# Report on the Status of Language Access Plans and Services Across King County

November 2025



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#### II. Proviso Text

Of this appropriation, \$100,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a report to the council describing the status of the language access plans required by Ordinance 18665, Section 6, across county departments, offices, and agencies and a motion that should acknowledge receipt of the report, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the report is passed by the council. The motion should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance, ordinance section, and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

The report shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. The status of every language access plan whether final or in development;
- B. A summary of how and what interpretation and translation services are made available for limited-English-speaking populations seeking benefits or services;
- C. A summary of how services and resources are accessible both in person and online;
- D. A summary of what reasonable efforts are made to provide assistance when forms are required to be completed in English; and
- E. A summary of the efforts made to ensure limited-English-speaking populations are informed of the language supports available to them when interacting with the county in any capacity.

This information should be broken down by county department, office, or agency and by language.

The executive should electronically file the report and motion required by this proviso no later than August 31, 2025, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the government accountability and oversight committee or its successor.

Ordinance 19861, Section 17, Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice, P11

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Ordinance 19861 [LINK]

# III. Executive Summary

This report, developed by the Office of Equity, Racial, and Social Justice (OERSJ), documents the latest reported status of Language Access Plans (LAPs) and language-access service delivery across King County departments, agencies, and offices, as required by Ordinance 19861. It fulfills the five reporting elements identified in the Proviso by summarizing information provided by departments, consolidated at the department or office level. It provides an inventory of existing practices, reported capacities, and identifies areas where work remains in development.

Ordinance 19861 directs the Executive to transmit a report to the Council describing the status of departmental LAPs required by Ordinance 18665. An LAP outlines how a department ensures that limited-English-proficient residents can access its programs, services, and information. Ordinance 18665 required each King County department, agency, and office to develop and submit an LAP to the Executive for transmittal to Council by September 30, 2018. The 21 plans were transmitted on November 6, 2018, and accepted by the Council through Motion 15558 on December 11, 2019.

The information in this report draws on three primary sources: 2018 LAP submissions, 2021 and 2023 self-assessment surveys performed by County departments and agencies, and limited follow-up community engagement conducted in 2023 and 2024 by OERSJ. Departments which submitted division-level responses were consolidated to the department level to align with the Proviso requirement to report by department, office, or agency. Data reflects departmental-reported information.

# **Status of Language Access Plans**

Departments reported differing stages of plan development and maintenance. Most have a LAP on file, but the age and completeness of those plans vary. Some departments submitted division-specific plans rather than a single department-wide plan, resulting in classification as "In Development." These findings indicate that while language access planning is occurring throughout King County, departments use different approaches and update cycles.

# **Interpretation and Translation Services**

Departments reported providing a range of spoken and written language services. Most maintain contracts for telephonic or in-person interpretation and request translation services as needed. Approaches to coordination and quality review differ by department depending on program size and frequency of public interaction. The tables summarize current operational conditions and are not intended as compliance evaluations. (See Tables 3A-3B)

# **Accessibility of In-Person and Online Services**

Departments reported that in-person supports, such as signage, bilingual staff, and interpreter availability, are more commonly in place than digital accessibility features. Online translation tools and multilingual content exist in some areas but are not yet standardized Countywide. These findings describe the current balance between physical and digital access as reported by departments. (See Table 4)Support with English-Only Forms

Departments indicated that staff regularly assist individuals completing English-only forms through bilingual staff support or on-demand interpretation. A smaller number reported developing translated templates or plain-language versions for commonly used documents. Few departments have formal policies governing how such support is provided. (See Table 5)

#### **Outreach and Public Awareness**

Departments described a range of outreach activities to inform limited-English-proficient communities about available services. Examples included translated flyers, multilingual events, partnerships with community-based organizations, and use of community-based media. Practices and tracking methods vary by department, and language-specific data are not yet collected consistently. (See Table 6)

#### Conclusion

The information summarized in this report provides a baseline for understanding language access conditions and practices across King County. Future efforts, if resourced, may focus on establishing shared templates, consistent reporting cycles, and technical supports that help departments maintain up-to-date LAPs and related service data. These findings highlight both progress made and the continued need for countywide alignment and coordination. OERSJ will continue to coordinate these efforts and provide guidance to departments as directed by the Executive.

Potential future language access opportunities include:

- Deploying a standardized LAP template and issuing countywide guidance on standards;
- Maintaining a consistent reporting process and utilizing shared tools to support departments
   Engaging in transparent communication with communities to inform improvement efforts; and
- Continuing to strengthen coordination and accountability to advance a unified and sustainable model of equitable language access.

# IV. Background

# A. Department Overview:

The Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice (OERSJ) is located within the Executive Department. It leads enterprise-wide efforts to embed equity into County operations and decision-making. Created as the Office of Equity and Social Justice in 2020<sup>2</sup>, OERSJ became the Office of Equity, Racial, and Social Justice in 2022, as its duties were established in King County Code (KCC) 2.16.025.F<sup>3</sup>. OERSJ is responsible for building systems, practices, and capacity to advance equity outcomes in partnership with communities most affected by inequities.

The Language Access Program (Program), a core function of OERSJ, provides Countywide coordination and policy leadership for language access implementation. While not explicitly named in section 2.16.025.F, the Program supports several of OERSJ's statutory duties. The Program supports implementation of language access requirements under KCC chapter 2.15, which was established by Ordinance 18665 (2018)<sup>4</sup>. These provisions require County agencies to ensure that individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) can access County services through free interpretation and translation.

Although KCC 2.15 does not specifically address communication access for individuals with disabilities, the Program's work intersects with federal effective communication requirements under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)<sup>5</sup>. OERSJ's Language Access, Civil Rights, and ADA programs collaborate to help align Countywide policies and systems to meet language and disability access standards.

In addition to supporting department-level LAPs the Program works to standardize interpretation and translation practices, provide training and technical assistance, and strengthen systems for tracking and accountability across County government. Per KCC 2.15.030(B), the Program collaborates with the County demographer to maintain the County's language tier system, using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and service-level information to guide translation priorities (see Appendix C: King County Language Tiers – 2021 and 2023 Updates). Under KCC 2.15.100, OERSJ also receives complaints related to language access and immigration provisions, which are investigated by the Civil Rights Program in accordance with KCC 12.22<sup>6</sup>. Together, these efforts support a coordinated, enterprise approach to ensuring language and communication access across King County operations.

# **B.** Key Historical Conditions:

https://mkcclegisearch.kingcounty.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5854921&GUID=8366564C-174A-4261-BB24-670A53C8DBA1&Options=Advanced&Search=&FullText=1

https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/code/05 Title 2.htm# Toc51932406 (last accessed June 11, 2025).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ordinance 19541:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> King County Code section 2.16.025

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ordinance 18665 (2018), establishing King County Code chapter 2.15. Codified version available at: https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/code/05 Title 2.htm# Toc51932405

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title II, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131–12165. Available at: <a href="https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/title-ii/">https://www.ada.gov/law-and-regs/title-ii/</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> King County Code chapter 12.22, Civil Rights — Enforcement Procedures. Available at: https://aqua.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/code/15 Title 12.htm# Toc141867213

Ordinance 18665 - In 2018, King County adopted legislation establishing requirements to ensure that individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) have meaningful access to County services through free interpretation and translation. The Ordinance required all County departments, agencies, and offices to develop LAPs describing how they would provide such access, consistent with the U.S. Department of Justice's definition of meaningful access—language assistance that enables accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual. This standard further clarifies that services should not be "significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior as compared to programs or activities provided to English-proficient individuals."<sup>7</sup>

Following establishment of KCC 2.15 via Ordinance 18665 departments, agencies, and offices were responsible for developing and implementing their own LAPs. To support this work, the OERSJ released a standardized LAP template to County departments and agencies in 2018. The template met legislative requirement and guided agencies to describe existing services and planning goals. As a result, many early departmental LAP submissions were preliminary capacity assessments rather than fully operational implementation plans.

In the absence of a countywide framework for establishing benchmarks, routine data collection and progress tracking, departments implemented language-access activities using approaches that reflected their individual structures, resources, and operational differences. This decentralized approach across County agencies has revealed gaps in accountability and coordination, with limitations underscored by the lack of shared infrastructure. Constrained resources countywide play a significant role in language access maturity for County departments and agencies.

