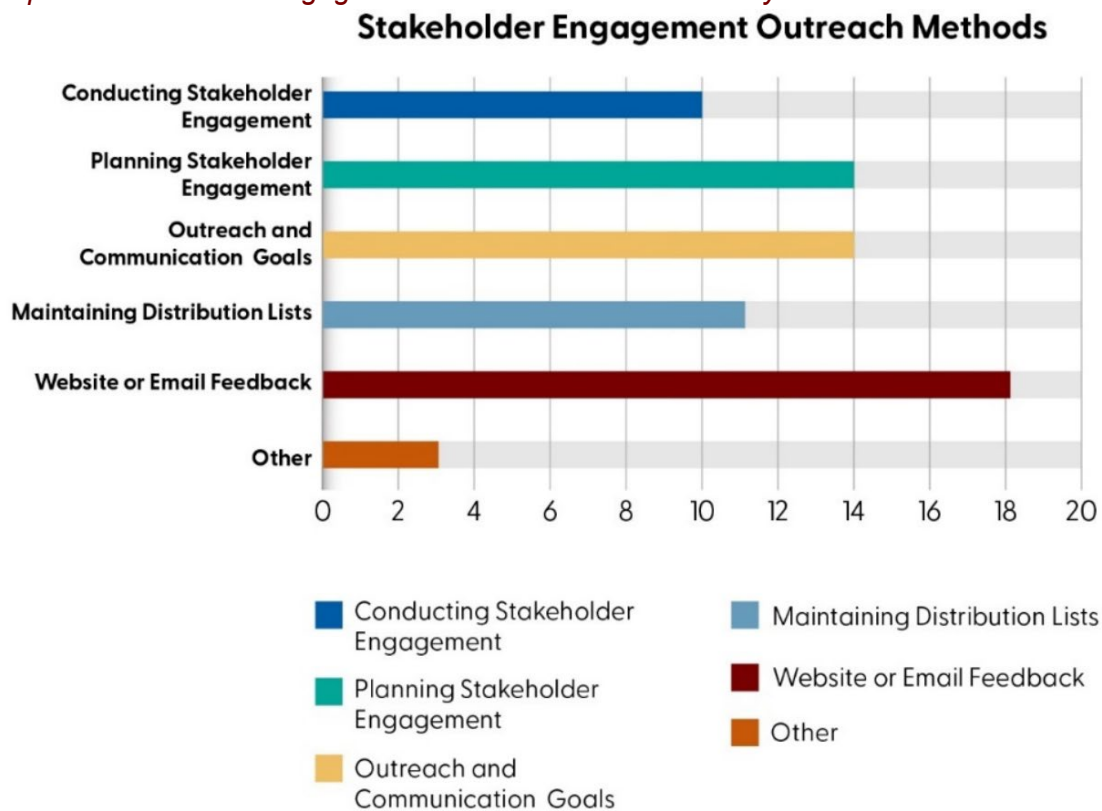


Based on the reported data, covered entities use multiple methods to provide public notice of available language assistance services. Posting information on the agency's website is the most commonly reported method, used by 25 entities. Printed materials, publications, and advertisements are reported by 16 entities, and 15 entities report using high-visibility signage and posters. Additional methods include public service announcements, reported by 7 entities, and telephone voice menus in non-English languages, reported by 6 entities. Thirteen entities selected "other," indicating the use of additional public notice approaches.

Because entities may use more than one method, these figures are cumulative and reflect overlapping public notice practices across entities, including both existing and planned methods

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Graph 9: Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Methods by Entities



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities employ a variety of methods to engage stakeholders. Planning stakeholder engagement activities is reported by 14 entities, while 10 report actively conducting stakeholder engagement. Outreach and communication goals are identified by 14 entities, and 11 maintain distribution lists to support ongoing communication.

The most commonly reported method is providing a website or email for feedback, used by 18 Covered Entities. Fewer entities report utilizing other outreach approaches.

Overall, the data indicates that stakeholder engagement is taking place across entities through multiple channels, with a stronger focus on feedback mechanisms and planning activities than on structured outreach implementation.

