

# New Jersey Department of Military and Veteran Affairs

## Language Access Plan

Pursuant to P.L. 2023, c.263

**Effective Date of Plan:** December 15, 2025

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### Language Access Coordinator (LAC)

The best way for the public to **contact** the agency regarding language access efforts and services is to contact the LAC:

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- Phone number: 609-530-7051
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- Website: <https://www.nj.gov/military/admin/departments/deib/>

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### Introduction

This Language Access Plan (“Plan”) is in compliance with New Jersey’s Language Access Law, [P.L. 2023, c.263](#) (“Law”), as part of New Jersey’s commitment to making our government resources more accessible to our State’s diverse residents. The Law requires State agencies to provide language assistance services and publish a language access plan explaining how they will communicate with individuals with limited English proficiency, and what services they will offer to help.

A language access plan<sup>1</sup> is a document that describes the services that a state government entity<sup>2</sup> and its employees are required to provide to ensure individuals with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities.

Having limited English proficiency means that a person does not speak English as their primary language and may have limited ability to read, write, speak, and/or understand English.

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<sup>1</sup> P.L. 2023, c.263 requires that “[e]ach State government entity in the Executive Branch that provides direct services to the public, in consultation with the Department of Human Services, Department of Law and Public Safety, and Office of Information Technology, shall develop and publish a language access plan that shall reflect how the entity will comply with the provisions of this act.”

<sup>2</sup> 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.”

This document provides information about:

- Our agency and how we interact with the public
- The populations with with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) that we serve or are likely to serve

It also outlines how our agency:

- Identifies language needs
- Provides language assistance services
- Makes sure language assistance services are high quality
- Informs the public about available free language assistance services
- Keeps the public informed about our efforts to follow the New Jersey's Language Access Law
- Trains staff on serving people with LEP
- Follows the New Jersey's Language Access Law.

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## Table of Contents

New Jersey Department of Military and Veteran Affairs Language Access Plan.....	1
Language Access Coordinator (LAC) .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Table of Contents .....	3
A. Our Agency and How We Interact with the Public .....	4
B. Populations with Limited English Proficiency that Our Agency Serves or is Likely to Serve.....	6
C. Determining the Need for Language Assistance Services and Language Identification .....	9
D. Provision of Language Assistance Services .....	10
E. Methods for Quality Assurance.....	12
F. Public Notice About the Availability of Free Language Assistance Services .....	13
G. Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach .....	13
H. Staff Training .....	14
I. Processes for Recordkeeping, Compliance Monitoring, and Reporting.	15
Appendix 1: Inventory of Translated Vital Documents.....	16

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## A. Our Agency and How We Interact with the Public

### 1. Agency Mission

Ready to Serve, Proud to Have Served. The mission of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is to provide highly trained, professional, and ready forces - prepared for rapid response to various civil and military operations - while providing exemplary services to New Jersey Service Members, Veterans, and their families.

### 2. How We Interact with the Public

The New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) interacts with the public through a wide range of programs that serve veterans, service members, families, youth, and constituents seeking support or information. Individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) may engage with DMAVA through:

- **In-person services** at Veterans Service Offices, Veterans Homes, Veterans Havens, BG Doyle Cemetery, NJ Youth Challenge Academy, the NGTC public-facing facilities.
- **Phone communication**, including program-specific phone lines and the statewide **VSO toll-free number (844-671-1019)**, as well as general inquiries directed to DMAVA headquarters.
- **Email communication** between constituents and program staff for benefits, services, scheduling, and general assistance.
- **Online access**, including public-facing forms on the DMAVA website, Simpligov-hosted applications, and informational pages.
- **Community outreach and events**, conducted by VSOs, NJYCA staff, and other program partners.
- **Social media platforms** (Facebook, Instagram), which provide public announcements, resources, and updates related to services and events.

Through these communication channels, DMAVA provides regular, ongoing support and information to individuals across New Jersey, including LEP community members.

### **3. Participating Entities**

**The following DMAVA divisions and programs provide direct public-facing or service-based interaction and are therefore included in this Language Access Plan:**

#### **Veteran Affairs Programs**

- **Veterans Services Division**
  - Veterans Service Offices (21 statewide)
  - Veterans Haven North and South
  - BG William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery
- **Veterans Homes Division**
  - Menlo Park Veterans Memorial Home
  - Paramus Veterans Memorial Home
  - Vineland Veterans Memorial Home

#### **Military Affairs Programs**

- New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy (NJYCA)
- National Guard Training Center (NGTC)
  - Included due to limited but meaningful interaction with eligible veterans, service members, and authorized external partners.

*(Note: Additional public-facing or service-based entities are under review in consultation with leadership. Updates will be reflected in future iterations of this Plan.)*

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## **B. Populations with Limited English Proficiency that Our Agency Serves or is Likely to Serve**

The Law requires that State agencies provide language assistance services to individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP). This involves identifying the needs of the populations they serve or are likely to serve, covering both written and spoken language support.