The initial LAP submissions were transmitted to the King County Council on November 6, 2018 and accepted via Motion 15558 on December 11, 2019.8

Language Access Plan Processes - While KCC 2.15 does not prescribe a regular update cycle for LAPs, OERSJ established a biennial assessment process beginning in 2021 in consultation with departmental Language Access Liaisons to help monitor implementation, identify service gaps, and support continuous improvement for LAPs. Communications about the process were shared through the Countywide Liaison Network, which was initially composed of formally designated representatives identified through the 2018 plan submissions. Over time, participation of departments broadened as additional staff with related responsibilities or interest in language access became involved in the network's activities. 9 These assessments became the primary mechanism to track progress, providing a view of emerging trends and capacity gaps across departments.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, *OJP Language Access Plan*, October 2024, revised January 2025, p. 5. Available at: https://www.ojp.gov/ojp-language-access-plan

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> King County Council, Motion 15558 – A motion acknowledging receipt of language assistance plans required by Ordinance 18665, introduced November 2018; see also accompanying Staff Report, April 15, 2019. Available at: https://kingcounty.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3755888&GUID=58394B06-B8BA-4893-B893-4478E1CC8FEC

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The Countywide Liaison Network traditionally convenes quarterly or on an ad hoc basis as issues arise. Network activities are currently paused while departmental designations are being updated to improve coordination.

The 2021 LAP assessment was the first countywide effort to evaluate how departments were implementing their 2018 LAPs (see Appendix A: 2021 Language Access Self-Assessment Survey). Of the 31 departmental plans submitted to the Council in 2018, 17 departments participated in 2021. Responses indicated that many agencies lacked clarity on status of their LAP; had experienced staff turnover resulting in lost institutional knowledge; or were implementing practices informally and or in isolation. While some agencies reported progress in 2021, overall results reflected inconsistent implementation of language access and limited alignment with countywide language-access goals.

In response to these findings, OERSJ launched an internal grant program in late 2021 to strengthen language access infrastructure across departments. The Program provided funding for department-led projects, including translated public materials, digital tools, and service enhancements, through spring 2023. The initiative helped increase visibility and awareness of language-access needs across departments and underscored the value of establishing clearer Countywide guidance and consistent systems to sustain implementation over time. <sup>10</sup>

In 2023, OERSJ contracted with Sway B Access LLC to conduct an enterprise-wide assessment of language access implementation (see Appendix B: 2023 Department Needs Assessment Survey). Thirty departments, offices, and agencies participated, providing updated information on LAPs, interpretation and translation practices, and accessibility supports. Responses reflected a broad range of operational structures and levels of implementation maturity.

Several departments and offices submitted separate or overlapping division-level responses to represent their respective operational areas, while other departments and offices had no designated Language Access lead and relied on various staff to complete the assessment on behalf of the department. This variation contributed to differences in how information was reported across departments and reflects the decentralized way language access has evolved across King County.

To complement departmental reporting, OERSJ and the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission collected input in 2023 from limited-English-proficient (LEP) residents and community-based organizations through multilingual surveys, interviews, and focus groups (see Appendix F: 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey). Participants in these engagement activities described experiences accessing interpretation, translation, and public information, providing context for the departmental data. This engagement represented the first time that resident perspectives were systematically incorporated into the County's assessment process.

Overall, departmental responses to the enterprise-wide assessment of language access implementation show that King County departments operate under a distributed model in which each department manages its own language-access responsibilities. Departments reported varying levels of implementation and coordination, reflecting differences in mission, staffing, and resource availability. This report documents those variations as current conditions, without assigning performance ratings or compliance determinations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice, *Have an idea to improve language access services? Your department may be eligible for a grant*, King County Employee News, February 16, 2023. Available at: <a href="https://kcemployees.com/2023/02/16/have-an-idea-to-improve-language-access-services-your-department-may-be-eligible-for-a-grant/">https://kcemployees.com/2023/02/16/have-an-idea-to-improve-language-access-services-your-department-may-be-eligible-for-a-grant/</a>. The article highlights examples of departments that used the grant to support translated communications, video projects, and digital resource development.

In 2025, the national landscape shifted with the issuance of a federal Executive Order declaring English the official language of the United States. <sup>11</sup> While its legal implications are still unfolding, the Order marks a shift away from longstanding civil-rights protections that have supported language access for decades. In this context, King County Code 2.15 remains an essential safeguard for residents with limited English proficiency. Maintaining these protections will require not only strong policy, but also the systems and capacity to implement them effectively across all departments.

Looking ahead, if resourced, OERSJ will coordinate with departments to complete updated LAPs in 2026 using a standardized Countywide template and shared technical supports. This process will ensure that each department has a current, department-wide plan aligned with County and federal requirements. The update will also create a consistent baseline for future inventories and compliance monitoring.

# C. Report Methodology:

This report was prepared by the OERSJ. It provides a factual summary of the latest reported status of language access plans and services across King County departments, agencies, and offices, consistent with the requirements set forth in the Proviso. The following data sources were utilized in the preparation of this report:

- 2018 Departmental LAP submissions 31 submissions
- 2021 Departmental Self-Assessment Survey 17 responses
- 2023 Departmental Needs Assessment Survey 30 responses
- 2023 Community Engagement Activities one multilingual survey, six in-language focus groups, and 14 interviews with LEP residents and community-based organizations and leaders

Third-party consultant Sway B Access LLC facilitated the 2023 community-engagement process in coordination with OERSJ and the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission (KCIRC). These activities informed the qualitative context of this report and are presented in aggregate, without identifying specific departments or agencies.

The 2021 survey remained open for eight weeks and the 2023 survey for twelve weeks. OERSJ issued reminders and provided technical assistance to encourage participation. Surveys were offered in multiple formats (online, fillable PDF, and Word) to maximize accessibility. Submissions received outside the online platform were entered manually.

All data were reviewed for completeness and internal consistency. Where multiple divisions within a department submitted responses, information was consolidated into a single department-level entry for presentation in this report. Data were analyzed to document the presence of language-access systems and reported practices, not to evaluate their effectiveness.

OERSJ conducted the 2023 Departmental Language Access Assessment between January and March 2023. Two virtual meetings were held on January 10 and January 12 for all designated Language Access

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, *Justice Department Releases Guidance on Implementing President Trump's Executive Order*, July 14, 2025. Available at: <a href="https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-releases-guidance-implementing-president-trumps-executive-order">https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-releases-guidance-implementing-president-trumps-executive-order</a>

Liaisons and departmental points of contact. During these sessions, OERSJ and the consulting team introduced the purpose of the assessment, reviewed the draft survey instruments for both departmental and community needs assessments, and invited feedback from department staff. The feedback remained open for two weeks and was incorporated before the survey launched on January 25, 2023.

The survey process incorporated multiple layers of review and guidance before submission, encouraging Language Access Liaisons to consult with their department leadership and, where applicable, their Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EIB) managers prior to submitting responses. OERSJ provided technical assistance and issued periodic reminders through February and March to departments in support of participation and to address questions. The survey closed at the end of March to allow sufficient time for the consultant to complete analysis and reporting within the contracted timeline.

Most departments participated in the 2023 assessment, though several provided partial data or did not respond to certain questions. Where information was not available for a specific Proviso element, the corresponding table identifies that entry as "No Data Provided."

Following completion of the 2023 analysis, OERSJ conducted follow-up discussions with departmental Language Access Liaisons to gather information about their responses and discuss preliminary observations. These discussions informed planning for future technical assistance and Countywide updates to departmental LAPs.