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Graph 10: Staff Training Topics Used by Entities

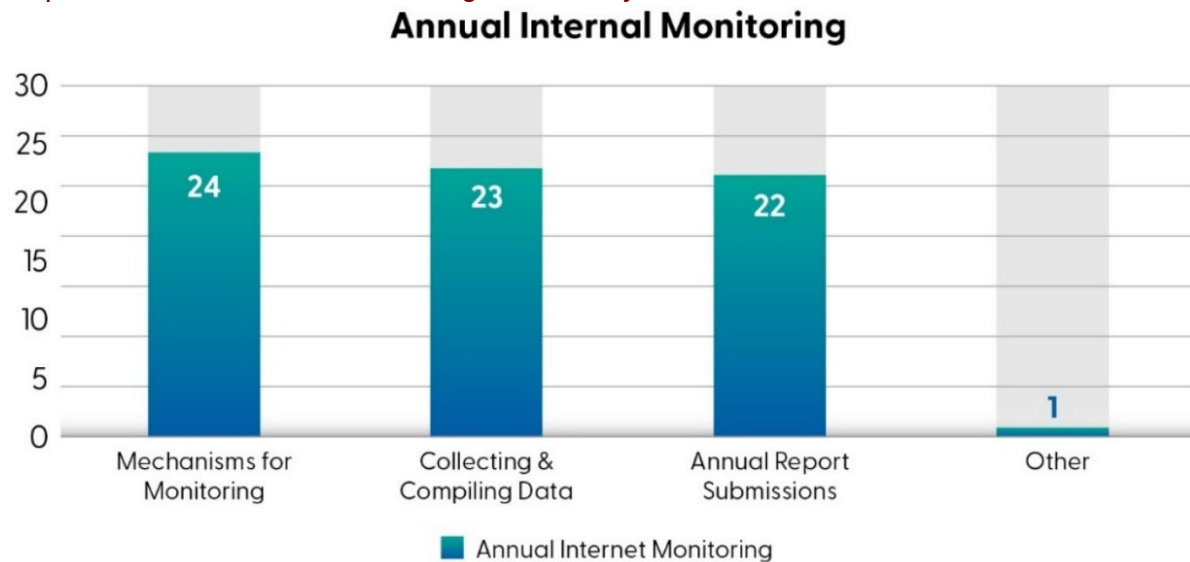


Based on the reported data, Covered Entities address multiple language access topics in staff training. The most commonly reported topics include legal obligations for language assistance and language access policies and protocols, each covered by 25 Covered Entities. Training on resources and best practices, as well as obtaining language assistance services, is reported by 23 entities. Additionally, 22 entities provide training on working with interpreters and translators, 20 focus on maintaining records of services provided, and 18 offer cultural competence and sensitivity training.

Since Covered Entities often cover multiple topics, these figures are cumulative. The reported selections reflect both current training practices and planned training activities that Covered Entities aim to implement.