Under the Law, agencies must translate vital documents<sup>3</sup> and information into the seven (7) languages most commonly spoken by individuals with LEP in New Jersey. To determine these top seven languages, our agency uses U.S. Census data (including data from the American Community Survey) and consults with the Language Access Implementation Lead Agencies.

This data also helps our agency understand other language characteristics of the communities we currently serve or are likely to serve, ensuring effective language access planning.

At the time of this Plan, the top languages spoken by individuals with LEP in New Jersey are:

1. Spanish
2. Portuguese (preference for Brazilian dialect)
3. Korean
4. Gujarati
5. Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese)<sup>4</sup>
6. French Creole or Haitian Creole
7. Arabic

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<sup>3</sup> Vital documents are defined in P.L. 2023, c.263 as “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.”

<sup>4</sup> While spoken Chinese primarily includes Mandarin and Cantonese, translation should be tailored to Simplified and Traditional Chinese for written communication.

## **1. Adding Languages Beyond the Top Seven at a State-level**

The Law also requires that State agencies translate vital documents into any other languages considered necessary by the agency based on the populations they serve.

Our agency has made the following determination about the addition of languages beyond the top 7:

At this time, the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) has not identified a need to include additional languages beyond the seven most commonly spoken by individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) in New Jersey. While no additional languages have been identified through available data or service patterns, DMAVA recognizes that the populations served—including veterans, service members, cadets, families, and the broader community—represent diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

In alignment with P.L. 2023, c.263, DMAVA will continue evaluating language needs through:

- Monitoring demographic and program trends, internal service data, and community feedback.
- Engagement with veteran- and National Guard/service member–support organizations, including military family support programs, community-based service providers, and other partners who may interact with LEP individuals that we serve.
- Consultation with stakeholders who can identify emerging or underserved language communities that may not be reflected in Census data or statewide datasets.

Should additional languages be determined necessary, DMAVA will update its translation and interpretation strategy and revise the Language Access Plan to ensure meaningful, equitable access for all who engage with the department.

## **2. Languages Available for Interpreting Services**

Under the Law, State agencies have to provide interpreting services between the agency and an individual in that person’s primary language when delivering services or benefits.

### **3. Populations with LEP**

Describe the populations with LEP that interact or are likely to interact with our agency or are otherwise in need or are eligible for our agency's services. This could include any efforts to identify specific language characteristics or needs through internal data or other relevant datasets, such as information from language services providers, school districts, community-based organizations, business associations, etc.

Populations with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) that may interact with the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) include veterans, service members, cadets, and their families across multiple public-facing programs. These interactions occur through services such as transitional housing for homeless veterans, long-term residential care at Veterans Homes, burial and interment services at the Brigadier General William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery, statewide benefits assistance provided through the 21 Veterans Service Offices, and youth development programs such as the New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy. DMAVA may also engage with members of the public through community outreach events, armory space rentals, and inquiries made through phone, email, or online platforms.

The inventory of vital documents includes forms related to program entry, eligibility, intake, benefits applications, admission or discharge, authorizations, termination of services, and the public rental or usage of eligible armory facilities. These documents may require translation to ensure meaningful access for individuals with LEP. DMAVA will continue to evaluate service patterns, regional demographics, and feedback from communities and stakeholders to ensure that all documents meeting the definition of "vital" under P.L. 2023, c.263 remain accessible.



## C. Determining the Need for Language Assistance Services and Language Identification

When an individual with LEP contacts our agency, staff must assess whether language assistance is needed in the following ways (Tables 1–3).

**Table 1: In-Person**

Description	Check (X) all that apply
Voluntary self-identification by the individual or their companion	X
Use of multilingual language identification cards, posters or visual aids (for example, “I Speak” posters)	X
Assistance from trained staff to identify the individual’s primary language	X
Support from a qualified interpreter (in-person, over-the-phone and/or remote) to identify/confirm an individual’s primary language	X
Other (specify):	

**Table 2: Telephonic Communication**

Description	Check (X) all that apply
Voluntary self-identification by the individual or their companion	X
Assistance from trained staff to identify the individual’s primary language	X
Support from a qualified interpreter (in-person, over-the-phone and/or remote) to identify/confirm an individual’s primary language	X
Other (specify):	

**Table 3: Electronic Communication**

Description	Check (X) all that apply
Notice of available language assistance services available on the agency website	X
Multilingual taglines included in applicable forms, letters, and/or email communications	X
Multilingual chatbot on website	
Use of automated translation tools only to identify primary language	X
Other (specify):	

## D. Provision of Language Assistance Services

### 1. Vital Document Translation

The Law requires translation of vital documents. Vital documents are defined in P.L. 2023, c.263, as “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.”

Our agency has the following resources available for translation of vital documents (Table 4).

**Table 4: Resources for Translation of Vital Documents**

Resource	Check (X) all that apply
Qualified, trained, and/or designated multilingual staff	
Contractors	X
Other (specify):	

Translation of vital documents is an ongoing process. Appendix 1 provides an inventory of vital documents translated as of the date of this publication. This list will be maintained and updated at least annually as part of annual reporting.