Table 1. Departments, Agencies, and Offices Participating in the 2023 Assessment (Abbreviations Used in Tables)

Full Name	Abbreviation
Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention	DAJD
Department of Community and Human Services	DCHS
Department of Executive Services	DES
Department of Human Resources	DHR
Department of Information Technology	KCIT
Department of Judicial Administration	DJA
Department of Local Services	DLS
Department of Natural Resources and Parks	DNRP
Department of Public Defense	DPD
Department of Public Health	DPH
Metro Transit Department	MTD
Metropolitan King County Council	MKCC
King County District Court	KCDC
King County Elections	KCE
King County Executive Department	EXEC
King County Assessor's Office	KCA
King County Sheriff's Office	KCSO
King County Superior Court	KCSC
Prosecuting Attorney's Office	PAO

# V. Report Requirements

This subsection is organized to follow the structure of the Proviso. Data discussed in the subsections below were collected through the 2023 Departmental Language Access Assessment and reflect self-reported operational conditions as of March 2023. Notably, some departments provided division level responses, and as noted, those responses are consolidated at the department level for presentation in this report. Where multiple divisions submitted separate responses, OERSJ combined them to create a single departmental status entry.

As noted in some subsections below, department and agency work on language access is evolving. As such, future reporting elements and guidance will also evolve. In addition, potential future countywide initiatives, such as a shared Translation Management System and Service Request Portal, could help standardize these processes and improve data consistency.

# A. The status of every language access plan whether final or in development

This section summarizes the status of LAPs across King County departments, agencies, and offices, as reported through the 2023 Departmental Language Access Assessment survey. This section documents which departments reported having plans in place, which are developing or updating the plans, and where information was not available/provided.

Departments provided information on whether a LAP exists, the extent to which it is active or under revision, and whether it is maintained at the department or division level.

Overall, sixteen departments, agencies, and offices reported having a LAP or draft in progress. Several indicated that updates were underway or that individual divisions were maintaining their own LAPs pending a department-wide consolidation. Four reported that their LAPs were final and in active use within their departments, agency, or office. The distribution across "Final," "In Development," and "No Data Provided" categories reflects active planning across the County at varying stages of completion.

Table 2. Status of Language Access Plans by Department - 2023

Department / Office / Agency	Status
DAJD	In Development
DCHS	In Development
DES	No Data Provided
DHR	No Data Provided
KCIT	In Development
DJA	In Development
DLS	In Development
DNRP	In Development
DPD	In Development
DPH	In Development
MTD	In Development
MKCC	In Development
KCDC	Final
KCE	Final
EXEC	In Development
KCA	In Development
KCSO	Final
KCSC	Final
PAO	No Data Provided

# **Definitions:**

- Final Departments reported having a LAP meeting governing requirements.
- **In Development** Draft, outdated, or partially implemented plan, may include division-level or partial plans.
- Not Provided Information was unavailable or not reported.

OERSJ contacted each department, agency, and office between January and March 2023 to confirm the status of their LAP. Departments were encouraged to coordinate with leadership prior to submitting their survey responses. Where information was incomplete or not reported, those instances are indicated as "No Data Provided."

As shown in Table 2, the majority of departments and agencies fall within the "In Development" category, reflecting ongoing efforts to update or finalize plans. The next Countywide update cycle planned for 2026 will provide an opportunity to standardize templates, clarify departmental responsibility, and align department-level plans with code and policy requirements.

B. Summary of how and what Interpretation and translation services are made available for limited-English-speaking populations seeking benefits or services

This section summarizes information reported by departments, agencies, and offices regarding their use of spoken-language interpretation and written translation services.

# **Key Observations**

The following points summarize current conditions reported by departments:

- Most departments reported availability of at least one form of interpretation service, commonly telephonic or video remote.
- Departments that provide direct public services reported higher overall demand for interpretation and translation compared to internal-service departments.
- Some departments maintain written procedures or guidance for requesting interpretation, while others reported informal practices handled at the program or division level.
- Departments described a need for shared tools and quality-assurance guidance to promote greater consistency in translated materials.

As shown in Tables 3A and 3B, interpretation and translation services are in place across most departments, though practices and coordination mechanisms vary. Future potential countywide initiatives, including the Translation Management System and Service Request Portal, could help standardize these processes and improve data consistency.

**Table 3A. Interpretation Services Made Available by Department** 

Department / Office / Agency	Status
DAJD	Partial
DCHS	Partial
DES	Partial
DHR	Partial
KCIT	No Data Provided
DJA	Partial
DLS	Consistent
DNRP	Partial
DPD	Partial
DPH	Partial
MTD	Partial
MKCC	Partial
KCDC	Consistent
KCE	Partial
EXEC	Consistent
KCA	Consistent
KCSO	Partial
KCSC	Consistent

PAO Partial

# **Definitions**

- **Consistent** Service or workflow is standardized department-wide with defined procedures and documentation.
- **Partial** Service is available but varies by division, program, or unit; coordination or oversight is limited.
- No Data Provided Information for this element was not reported or unavailable.

Table 3B. Translation Services Made Available by Department

Department / Office / Agency	Status
DAJD	Consistent
DCHS	Partial
DES	No Data Provided
DHR	Partial
KCIT	No Data Provided
DJA	Consistent
DLS	Partial
DNRP	Partial
DPD	Partial
DPH	Partial
MTD	Partial
MKCC	Partial
KCDC	Consistent
KCE	Consistent
EXEC	Consistent
KCA	Consistent
KCSO	Partial
KCSC	Consistent
PAO	Consistent

# **Definitions**

- **Consistent** Service or workflow is standardized department-wide with defined procedures and documentation.
- **Partial** Service or workflow is standardized department-wide with defined procedures and documentation.
- No Data Provided Information for this element was not reported or unavailable.

# C. A summary of how services and resources are accessible both in person and on line

This section summarizes how departments, agencies, and offices reported providing in person and on line access to services and information for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). It includes access supports, such as signage, interpreter availability, translated materials, and digital resources.

Departments described a variety of approaches to facilitating in-person communication, including the use of bilingual staff, on-demand or scheduled interpretation, and translated signage in public-facing locations. Many departments indicated that in-person supports are well established within customer service and front-desk settings. Online and digital resources, such as translated webpages, electronic forms, and accessibility features, are developing but not yet implemented consistently across departments.

# **Key Observations**

The following points summarize current conditions reported by departments:

- In-person access supports—such as signage, bilingual staff, and interpreter availability—are more consistently reported to be used more than online supports.
- Departments that provide direct public services reported greater use of posted information about available language assistance services and established procedures for requesting interpreters.
- Online translation tools, multilingual content, and digital forms are available in some departments but not yet standardized countywide.
- Departments indicated a need for shared digital-accessibility guidance linking language access to ADA effective-communication standards.
   Community feedback gathered through multilingual surveys and focus groups emphasized that residents value clear signage, simple website navigation, and translated content that is easy to locate.

**Table 4. Department-Level Support for In-Person and Online Services** 

Department / Office / Agency	In-Person Access	Online Access
DAJD	Partial	Partial
DCHS	Partial	Partial
DES	Partial	Partial
DHR	Partial	Partial
KCIT	No Data Reported	Consistent
DJA	Consistent	Partial
DLS	Partial	Consistent
DNRP	Partial	Partial
DPD	Consistent	Partial
DPH	Partial	Partial
MTD	Partial	Partial
MKCC	Partial	Partial
KCDC	Consistent	Partial
KCE	Consistent	Consistent
EXEC	Consistent	Consistent
KCA	Consistent	Partial
KCSO	Partial	Partial
KCSC	Consistent	Partial
PAO	Consistent	Partial

#### **Definitions**

• **Consistent** – Service or resource is broadly available department-wide with established procedures and accessibility features.

- **Partial** Service or resource exists in some divisions or programs but lacks standardized workflows or visibility across the department.
- No Data Reported Information for this element was not reported or unavailable

As shown in Table 4, departments continued to rely on in-person communication supports than digital tools. OERSJ will provide future guidance and technical assistance to help departments integrate multilingual and accessibility features into online platforms, ensuring residents can access information and assistance through multiple channels.

D. A summary of what reasonable efforts are made to provide assistance when forms are required to be completed in English

This section summarizes how departments, agencies, and offices reported providing assistance to individuals who encounter English-only forms, applications, or other written materials.

Departments described several approaches for helping residents complete English-only forms. Most indicated that departmental bilingual staff, interpreters, or caseworkers provide direct support when needed, while some reported having translated templates or plain-language versions for commonly used documents. Several departments noted that assistance is typically provided upon request rather than through a standardized approach.