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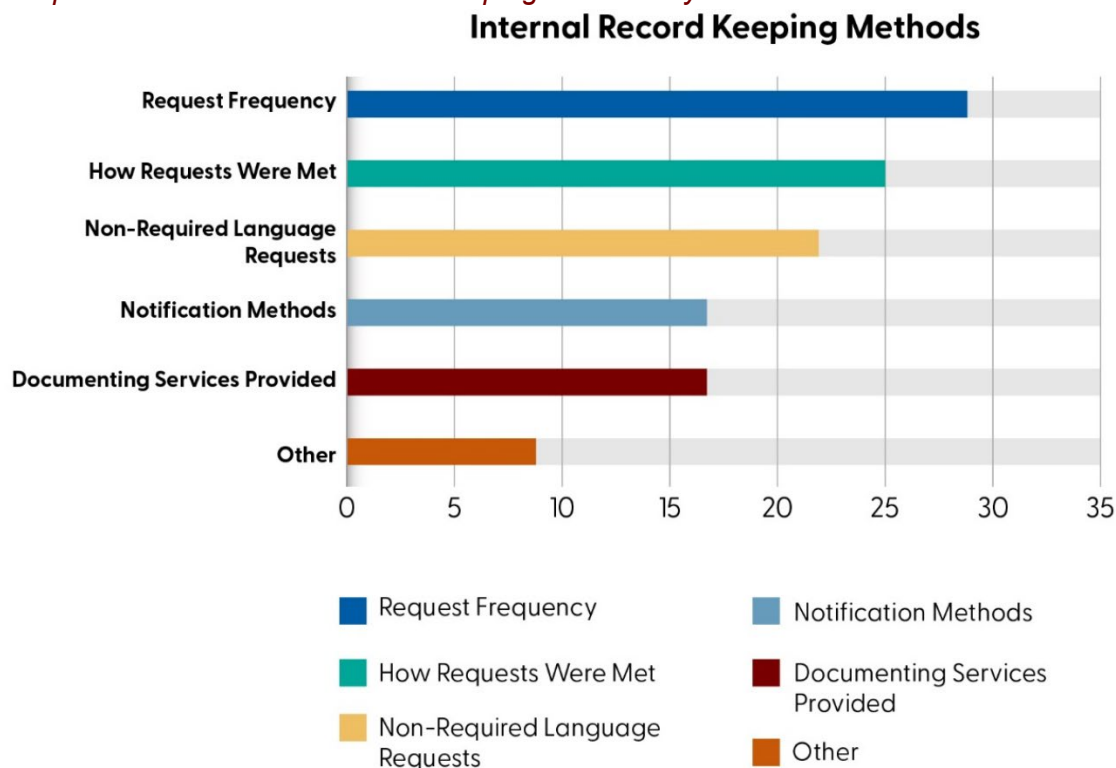
Graph 11: Annual Internal Monitoring Methods by Entities



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities engage in various internal monitoring activities. 24 entities report having mechanisms to monitor language access implementation, 23 collect and compile data for reporting, and 22 submit annual reports. Since Covered Entities often perform multiple activities, these figures are cumulative. The reported selections reflect both current monitoring practices and planned activities, with variation in the specific approaches utilized.

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Graph 12: Use of Internal Recordkeeping Methods by Entities



Based on the reported data, Covered Entities employ multiple methods to track language access–related information. The most commonly reported practice is tracking the frequency of language assistance requests, followed by documenting how these requests were met. Fewer Covered Entities report tracking requests in languages beyond the required ones, documenting notification methods, or maintaining records of services provided.

Since Covered Entities often use multiple recordkeeping methods, these figures are cumulative. The reported selections reflect both current recordkeeping practices and planned activities, with approaches varying across entities.

7. Opportunities for Growth and Paths Forward

Valuable insights have been obtained into the progress, lessons learned, and areas of improvement that Covered Entities are experiencing in implementing the Law through empirical data gathered from conversations with LACs, reviews of LAPs, and discussions in the Community of Practice meetings and Office Hours sessions, as well as stakeholder feedback.

While LAPs reveal varying levels of Covered Entities' implementation progress and highlight key areas for improvement, discussions within the Community of Practice shed light on opportunities for addressing systemic challenges, including exploring innovative solutions to resource limitations, enhancing staffing capacity, and building infrastructure to support the diverse range of languages spoken by populations with LEP, including less commonly spoken languages. Additionally, Community of Practice discussions have showcased promising practices and success stories that can serve as models for progress in implementation. This collective data serves as a strong foundation for identifying opportunities, refining strategies, and driving continuous improvement in language access efforts across the state.

Enhancing Capacity for Language Access Designees

Each state entity and authority subject to the law identified a LAC. Designations were made by senior department leadership, signaling the importance of language access planning and implementation efforts.

Designated personnel responsible for leading the implementation of language access efforts (including LACs and LALs), often juggle multiple responsibilities in addition to their language access duties.

For instance, LACs hold critical roles within their respective entities, serving as Executive Directors, Program Directors, Associate Directors, Senior

Policy Advisors, Chiefs of Staff, Officers, and more. LALs serve as Program leads and managers that oversee division level programs and initiatives. These positions already carry significant responsibilities including strategic planning, policy development, overseeing programs and managing teams. Within these demanding portfolios, language access represents only one fraction of their roles.