## 2. Language Interpreting Services

Our agency has the following free resources available for spoken or sign language interpreting requests (Table 5).

**Table 5: Resources for Spoken or Sign Language Interpreting Requests**

Resource	Check (X) all that apply
Assistance from qualified, trained, and/or designated multilingual staff	
Over-the-phone interpreting services	X
In-person interpreting services	X
Video-remote interpreting services	X
Other (specify):	

## 3. Additional Accessibility Equipment and Services

**Table 6: Accessibility Equipment and Services**

Equipment or Service	Check (X) all that apply
Telephone voice menus for help with agency programs are available in the following languages (specify):	
Trained multilingual staff can communicate with individuals with LEP in select languages, including (specify):	
Access to auxiliary aids such as hearing induction loops, pocket talkers, captioning, video-remote interpreting and/or simultaneous interpreting equipment	X
Services through partner agencies that serve those who need auxiliary aids, including:	X
The Department of Human Services' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	X
Other (specify):	

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## E. Methods for Quality Assurance

To ensure language assistance services are accurate, high-quality, and culturally competent, activities underway or planned include (Table 7):

Table 7: Methods for Quality Assurance

Method	Check (X) all that apply
Prioritizing the use of plain language	X
Using vetted contractors that implement quality assurance standards to ensure that its linguists are experienced, trained, and certified as appropriate and are linguistically and culturally competent	X
Monitoring and tracking the quality of interpreting and translation services provided by vendors, and training staff to monitor quality of those services	X
Including quality assurance requirements in vendor contracts, e.g., glossaries, translation review, use of translation memory, localization software, desktop publishing, etc.	X
Partnering with community-based organizations to periodically check quality of interpreting and translation services	X
Conducting periodic testing of translated documents and interpreting services across languages	X
Ensuring quality and proper maintenance of auxiliary aids and equipment, such as hearing induction loops, pocket talkers, captioning, tablets, and/or simultaneous translation equipment	
Other (specify):	

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## F. Public Notice About the Availability of Free Language Assistance Services

Our agency informs individuals with LEP in required languages, including auxiliary aids and equipment, about their right to free language assistance services in the following ways (Table 8):

**Table 8: Public Notice**

Method	Check (X) all that apply
Signs and posters in areas highly visible to the public	X
Information on agency's website describing available language assistance services, processes, and documents required by the Law	X
Printed material, publications, and advertisements	X
Telephone voice menu providing information in non-English languages	
Public service announcements	
Other (specify):	

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## G. Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

Our agency's engagement with community or stakeholder entities representing populations with LEP regarding language access planning and implementation includes (Table 9):

**Table 9: Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach**

Method	Check (X) all that apply
Conducting stakeholder engagement to inform our language access planning, which may include public listening sessions with groups and/or one-on-one meetings	X
Planning to conduct and maintain stakeholder engagement as this Plan is implemented and updated, which may include public listening sessions and/or one-on-one meetings	X
Having clear and measurable goals for program/service-specific outreach and communication to reach individuals with LEP from different language communities	X

Method	Check (X) all that apply
Maintaining and utilizing distribution lists that include local, culturally, and linguistically diverse community-based organizations and media to disseminate information regarding the agency's language access services	X
A website to receive feedback, and/or public email address for language access questions, feedback, and/or concerns	X

## H. Staff Training

For staff involved in implementing P.L. 2023, c.263, annual training includes the following topics (Table 10):

**Table 10: Staff Training**

Topic	Check (X) all that apply
The agency's legal obligations to provide language assistance services	X
The agency's language access policies and protocols	X
The agency's resources and best practices for providing language assistance services	X
How to access and work with interpreters and translators	X
Cultural competence and cultural sensitivity	X
How to obtain translation and interpreting services	X
Maintaining records of language access services provided to individuals with LEP	X

## I. Processes for Recordkeeping, Compliance Monitoring, and Reporting

### 1. Annual Internal Monitoring

Our agency monitors implementation of this Plan to ensure compliance with P.L. 2023, c.263 by (Table 11):

**Table 11: Annual Internal Monitoring**

Method	Check (X) all that apply
Supporting the establishment of mechanisms for monitoring the agency's implementation of this Plan	X
Collecting and compiling the data necessary for the agency's Annual Report on compliance with P.L. 2023, c.263	X
Submitting in a timely manner the Annual Report pursuant to P.L. 2023, c.263	X

### 2. Internal Recordkeeping

Our agency tracks language access-related data on an ongoing basis. The tracking underway includes [Table 12]:

**Table 12: Internal Recordkeeping**

Metric	Check (X) all that apply
Frequency of requests for language assistance services	X
How requests were met	X
Whether language assistance services were requested in languages other than the required seven	X
How the agency intends to notify the populations with LEP of the available language assistance services	X
How the agency documents the actual provision of language assistance services to individuals with LEP	X
Other (specify):	

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## Appendix 1: Inventory of Translated Vital Documents

Translation of vital documents is an ongoing process. As of the date of this publication, the following vital documents are available publicly in the following languages: [Inventory List](#)