# **Key Observations**

The following points summarize current conditions reported by departments:

- Most departments reported offering some form of assistance, typically through bilingual staff or on-demand interpretation, when residents need help completing English-only forms.
- Few departments indicated that they maintain formal procedures or written guidance governing how this support is delivered.
- Definitions of "vital" or high-priority documents vary across departments, resulting in different translation and accessibility practices.
- Departments expressed interest in additional guidance on identifying vital documents, plainlanguage standards, and integration of ADA effective-communication requirements.
- Community feedback highlighted that translated forms are often difficult to locate and that staff awareness of available translations varies by department.

Table 5. Summary of Assistance with English-Only Forms by Department

Department / Office / Agency	Status
DAJD	Partial
DCHS	Partial
DES	Partial
DHR	Partial
KCIT	No Data Provided
DJA	Partial
DLS	Partial
DNRP	Partial
DPD	Consistent
DPH	Partial
MTD	Partial
MKCC	Partial
KCDC	Consistent
KCE	Consistent
EXEC	Consistent
KCA	Partial
KCSO	Partial
KCSC	Consistent
PAO	Consistent

# **Definitions**

- **Consistent** Department has structured procedures or templates in place, with clear criteria for translated or accessible forms.
- **Partial** Support is available in some areas or on request but lacks standardized procedures or centralized oversight.
- No Data Provided Information for this element was not reported or unavailable.

As shown in Table 5, most departments provided assistance with English-only forms on an as-needed basis, but few have formalized these processes as of the 2023 survey. Future guidance on vital documents, plain-language standards, and coordinated ADA and language-access planning could help promote greater consistency and help ensure that assistance is easy to access across all service areas.

E. A summary of the efforts made to ensure limited-English-speaking populations are informed of the language supports available to them when interacting with the county in any capacity

This section summarizes information reported by departments, agencies, and offices on how they inform limited-English-proficient (LEP) populations about the language supports available when interacting with King County.

Departments described a range of outreach approaches, including translated materials, multilingual signage, participation in community events, and partnerships with community-based organizations.

Many noted that multilingual outreach occurs as part of specific program initiatives rather than through standardized department-wide strategies. Departments that provide direct public services reported more frequent engagement with LEP communities than those that primarily support internal County operations.

Responses were consolidated at the department level for presentation in this report. Where multiple divisions provided distinct responses, OERSJ combined them to create a single departmental summary. "No Data Provided" indicates instances where information for this element was unavailable or not reported.

While the Proviso calls for outreach information be provided by language, departments do not track outreach or engagement by specific language group in a consistent or reportable format. As a result, language-level data are not able to be included in this report. Future reporting frameworks could incorporate standardized tracking fields to capture language-specific outreach data if departments have established consistent methods for doing so.

# **Key Observations**

The following points summarize current conditions reported by departments:

- Most departments reported some level of multilingual outreach or engagement, often tied to specific programs, projects, or community events.
- Common communication methods include translated flyers, multilingual signage, community presentations, and use of community-based or ethnic media outlets.
- Few departments indicated having a formal framework for tracking outreach by language group or evaluating reach and impact.
- Departments expressed interest in shared guidance, translation review support, and vendor resources to help ensure accurate, culturally responsive communication.
- Community feedback emphasized the importance of clear messaging, trusted messengers, and inclusion of smaller or emerging language communities.

These observations provide a snapshot of current outreach practices and can inform future countywide standards, evaluation tools, and coordination efforts.

Table 6. Departmental Outreach, Education, and Engagement with LEP Communities

Dept.	Status
DAJD	Partial
DCHS	Partial
DES	Partial
DHR	Partial
KCIT	Partial
DJA	No Data Reported
DLS	Partial
DNRP	Partial
DPD	Partial
DPH	Partial
MTD	Partial
MKCC	Partial
KCDC	Partial
KCE	Consistent
EXEC	Consistent
KCA	Partial
KCSO	Consistent
KCSC	Consistent
PAO	Partial

#### **Definitions**

- **Consistent** Multilingual outreach and engagement activities are formalized or conducted regularly through structured processes.
- **Partial** Activities occur in some divisions or projects but are not standardized or tracked department-wide.
- No Data Provided Information for this element was not reported or unavailable.

As shown in Table 6, most departments reported ongoing multilingual outreach and engagement, though the level of formality and tracking varies. Future countywide efforts to develop standardized outreach practices and shared data-collection tools could help ensure that residents across all language communities are aware of available services and supports.

# VI. Conclusion

The information summarized in this report reflects conditions and practices reported by King County departments, agencies, and offices as of March 2023. It demonstrates that departments are implementing language access differently, that departments are at varying stages of maturity, and most continued to build capacity and refine internal processes. These variations reflect differences in size, service scope, and available resources.

Community feedback collected through surveys, focus groups, and interviews reinforced the importance of clear communication, translated materials, and qualified interpretation. Participants described barriers such as difficulty locating in-language information and inconsistent awareness of how to request assistance. These perspectives underscore the need for ongoing coordination and transparency, while also highlighting the commitment of County departments to improve access.

Moving forward, King County could strengthen language access by continuing to align systems and expectations across departments. Future work includes balancing enterprise-level coordination with department-level accountability, and ensuring that agencies have the tools, guidance, and support necessary to meet the County's statutory obligations under KCC 2.15, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Title II of the ADA.

OERSJ will continue to coordinate these efforts and support departments through technical assistance, training, and centralized resources as directed by the Executive. Future efforts, if resourced, may include such actions as deploying a standardized LAP template and issuing countywide guidance on standards. By supporting departments, maintaining a consistent reporting process, utilizing shared tools, and engaging in transparent communication with communities, King County can continue progressing toward a unified and sustainable model of equitable language access. The incoming Executive and departmental leaders have opportunities, as identified in this report, to further strengthen language access implementation across the County.

# VII. Appendices

# F. Community Needs Assessment Engagement Activities and Summary

#### Overview

In 2023, the Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice partnered with Sway B Access LLC to engage limited-English-proficient residents and community-based leaders through multilingual surveys, focus groups, interviews, and listening sessions. Participants represented more than 40 language communities and shared experiences accessing County services, interpretation, translation, and public information. Feedback was collected in collaboration with the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission (KCIRC) to ensure inclusive outreach. Findings are presented in aggregate to protect confidentiality.

# **Cross-Cutting Themes**

Community members and organizations identified several consistent themes:

- Awareness and visibility: Residents were often unaware of their right to free interpretation or how to request it.
- Quality and timeliness: Participants described variable experiences with interpretation and translation services, particularly for smaller language groups.
- Accessibility of information: Translated content was sometimes difficult to locate or understand, underscoring the importance of plain language and culturally responsive communication.
- **Digital inclusion:** Limited access to technology and language-friendly web platforms remains a barrier for many communities.
- **Community partnership:** Trusted messengers, community-based organizations, and culturally specific outreach were cited as critical to improving access and building trust.

These insights complement the findings presented in the main report and highlight the lived experiences behind the quantitative data. Together, they underscore the importance of coordinated, accountable, and culturally responsive language-access systems across King County.

# **Engagement Scope**

The following table summarizes the 2023 community engagement activities conducted by OERSJ and Sway B Access LLC. Languages listed represent those most frequently identified by participants and do not capture every language community represented.

Activity	Audience	Language Communities
Focus groups	LEP community members	<ul> <li>Spanish</li> <li>Mandarin, Cantonese</li> <li>Vietnamese</li> <li>Korean</li> <li>Russian, Ukrainian</li> <li>Somali</li> </ul>
Listening sessions and interviews	Community leaders and advocates	<ul> <li>Amharic</li> <li>Arabic</li> <li>Dari</li> <li>Hindi</li> <li>Japanese</li> <li>Marshallese</li> <li>Oromo</li> <li>Punjabi</li> <li>Samoan</li> <li>Swahili</li> <li>Tigrinya</li> <li>Tagalog</li> </ul>
Survey <sup>12</sup>	Community-Based Organizations	<ul> <li>Multilingual</li> <li>(Included but not limited to: Chuukese, Farsi, Fijian, Hausa, Hmong, Kosraean, Kunama, Lao, lu Mien, Nuer, Pidgin Krio/Creole, Tongan, Samoan, Tongan, Yoruba, Wolof, other COFA and Pacific Islander languages)</li> </ul>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Note: Only the 2023 and 2021 survey instruments are included in the appendices. Focus group and interview materials have been excluded to protect participant privacy and the confidentiality of community-based organizations that hosted or facilitated these engagements.