Several Covered Entities face limited staffing leaving LACs or LALs without adequate support to implement language access measures effectively across entities, divisions/offices, and programs/activities.

Potential Impact:

- Without sufficient time and resources, LACs, LALs, and program/activity personnel supporting implementation may face challenges in ensuring the effective implementation of language access initiatives.
- Limited capacity within entities could hinder the ability to fully meet the needs of individuals with LEP.

Opportunity:

- To the extent feasible in available personnel and fiscal resources, considering how to increase staffing dedicated or significantly focused on language access implementation can help Covered Entities ensure that language access is prioritized and executed successfully.
- Strengthening capacity at all levels would allow more effective, consistent and comprehensive implementation.

Strengthening Infrastructure for the Provision of Language Access Services

Many Covered Entities lack access to the necessary tools to design and implement effective systems that provide high-quality translation and interpreting ensuring access to individuals with LEP, such as multilingual phone trees and other modernization efforts, which require staffing, funding, and staff user training.

Potential Impact:

- To address gaps, Covered Entities often rely on ad hoc staff⁶ for interpreting or translation, or have insufficient access to professional, trained, and qualified language assistance services. Additionally, communication systems designed to help individuals effectively engage with entities are limited. For example, implementing public requires adequate staffing, sufficient resources, and effective communication and training to ensure staff can deliver the services advertised in these notices.

Opportunities:

- With the guidance of Lead Implementing Agencies, Covered Entities will continue to identify the resources needed to expand availability of language access services, such as additional staffing, technological tools, and financial resources.
- Efforts to update and improve language access services should include robust strategies to ensure quality, cultural competence, and respect for individuals with LEP. This includes enhancing the quality of both human and technology-based translation and interpreting services that are available. Covered Entities will continue to assess resources and provide training to ensure staff are equipped to effectively utilize these resources.

⁶ Ad hoc means bilingual staff who have not been trained, assessed, and/or designated.

- Departments should consider leveraging existing resources, cost-sharing opportunities, and accounting for language access-related costs in the Department's routine activities, such as factoring translation and/or interpreting services into grant applications and other funding opportunities.

Scaling Up Entity Supports and Monitoring of Progress

As Covered Entities continue to establish their internal policies and protocols, additional mechanisms to monitor progress on the implementation of the Law will be needed to ensure consistency of implementation and compliance.

Potential Impact:

- Without ongoing monitoring of progress, gaps in language access services may go unaddressed, disrupting accessibility for individuals with LEP.

Opportunity:

- Covered Entities will continue to receive support to establish best practices in ongoing progress monitoring to achieve more effective service delivery, implementation, and adherence to the Law. Similarly, Covered Entities will continue to receive ongoing support as they report their progress in alignment with the Law's requirements. This includes targeted guidance regarding corrective action plans as needed.

Promoting Consistent Implementation Across Entities

There are varying levels of capacity, resources, readiness, and expertise across State government entities. For example, some entities entered 2025 with significant numbers of in-house multilingual personnel, established

protocols for serving individuals with LEP, longstanding language access plans, and vendor relationships to support translation and interpreting.

Potential Impact:

- By fostering consistency in language access efforts, individuals with LEP will experience access and high-quality services across all State government, regardless of the entity or location or service.

Opportunity:

- DHS will continue providing technical assistance and support as Covered Entities continue to establish structures to further their language access services across their programs and initiatives.
- The Community of Practice gatherings will continue to serve as a place where Covered Entities in different stages of the implementation process can learn from each other.

Increasing Staff Training and Guidance

Limited capacity across all entities, including Lead Implementing Agencies, makes it difficult to maintain the pace required to support staff and develop training and material LACs can utilize across levels and entities.

Many staff members lack training in language access topics including how to identify and serve individuals with LEP, how to procure language access services, how to ensure quality in services, and how to track and monitor, etc.

Potential Impact:

- Front-facing entity staff may not provide appropriate assistance due to lack of adequate training, limiting access to individuals with LEP.
- Miscommunication can lead to negative user experiences and outcomes with potential risk for the state.