# G. King County Language Tiers – 2021 and 2023 Updates

King County's language-tier system guides translation priorities for departments, agencies, and offices in alignment with King County Code 2.15.030(B). The tiers are developed jointly by the Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice (OERSJ) and the King County demographer, drawing on census, education, health, and service-level data. Tier 1 languages require translation of vital documents; Tier 2 languages are recommended for translation based on service demand; and Tier 3 languages are encouraged for translation as resources permit.

# **King County 2021 Language Tiers**

	Language
<b>Tier 1</b> <i>Translation Required</i>	Spanish
Tier 2	Chinese <sup>13</sup>
Translation	Vietnamese
Recommended	Somali
	Russian
	Korean
	Ukrainian
	Tagalog
	Amharic
	Arabic
Tier 3	Dari
Translation Encouraged	Punjabi
	Tigrinya
	Japanese
	Marshallese

The 2021 language tiers informed the design and outreach scope of the 2023 departmental assessment. The tiers were based on five primary data sources:

- 1. U.S. Census Bureau ACS PUMS data (2015–2019)
- 2. Washington State Office of Financial Management data on LEP students (2016)
- 3. King County District Court interpretation data (2019–2020)
- 4. WIC system data via the Department of Health (2019–2020)
- 5. Public Health clinic visit data (2019–2020)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> When referenced in the King County Language Tiers, "Chinese" includes speakers of Cantonese, Mandarin, and Min Nan Chinese, as reported in ACS and local service data.

# H. King County 2023 Language Tiers

	Language
<b>Tier 1</b> Translation Required	Spanish
Tier 2	Chinese
Translation	Dari
Recommended	Russian
	Vietnamese
	Somali
	Amharic
	Pashto
	Ukrainian
	Korean
Tier 3	Arabic
Translation Encouraged	Japanese
	Portuguese
	Tagalog
	Tigrinya

The 2023 language-tier update incorporates the U.S. Census Bureau's ACS 5-Year Estimates (2018–2022) and additional locally sourced data compiled in partnership with OERSJ. Sources include interpretation records from King County District Court, clinic visit data from Public Health, WIC system data, LEP student enrollment data from the State Office of Financial Management, and interpreted customerservice call data from LanguageLine, which was added to the analysis for the first time. The full dataset was finalized in early 2025 following coordination across court and clinical systems.

**Note:** The language-tier system is a planning tool that helps departments allocate translation resources equitably. Inclusion of a language within a given tier reflects Countywide service and demographic data rather than service demand for any individual department.

# I. 2021 Language Access Self-Assessment Survey

The 2021 Language Access Self-Assessment Survey was developed by the Office of Equity and Racial and Social Justice (OERSJ) to help departments evaluate their progress toward the goals established in their 2018 LAPs. The survey also sought to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic affected implementation efforts, service delivery, and staff capacity. Results provided the first Countywide view of how departments were institutionalizing language access under King County Code 2.15 and informed subsequent guidance and technical-assistance priorities.

This appendix includes only the survey instrument used to collect responses. Individual departmental submissions are summarized in the main body of this report and are not reproduced here.

# Office of Equity and Social Justice Language Access Program Self-Assessment Survey

In the coming weeks, the OESJ Language Access Team will be conducting a
Countywide assessment on language access. We're conducting this survey to gain a
better understanding of where your department/program/agency is at with implementing the Language
Access Plan (LAP) submitted in 2018 as required by Ordinance 18665.

Your participation in this survey will help us:

- 1. Strengthen the quality of language access services and improve outcomes for King County residents
- 2. Support you in aligning your LAP with the strategic goals of your department/program/agency
- Evaluate department/program/agency needs and ensure equitable distribution of County resources
- 4. Shape the Scope of Work (SOW) for our Language Access Consultant

Once the survey is closed, we will aggregate your responses and share the results. In the weeks that follow, our team will meet with department/program/agency liaisons individually to discuss strategies to improve performance and address problem areas.

Please spend some time reviewing the 2018 LAP submitted by your department/program/agency before responding to the questions in this survey. We also encourage you to collaborate internally to draft your responses and submit only one survey per department/program/agency.

If you're unable to locate a copy of your 2018 LAP or have questions about completing this survey, please contact OESJ's Immigration and Language Access Coordinator, Cheryse Ishii, at <a href="mailto:cishii@kingcounty.gov">cishii@kingcounty.gov</a>.

Deadline: Wednesday, September 29th, 2021

Full Name and Title:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Email Address:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Phone Number:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Pronouns:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Department:

Choose an item.

Division:

Click or tap here to enter text.

1. Please provide an update on the demographics of your department, program, or agency's current and priority populations.

Refer to questions 2, 3, and 4 in your LAP

2. Please provide an update on the LEP/LES data assessment strategies and tools used by your department, program, or agency.

Refer to questions 5 and 6 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Please provide an update on the existing language access policies, services levels, and tracking methods in your department, program, or agency. Be sure to identify any new gaps or problem areas.

Refer to Question 7 of Section 1 and Question 1 of Section 2 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Please provide an update on the current state of translated materials and interpretation service levels. Be sure to highlight communities your department, program, or agency has not been able to serve effectively due to insufficient resources.

Refer to Question 8 of Section 1 and Questions 2 & 3 of Section 2 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

What translation vendors does your department, program, or agency currently or have plans to work with? How do/will you ensure quality control of translations?

Refer to Section 4 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

6. What <u>interpretation</u> vendors does your department, program, or agency currently or have plans to work with? How do/will you measure quality of services?

Refer to Section 4 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. How does your department, program, or agency currently or plan to conduct <u>in-language</u> <u>outreach</u> (e.g., ethnic media ad buys)? How do/will you measure effectiveness of outreach strategies and messaging?

Refer to Section 4 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

8. Any changes or concerns related to how your department, program, or agency consults with priority populations (i.e., residents, community partners or stakeholders, etc.) to assess language needs and effectiveness of services?

Refer to Questions 2 & 3 of Section 4 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

9. What kinds of ADA/auxiliary aids and effective communication services does your department, program, or agency currently or plan to implement?

Click or tap here to enter text.

10. Any updates or concerns related to how your department or agency handles language-access complaints?

Refer to Questions 3 of Section 4 in your LAP

Click or tap here to enter text.

11. What has been working well (e.g., resources, tools, technologies, strategies, cross-departmental collaboration, community partnerships, etc.)?

Click or tap here to enter text.

12. What have been some challenges? Be sure to highlight constraints presented by COVID-19.

Click or tap here to enter text.

13. Tell us about capacity. What is the current staffing structure for implementing and coordinating language access services in your department, program, or agency?

Click or tap here to enter text.

14. What is your department, program, or agency's budget for language access? Complete the table below to demonstrate your overall budget and expenditures as a basis for understanding the extent and utilization of language access investments.

Refer to Section 5 in your LAP

Catamaria	2019-2020		2021-2022	
Categories	Budget	Expenditures	Budget	YTD Expenditures
Translation Services:	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Interpretation Services:	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Auxiliary Aids and Services:	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Contracting with CBOs:	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Ethnic Media Ad Buys:	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Other: Enter	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Other: Enter	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
Other: Enter	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount

15. What kinds of tools, resources, trainings, or support would you like to see from the OESJ Language Access Team — immediate and long-term?

Example: Training on requesting translations, guide to working with interpreters, directory for community translators, more engagements, etc.

Click or tap here to enter text.

16. If more than one liaison has been appointed in your department, program, or agency, please add their full name, title (include division where applicable), and email address below.

NOTE: Liaisons' names and contact information will be posted on the Language Access webpage.

Name	Title Email Address	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text. Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text. Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text. Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text. Click or tap here to enter text.	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

17. KC.gov Refresh – Please identify which of your department, program, or agency's web pages should be prioritized for translation.

Click or tap here to enter text.

 KC.gov Refresh – A robust Term Base increases consistency, quality, and speed of translations. Please attach a <u>glossary</u> of the most frequently used terms in your department, program, or agency with your completed survey.

# J. 2023 Department Needs Assessment Survey

The 2023 Departmental Language Access Needs Assessment was designed and administered by Sway B Access LLC in partnership with OERSJ. The consultant developed the survey and accompanying community-engagement framework to capture both departmental and community perspectives on language access. The survey collected updated information on LAPs, interpretation and translation practices, accessibility of online and in-person services, and multilingual outreach activities.

This appendix provides the 2023 survey instrument only. Departmental responses are reflected in Section V of this report and are not included in this appendix.

# Background

The Executive's Office of Equity, Racial and Social Justice (OERSJ) is working with the consulting firm, Sway B Access LLC, to conduct a gap analysis on the effectiveness of language access services and programming at King County. The goal of this project—the Language Equity & Access Project (LEAP)—is to better engage and service our region's linguistically-diverse immigrant and refugee communities and improve language equity and access across the King County enterprise.

#### Survey Goals

OERSJ conducted a Self-Assessment Survey in Fall 2021 to gain a better understanding of the progress agencies have made in implementing the Language Access Plans (LAPs) submitted to Council in 2018. However not all liaisons participated. There are still gaps in our understanding of both the impacts of COVID-19 on LAP implementation and between the needs and resources of agencies in achieving their language equity goals. This survey will build on data collected and further define:

- Your agency's current language access infrastructure and operations;
- Progress made since LAPs were first submitted in 2018 and/or Self-Assessment Surveys were completed in 2021;
- Implementation gaps and needs, including the impacts of COVID-19 on service delivery
- Countywide and agency-specific priorities for improving service delivery
- Most immediate tools, resources, and technical assistance agencies need to advance language equity and access.

# Outcomes

The results of this survey will inform King County's strategic planning and implementation for language equity and access. Deliverables include a summary of findings and recommendations for improvement, a Strategic Plan for Language Access at King County with timelines, benchmarks, and objectives to be undertaken by each agency, policy and procedure recommendations, LE/A tools and resources, and staff trainings.

# **Time Commitment**

This survey will take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete, longer where requested data or information is not readily available, tracked or prioritized. Where applicable, surveys should be completed with guidance from your department or division's Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EIB) manager to ensure alignment with your agency's ESJ action plan.

# Deadline

This survey will close on Wednesday, March 22 @ 6 p.m. PST.

# Questions?

For questions about this survey or to request interpretation and translation support, please contact King County's Language Access Program Manager, Cheryse Ishii, at <a href="mailto:cishii@kingcounty.gov">cishii@kingcounty.gov</a> or (206) 477-6608

# **Background**

1. Your Name:	
2. Your Email:	
3. Your Job Title:	
4. Name of the Equity, Incli survey (if applicable):	usion, and Belonging Manager (EIB) helping you complete this

# **Department/Division or Office Profile**

o. Name of your Departme	nt or Office:
6. Name of your Division o	r Program (if applicable):

agency provides to King County constituents? This tiered system is intended to organize and prioritize agency needs and inform plans for County-wide implementation.
Tier I: Emergency  A constituent-facing agency whose core functions include emergency response, widespread communications and primary constituent services. Tier I agencies have the highest anticipated need for language access due to the critical nature and exigency of constituent services.
Tier II: Major Public Contact A constituent-facing agency centered around distinct demographic groups or centered around the County's greater function. Tier II agencies have significant need for language access.
Tier III: Limited Public Contact An internal-facing agency whose core functions require limited to no direct interaction with constituents. Have the lowest anticipated need due to the nature of their services. Tier III agencies have minimal need for language access.
Other (please specify)
8. Are any of your agency's programs federally or locally legally mandated?
○ Yes
○ No
O I'm not sure
9. If "yes," please identify which of your programs are federally or locally legally mandated.

7. Which of the three 'Tiers' best describes the nature of programs and services your

# **Current LEP Constituents**

do you estimate were with LEP-speaking individuals? Please provide a general estimate.					
11. Please identify to constituents by ty			ounters with LEP-s	speaking	
	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	
In-Person Direct Service Encounters	0	0	0	0	
Remote (Virtual) Direct Service Encounters	0	0	0	$\circ$	
In Person Program Encounters	0	0	0	0	
Remote (Virtual) Program Encounters	0	0	0	0	
Agency's Print Communications	0	0	0	0	
Agency's Digital Communications (Email, newsletter, etc)	0	0	0	0	
Agency's Website	0	$\circ$	0	0	
Agency's Social Media Platforms	0	0	0	0	

10. What percentage of your agency's total encounters in FY 2022 (July 2021-June 2022)

12. Based on regional data for LEP communities, King County has identified the top 6 languages requiring translation of vital documents and public communication materials as <b>Spanish</b> , <b>Chinese</b> , <b>Vietnamese</b> , <b>Somali</b> , <b>Russian</b> , <b>Korean</b> .
Do the top 6 languages your agency encounters align with the top 6 languages identified by the County?
○ Yes
○ No
3. If "no," what are the top 6 languages most frequently encountered by your agency?
14. What additional languages does your agency encounter most frequently?
Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations Language Access Implementation Directive & Standards
15. Please describe your agency's vision and goals for immigrant and refugee inclusion and language access.
16. Are the vision and goals you describe in the previous question currently reflected in your agency-wide ESJ strategic priorities and performance measures?
○ Yes
○ No
○ I'm not sure.

17. How clear are your agency's language access implementation guidelines and standards?
O Very clear
O Somewhat clear
O Not so clear
O Not at all clear
Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations (Continued) Language Access Plan
18. Does your agency currently have a language access plan?
○ Yes
○ No
○ I'm not sure.
19. If "yes," overall how successful has your agency been in meeting the annual improvement targets outlined in your language access plan (LAP)?
O Very successful
O Somewhat successul
O Not so successful
O Not successful at all
20. If "yes" to question #18, please describe any measures taken by your agency to evaluate or update the plan in 2023-2024.

## **Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations (Continued)**

Department/Division-level Procedures

21. Please indicate which of the following protocols and procedures are currently available to support your agency's language access implementation efforts.

	Available	Not Available	In Planning Stage
LEP-speaker Data Collection and Reporting Procedures	0	0	0
Procedures for Requesting Translation of Vital Documents and Public Communication Materials	0	0	0
Translation Quality Assurance Procedures	0	0	0
Language Access Training Procedures	0	0	0
Procedures for Processing and Enforcing Language Access Complaints	0	0	0
Procedures for Periodic Compliance Monitoring and Budgeting for Language Access Implementation	0	0	0

# Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations (Continued)

Language Access Budget

22. Does your agency currently have sufficient funds committed for language access implementation?
○ Yes
○ No
○ I'm not sure
23. In the current fiscal year (FY 23), what is your agency's budget for language access' (numbers only)
24. In the last fiscal year (FY22), how much money did your agency spend on language access implementation? (numbers only)
25. On interpretation services? (numbers only)
26. On translation services? (numbers only)
27. On language access related marketing and communications expenses (e.g, ads, ethnic media, etc.)? (numbers only)

# Bilingual Staff 28. To your knowledge, approximately what percentage of your agency's total staff are bilingual or multilingual? 0-20% 61-80% O 81-100% 21-40% 41-60% 29. Does your agency currently assess the language proficiency skills of bilingual staff? O Yes O No I'm not sure. Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations (Continued) Training 30. Per K.C.C. § 2.15.010, all King County employees/agents must be trained on the provisions of the King County Immigrant, Refugee, and Language Access Ordinance. Overall, how familiar is staff with key compliance requirements your agency's needs to meet to fulfill language access obligations? O Very familiar Somewhat familiar Not so familiar

**Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations (Continued)** 

Not familiar at all

## **Current Language Access Practices & Tools**

Data Collection

31. Which of the following data collection methods does your agency use to identify and track language service usage and language needs of LEP-speaking customers?
Interpretation requests
Translation requests
Use of telephonic interpretation
Language Identification on Sign-in Sheets
Language Identification in Customer Tracking Software
Logs Maintained by Bilingual Staff
Other (please specify)
32. According to the U.S. federal government's Civil Rights Act and King County Ordinance 18665 codified in K.C.C. § 2.15, King County departments, divisions, offices, contractors, and programs are required to provide interpretation and translation services during all encounters with LEP-speaking constituents.
Overall, how equipped is your agency to meet translation and interpretation requirements?
C Fully equipped
O Somewhat equipped
O Not so equipped
O Not equipped at all

## Current Language Access Practices & Tools (Continued)

Translation

33. Does your agency have an inventory of vital documents and public communications materials that need to be translated?
○ Yes
○ No
O I'm not sure.
34. Has your agency identified which vital documents and public communications materials will be prioritized for translation in the current fiscal year (FY 23)
○ Yes
○ No
O I'm not sure.
35. Does your agency currently use the County's pre-approved vendors to get documents translated?
○ Yes
○ No
O I'm not sure
36. If "yes," please identify the contracted vendors you work with most frequently.
37. If "no," please identify which vendors you work with most frequently.