Opportunity:

- Lead Implementing Agencies will continue to provide guidance and assistance. Covered Entities will need to establish training protocols and requirements to ensure that staff who engage with LEP populations have a clear understanding of the requirements of the Law and provision of language access services.
- Increasing training needs may require additional resources to provide the appropriate level of support to all State staff, including the appropriate Civil Service Commission designations and titles. Covered Entities will also continue identifying covered local and county-level entities, as well as programs and activities, and assessing their needs to expand access to the services they provide to individuals with LEP.

Expanding Capacity and Availability of Language Access Services Vendors

Over the course of 2025, the State has increased the number of contracted vendors for human-based and technology-based translation and interpretation, as well as specific modernization projects to build multilingual access with tools like AI.

Covered Entities may have limited access to vendors who are on State contract or who have capacity to provide services in a variety of languages, at the necessary turnaround pace, or at the volume needed for the provision of state services. Additionally, assessment of the quality of vendor services for language access is limited based on programmatic capacity and infrastructure.

Potential Impact:

- The feedback loop to assess quality of experience with vendors who provide language access services by entities who utilize these services and constituents who engage with them creates a gap in understanding of where improvements need to be made.

Opportunity:

- The State of New Jersey will continue its efforts to expand availability of contracted vendors. Lead Implementing Agencies will continue offering guidance for the development of resources and tools for vendor quality and user experience.

Facilitating Additional Data Collection and Needs Assessments

Covered Entities have historically focused on U.S. Census data, which may overlook smaller or emerging populations with LEP not represented in data sources. Additional needs assessments to identify underserved communities in specific regions of the state and anticipate future needs are needed to identify hard to reach populations that may need language access services.

Potential Impact:

- Individuals with LEP in smaller or less visible communities may be overlooked in language accessibility initiatives, leaving their needs unmet.
- Covered Entities may not have an accurate understanding of the full landscape of the populations that they serve or are likely to serve, leading to gaps in service delivery.

Opportunity:

- Lead Implementing Agencies will continue to provide support to LACs on best ways to assess the needs of hard-to-reach populations. Many programs already collect data on who they serve and their preferred language. Program evaluation data already collected should be analyzed to determine target populations. For example, entities may supplement U.S. Census data with demographic data from other

community networks and programs, such as school districts or other services where LEP populations may be engaging.

Increasing Community Engagement

There are varying levels of community engagement efforts across state entities, including engagement with community organizations that work directly with LEP populations. For example, some have deep relationships with nonprofits and community partners that work with LEP populations and have engaged them to provide input and feedback on language access initiatives. Additionally, LACs have met with providers that work with populations with LEP during the Community of Practice Meetings to better understand language access needs of the populations they serve.

Understanding needs and gaps in language access is best assessed through engaging communities with LEP to gather feedback on available services and overall needs to navigate or benefit from government services.

Per stakeholder feedback, additional outreach efforts might be needed, including improving support for the elderly and individuals with limited digital skills.

Potential Impact:

- Services may not align with the actual needs and preferences of LEP individuals.
- A lack of trust and awareness among communities with LEP can result in underutilization of available services.

Opportunity:

- DHS ONA will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance on best ways to engage with LEP populations and assessment models that may be used to better understand the language access services needs of LEP populations.

8. Priorities for 2026

Looking ahead to 2026, the focus will be on advancing the following priorities:

- **Continue developing internal agency-level policy and protocols**, including staff-level guidance on enhancing the provision of language access services to constituents, ongoing translation of vital documents, and policies that will continue to guide staff on the requirements of this Law.
- **Increase translation of vital documents** into the seven top languages, or additional languages as needed based on the populations served by the programs, including translations of emergency notices and alerts, as appropriate. Support the development of materials in plain language and other accessible formats.
- **Implement support for front-facing staff**, including developing a training curriculum for staff that engage with LEP populations. Review standards and requirements for bilingual staff supporting in-language communication, translation, and interpreting.
- **Ongoing guidance for intentional needs assessments and community engagement**, strengthening the relationship between LEP populations and the State entities who serve them to enhance language access services.
- **Establish agency-level vendor services feedback** to ensure high-quality services for entities and constituents utilizing these services.
- **Expand public-facing information** about the implementation of the Law, including available data and updates from entities as they continue to expand their available services.

9. Key Terms

The following terms are defined as shown below for the purposes of this report:

Covered Entity Pursuant to P.L. 2023, c.263, a “State government entity” is defined as “any State department or agency in the Executive Branch and any commission, board, bureau, division, office, or instrumentality thereof providing direct services to the public.”

Direct services to the public refer to the services, benefits, programs, activities, and information made available to the general public by a State government entity and/or that are managed, conducted, provided or administered by a State government entity to serve the public interest. These include services that require State employees to interact directly (via real time encounters, including face-to-face, over-the-phone, or video-remote) or indirectly (via asynchronous written communications, web or digital services) with the public.

Cultural competence Cultural competence means understanding that different populations and communities are affected in various ways by historical biases, racism, and other forms of discrimination and stigmatization. It also involves being self-aware of how one’s own needs, values, practices, and both verbal and nonverbal communication styles can influence others.⁷

⁷ New Jersey Public Law 2023, Chapter 263 (P.L. 2023, c.263). Retrieved January 6, 2026, <https://pub.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/PL23/263..PDF>.

**Designated
Bilingual/
Multilingual
Staff**

A staff member who holds a bilingual title and demonstrates advanced proficiency in listening, reading, and speaking in English, as well as in at least one other language as assessed by the Bilingual Communicative Ability Test (BICAT). There are three levels of foreign language proficiency used by the New Jersey Civil Service Commission:

- Basic (Level 1)
- Intermediate (Level 2)
- Advanced (Level 3).

The passing proficiency level is linked to the job title the staff member holds. Most clerical job titles and some aide job titles require a Level 1 proficiency to pass, whereas most others require a Level 2 proficiency to pass. For interpreting and translation roles, staff members must possess Level 3 proficiency.

A staff member without a bilingual variant designation for their Civil Service Commission (CSC) title cannot be required to facilitate direct in-language communication or serve as an interpreter or translator. Bilingual and multilingual staff should have defined roles and expectations regarding whether they are performing their job duties in-language or acting as qualified interpreters or translators. A distinction should be made between Bilingual/Multilingual Staff who provide services directly in a non-English language (e.g., call center staff) and those who interpret, as the assessment and skills required for each differ.⁸

⁸ New Jersey Civil Service Commission, *CSC Assessment Methods*, State of New Jersey. Retrieved January 6, 2026, <https://nj.gov/csc/jobs/publicsafety/rule7.shtml>.

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Direct Services to the Public Direct services may occur at various points of contact with the public and consist of those services that are essential for the public to access, participate, navigate, or benefit from programs administered by the State government entity.⁹

Effective Communication For communication disabilities, it refers to aids and services to ensure that communication with people with disabilities, such as people who are deaf or hard of hearing, is as effective as communication as for people without disabilities. Auxiliary aids and services must be provided when needed to achieve effective communication.¹⁰

Interpreting Conveying a message orally, or through signed language, from one language into another, while preserving the original meaning.

Limited English proficiency Means that a person speaks, reads, writes, or understands the English language less than “very well,” in accordance with Census Bureau data, and as self-reported by that person to the State government entity.¹¹

In-Language Communication Refers to the practice of engaging with individuals in their preferred language.¹²

⁹ P.L. 2023, c.263, supra.

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, ADA Requirements: Effective Communication. Retrieved January 6, 2026, <https://www.ada.gov/resources/effective-communication/>.

¹¹ P.L. 2023, c.263, supra.

¹² See Direct “In-Language” Communication: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. (2023). *Limited English Proficiency Plan*. Retrieved January 6, 2026, <https://www.usccr.gov/limited-english-proficiency-plan>.

Individuals with limited English proficiency

Describes individuals who:

- Do not speak English as their primary language, and/or
- Have a limited or no ability to read, speak, write, or understand English (following Census Bureau data, and as self-reported by that person to the State government entity).¹³

Individuals with LEP may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but have limited proficiency in English in other areas (e.g., reading or writing). LEP designations are also context-specific; an individual may possess sufficient English language skills to function in one setting (e.g., conversing in English with coworkers), but these skills may be insufficient in other settings (e.g., addressing legal proceedings).