38. What are your agency's most immediate needs and challenges when it comes to getting vital documents and public communications materials translated?
Current Language Access Practices & Tools (Continued) Interpretation Services
39. Is your agency currently set up to utilize telephonic interpretation services?
○ Yes
○ No
○ I'm not sure.
40. If "yes," please identify the vendor you work with for telephonic interpretation service.
41. If "no," how does your agency ensure that interpreter services offered to LEP- speaking communities are accurate?
42. What are your agency's most immediate needs and challenges when it comes to providing interpretation services?

Current Language Access Practices & Tools (Continued)

Tools and Resources Used

### **Current Language Access Practices & Tools (Continued)**

Tools and Resources Used (Continued)

44. Please indicate which of the following outreach and community engagement tools and strategies your agency uses to reach and engage LEP-speaking communities.

	Frequently Used (76- 100% of the time)	Sometimes Used (51-75%)	Rarely Used (26-50%)	Never Used (0-25%)
Multilingual "Know Your Language Access Rights" workshops	0	0	0	0
Multilingual programming centering distinct language and demographic groups	0	0	0	0
Host community events centering distinct language and demographic groups	0	0	0	0
Table at culture or language-specific community events and gatherings	0	0	0	0
Partner with community organizations and leaders on collaborative projects	0	0	0	0
Partner with faith-based organizations and leaders on collaborative projects	0	0	0	0
Publish multilingual content and ads in language- specific ethnic	0		O A Complete A Comp	O South

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media					
Place multilingual posters and culturally relevant visual signage in high LEP concentration transportation hubs and neighborhood locations	0	0	0	0	
Use messaging apps such as WhatsApp	0	0	0	0	
Use social media platforms (e.g., Facebook and Twitter)	0	0	0	0	
45. What additional strategies does your agency use to reach and engage LEP-speaking communities?					
46. What additions and engage LEP-s			-	ency to reach ion access needs?	

## **Existing Language Access Infrastructure & Operations**

King County's COVID-19 Emergency Response

47. Was your agency involved in King County's COVID-19 Emergency Response?
○ Yes
○ No
O I'm not sure
48. If "yes," overall, in terms of language access, how successful was your agency in reaching LEP-speaking communities through its COVID-19 response?
O Very successful
O Somewhat successful
O Not so successful
O Not successful at all
49. With respect to communicating with LEP/immigrant and refugee communities during COVID-19 emergency response efforts, what did your agency do most effectively?
50. What are the biggest opportunities to improve how your agency communicated with LEP/immigrant and refugee communities during COVID-19 emergency response efforts?
51. If at all, how has what happened in this time of emergency response changed the way your agency functions? How will it impact future emergency response planning?

### **Communications Access for Constituents with Disabilities**

inities or groups does your agency encounter
Residents with cognitive disabilities
Residents with intellectual or learning disabilities
<ul> <li>Residents with emotional or behavioral disabilities</li> </ul>
Residents with seizure disabilities
counters in FY 2022 do you estimate were needs? Please provide a general estimate.
eeting the real need within your community
ented process to provide reasonable ) upon request?

56. Please indicate which of the following tools and resources are currently used by your agency's staff to communicate with individuals with communication access needs.

	Frequently Used (76- 100% of the time)	Sometimes Used (51- 75% )	Rarely Used (26-50%)	Never Used (0-25%)
Braille Materials	0	$\circ$	0	0
Large Print Materials	$\circ$	$\circ$	0	0
Audio-recording of printed information	0	0	0	0
Digital copy available for print-ready versions	0	0	0	0
Digital - Email Communications	0	0	0	0
Digital - Text Communications	0	0	0	0
Sign language interpreters - in person	0	0	0	0
Tactile (Deafblind) interpreters - in person	0	0	0	0
Video Remote Interpreter Services (VRI)	0	0	0	0
Assistive Listening Devices (or Systems)	0	0	0	0
Teletypewriter (TTY)	0	0	0	0
Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART)	0	0	0	0

Automated live captions	0	0	0	0
Video Captions	$\circ$	0	$\circ$	$\circ$
Transcript for Video Content	0	0	0	0
Audio Description	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\circ$	$\circ$
Sign language video translation	0	0	0	0
57. What strategies communities in King		cy use to reach and	d communicate w	vith disability
58. Overall, how s access needs thro	ough its COVID-		hing individuals v	vith communication
O Somewhat su	ccessful			
O Not so succes	sful			
O Not successfu	ıl			
59. With respect to emergency respons				

## Implementation Needs & Technical Assistance Priorities

60. Please rank the following areas of technical assistance support that your agency needs. (First - Highest Need; Last - Lowest Need)

■	Identifying effective data collection strategies and tools
■	Leveraging and analyzing data to determine language access needs
■ 🔷	Developing internal procedures for interpretation, translation, and use of plain language
<b>■</b> •	Prioritizing vital documents/public communication materials and languages for translation; use of in-language taglines or footers on English-only documents
≡ 🛊	Implementing a comprehensive quality assurance process for translated materials
■	Selecting and working with vetted interpretation and translation vendor(s) and community translators
■	Developing outreach and communications procedures or strategies for LEP populations
■	Building partnerships or formal relationships with community partners
■	Identifying types of accommodations available for individuals with communications-related disabilities
■	Ensuring accessibility of vital documents, public communications content on department/division website
■	Developing an internal process for handling language access complaints
■	Informing LEP-speaking customers about how to submit a language access complaint
■	Increasing staff awareness on language access standards and requirements and needs of King County's LEP-speaking populations
≣ •	Build staff skills (e.g. how to request translation services; how to use telephonic interpretation services; how to request and work with an interpreter virtually or in person)

# Closing

61. Is there anything else you would like to add to inform King County's strategic		
planning and implementation for effectively engaging with its culturally and linguistically		
diverse LEP-speaking residents?		

#### K. 2023 Community Needs Assessment Survey

This appendix provides the community-partner survey instrument used by Sway B Access LLC as part of the 2023 Community Needs Assessment, conducted in partnership with the King County Immigrant and Refugee Commission (KCIRC). The survey was designed to gather input from immigrant-, refugee-, and limited-English-proficient (LEP) community organizations about their experiences and perspectives on language access within King County programs and services.

Findings from this community survey, combined with focus groups, interviews, and listening sessions, helped contextualize the departmental data and informed recommendations for Countywide improvements. This appendix includes the full survey instrument for reference; individual responses are confidential and are summarized in aggregate form within the report's narrative and appendices.

#### Background

The Office of Equity, Racial and Social Justice (OERSJ) is working with the consulting firm, Sway B Access LLC, to conduct a gap analysis on the effectiveness of language access services and programming at King County. The goal of this project—the Language Equity & Access Project (LEAP)—is to better engage and service our region's culturally and linguistically-diverse immigrant and refugee communities and improve language equity and access across the King County enterprise.

#### Objective

The objective of this survey is to better understand the needs, experiences and perceptions of King County residents who have limited English proficiency (LEP). In particular, we'd like to identify the barriers they face when accessing government services, including challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although you may have had experiences with other government entities, we would like you to focus your responses on King County services and its programs. Please respond to each question from the perspective of your organization and in relation to the specific language/immigrant and refugee communities you serve.