It's important to acknowledge that stress and other factors can lead to a fully bilingual individual being perceived as having LEP.

An individual who is D/HOH may also have limited proficiency in spoken or written English and may not be proficient in ASL or any other recognized sign language.

¹³ Various legal authorities use the term “individuals with limited English proficiency.” Language access literature recommends terms such as “individuals with a non-English language preference” or “individuals who speak a language other than English.” See Ortega, P., Shin, T.M. & Martínez, G.A. Rethinking the Term “Limited English Proficiency” to Improve Language-Appropriate Healthcare for All, *J Immigrant Minority Health* 24, 799–805 (2022).

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Language Access	Means the ability of individuals with LEP to communicate with State government entity employees and contractors, and meaningfully learn about, apply for, or participate in government programs, activities, benefits and services.
Language Assistance Services	Refers to all oral, written, and signed language services provided to assist individuals LEP and those who are Deaf or hard of hearing, to ensure meaningful access and effective communication with State entity staff and contractors, allowing equal opportunity to participate in the services, activities, programs, or other benefits administered by the state of New Jersey.
Lead Implementing Agency	Refers to an entity responsible for overseeing, coordinating and executing the implementation of the Law. This entity provides guidance, resources and support to other entities, and ensures that implementation goals are met and that efforts are aligned with the requirements of the Law.
Meaningful Access	Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual with LEP needing assistance. Meaningful access denotes access that is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior as compared to programs or activities provided to English-proficient individuals.

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Plain Language	Means writing that is “clear, concise and well organized.” ¹⁴
Primary/ Preferred Language	It means the language that an individual identifies as their choice to communicate most effectively. It is the language they prefer to use to express themselves and understand information.
Qualified Interpreter/ Translator	A bilingual/multilingual person who has the appropriate designation, training and experience or demonstrated ability to fully understand, analyze, and process and then faithfully render a spoken, written, or signed message in one language into a second language and who abides by a code of professional practice and ethics. A child shall not be considered a qualified translator or interpreter, nor shall a family member or employee who does not meet the minimum qualifications specified above. Someone who happens to be bilingual may not be a qualified interpreter or translator.
Sign Languages	Languages that people who are deaf or hard of hearing use in which hand movements, gestures, and facial expressions convey grammatical structure and meaning. There is no universal sign language. Different sign languages are used in different countries or regions. For example, British Sign Language (BSL) is a different language from ASL, and Americans who know ASL may not understand BSL.

¹⁴ Digital.gov. (n.d.). *Plain Writing Act*. U.S. General Services Administration. Retrieved January 6, 2026, from <https://digital.gov/resources/plain-writing-act>.

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State Government Entity	Means any State department or agency in the Executive Branch and any commission, board, bureau, division, office, or instrumentality thereof providing direct services to the public. ¹⁵
Tagline	Refers to a brief sentence or message included in or attached to a particular document. For documents written in English (including websites), taglines in other languages are used to inform individuals with LEP about how they can access translation services or an interpreter to read or explain the document.
Translation	<p>Means the conversion of written words from one language to another in a manner that conveys the intent and essential meaning of the original text and communication.</p> <p>“Translation” does not mean the use of automatic electronic translation services. “Translation” may include professional translation software, provided the State government agency conducts a quality control to ensure that the software has correctly translated the documents.¹⁶</p>

¹⁵ P.L. 2023, c.263, supra.

¹⁶ Idem.

Vital documents Means documents that affect or provide legal information about access to, retention of, termination of, or exclusion from program services or benefits; which are required by law; or which explain legal rights. Vital documents include but are not limited to applications; consent forms; complaint forms; intake forms; letters or notices pertaining to eligibility for services or benefits; and letters or notices pertaining to rights or to the reduction, denial, or termination of services or benefits or that require a response from the person who has limited English proficiency.

Vital documents shall not include vital records or certified copies thereof, such as birth certificates, death certificates, or marriage licenses, or government-issued forms of identification, such as driver's licenses or non-driver identification cards; or newsletters, data reports, and releases when such newsletters, data reports, and releases are unrelated to program services or benefits.¹⁷

¹⁷ Ibid.