#### Outcomes

In addition to this survey, we are also conducting focus groups, interview, and listening sessions with community partners, including LEP community members. The results of our community needs assessment will directly inform King County's strategic planning and implementation for language equity and access. Deliverables include summary report of findings and recommendations for improvement, a Strategic Language Access Plan (LAP) for King County with timelines, benchmarks, and objectives to be undertaken by each agency, policy and procedure recommendations, tools and resources, and staff trainings.

#### **Time Commitment**

20-30 minutes

#### Confidentiality

Your responses to this survey are confidential, and results will be presented in summary form, meaning that your identity will not be linked to any reported responses.

#### Questions?

For any questions about this survey or to request free interpretation or translation support, please contact King County's Language Access Program Manager, Cheryse Ishii, at <a href="mailto:cishii@kingcounty.gov">cishii@kingcounty.gov</a> or (206) 477-6608

### Background

* 1. Yo	ur Name:	
* 2. Yo	ur Email:	
* 3. Na	ame of your Organization:	
* 4. app	Which of the following regions of King County do you doly.	irectly serve? Select all that
	North County (Bothell, Cottage Lake, Kenmore, Lake Forest Woodinville)	Park, Shoreline, and
	] Seattle	
	East County (Bellevue, Carnation, Duvall, Issaquah, Kirkland Newcastle, North Bend, Redmond, Sammamish, and Skykor	
	South County (Auburn, Burien, Covington, Des Moines, Enur Valley, Normandy Park, Renton, Tukwila, SeaTac, White Cen Island)	

Non-profit organization	
Community Center	
Community Advocacy Group	
Social Service Provider	
Commercial or Local Business	
Faith-based Organization	
Other (please specify)	
apply.	Oromo
Arabic	☐ Punjabi
Cantonese (Chinese)	Russian
☐ Dari	Spanish
☐ Dari ☐ Farsi	☐ Spanish ☐ Somali
	_
Farsi	☐ Somali
Farsi Hindi	☐ Somali ☐ Somoan
Farsi Hindi Japanese	Somali Somoan Tagalog
Farsi Hindi Japanese Kiswahili	Somali Somoan Tagalog Thai
Farsi Hindi Japanese Kiswahili Korean	Somali Somoan Tagalog Thai Tigrinya
Farsi Hindi Japanese Kiswahili Korean Lushootseed	Somali Somoan Tagalog Thai Tigrinya Ukranian
Farsi Hindi Japanese Kiswahili Korean Lushootseed Mandarin (Chinese)	Somali Somoan Tagalog Thai Tigrinya Ukranian

* 7. How long has your organization worked directly with LEP/immigrant and refugee community members? (years)
Priority Languages and Emerging Needs Based on Census and other regional data sources for LEP/immigrant and refugee community members, King County has identified the top 6 languages requiring translation of vital documents and public communication materials as Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Somali, Russian, Korean.
<ol> <li>In your observation, what are some emerging or rising language communities or groups that also face barriers to accessing King County services and programs? (short- answer)</li> </ol>
<ol><li>In your own words, please describe the context of why King County is seeing this shift in demographics. (long-answer)</li></ol>

## Perceptions and Experiences of Language Access within King County

members you serve, which King County ager Check all that apply.	
Dept. of Adult & Juvenile Detention	Dept. of Public Health (DPH)
(DAJD)	☐ King County Assessor (KCA)
<ul> <li>Dept. of Community and Human Services</li> <li>(DCHS)</li> </ul>	☐ King County Council (KCC)
Dept. of Executive Services (DES)	☐ King County District Court (KCDC)
Dept. of Human Resources (DHR)	☐ King County Elections (KCE)
Dept. of Information Technology (KCIT)	☐ King County Executive (KCEO)
Dept. of Judicial Administration (DJA)	☐ King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO)
Dept. of Local Services (DLS)	☐ King County Superior Court (KCSC)
Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)	Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO)
Dept. of Metro Transit (MTD)	
Dept. of Public Defense (DPD)	
Other (please specify)	

<ol> <li>Of these King County agencies, which one members you serve have the most difficulty</li> </ol>	
Dept. of Adult & Juvenile Detention	Dept. of Public Health (DPH)
(DAJD)	☐ King County Assessor (KCA)
<ul> <li>Dept. of Community and Human Services (DCHS)</li> </ul>	☐ King County Council (KCC)
Dept. of Executive Services (DES)	☐ King County District Court (KCDC)
Dept. of Human Resources (DHR)	☐ King County Elections (KCE)
Dept. of Information Technology (KCIT)	☐ King County Executive (KCEO)
Dept. of Judicial Administration (DJA)	☐ King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO)
Dept. of Local Services (DLS)	☐ King County Superior Court (KCSC)
<ul> <li>Dept. of Natural Resources and Parks</li> <li>(DNRP)</li> </ul>	Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO)
Dept. of Metro Transit (MTD)	
Dept. of Public Defense (DPD)	
Other (please specify)	
12. How much does language access, such a interpretation and translation, play a role in  O Very significant	
O Somewhat significant	
Not so significant	
O Not significant at all	
13. What other factors contribute to this barrie	r to King County services?

14. Overall, in terms of language access, how accessible do you think King County's programs and services are?	
O Very accessible	
O Somewhat accessible	
O Not so accessible	
O Not accessible at all	

# Perceptions and Experiences of Language Access within King County (Continued)

	15. Overall, in terms of language access, how effective were King County's COVID-19 response efforts?
	O Very effective
	O Somewhat effective
	O Not so effective
	O Not effective at all
	With respect to communicating with LEP/immigrant and refugee communities during VID-19 emergency response efforts, what did King County do most effectively?
	A
	With respect to communicating with LEP/immigrant and refugee communities during VID-19 emergency response efforts, what are the biggest opportunities to improve?
	A
ef	With respect to preparing for future emergency communications and response orts, what strategies should King County departments adopt to ensure that P/immigrant and refugee communities are meaningfully informed and serviced?

# Perceptions and Experiences of Language Access within King County (Continued)

	19. Have you ever had to support a LEP/immigrant and refugee community member' request for interpretation or translation services from a King County department or staff?		
	○ Yes		
	○ No		
	20. If yes, how often was the language service	e provided in a timely manner?	
	○ Always	Rarely	
	○ Usually	○ Never	
	○ Sometimes		
	21. If yes, how often was the language service	e of good quality?	
	○ Always	Rarely	
	○ Usually	○ Never	
	○ Sometimes		
	22. If yes, how often did King County <u>not</u> pro	vide the requested interpreter service?	
	Always	Rarely	
	○ Usually	○ Never	
	○ Sometimes		
2	3. Would you like to add more context to this	scenario? If nothing to add, leave blank.	

# Perceptions and Experiences of Language Access within King (Continued)

24. According to the U.S. federal government's Civil Rights Act and King County Ordinance 18665, King County agencies are required to provide community members with limited English Proficiency (LEP) with interpretation and translation services that meet their language needs and at no cost to them. How aware are your LEP/immigrant and refugee community members of their legally protected right to receive free language access services from King County? O Very aware Somewhat aware Not so aware Not at all aware 25. How aware are your LEP/immigrant and refugee community members of how to request free language access services from a King County agency or staff? O Very aware Somewhat aware Not so aware Not at all aware 26. What perceived reasons do your LEP/immigrant and refugee community members not request language access services from a King County agency or staff?

# Meaningful Community Engagement

27. Select King County agencies currently work with Ethnic/Community Media outlets when conducting outreach. Yet, there is still a sizable gap in effectively engaging with community members with limited English proficiency (LEP). From your experience, why is this?		
	4	
28. What top two engagement strategies do yo to improve the participation of LEP/immigrant		
	4	
29. From your experience, what are the best and resources with the specific LEP/immigra serve?	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
Ethnic media sources not listed in the directory	Community Meetings or Groups	
Social media: Facebook or Facebook	King County Website	
Messenger, WhatsApp, WeChat, Telegram,	☐ E-mail	
etc.	☐ Mail	
Community Newsletters	☐ Text Message	
☐ Neighborhood Newspaper		
Paper Flyers Posted in Community		
Other (please specify)		

# Closing

32. Is there anything else you would like to add that will help us improve King County approach to communicating effectively with its culturally and linguistically-diverse immigrant and refugee communities?		