



COVID-19 Language Access Process

Multnomah County is the lead agency for the metro region's COVID-19 response and the City of Portland has assisted in translation and information delivery efforts. The City of Portland has specific information that is vital for all community members and has a responsibility under federal law to ensure we are communicating in an equitable and accessible way. The Language Access Process guides bureaus and elected leaders' offices in translation and information sharing.

I. Identify Critical Messaging

Determine what policies or procedures are critical for all community members in Portland. It is not necessary to translate entire press releases, etc. A simple one-page document listing critical points in plain language can be a useful approach in the case of this crisis response.

Prioritize information by:

- Safety implications
- Health implications
- Legal implications
- Financial impacts

News about public hygiene stations, suspending water shut-offs, and stay-at-home guidance would be considered more critical and time-sensitive than a discounted scooter rental fee, for example.

II. Joint Information Center (JIC) Review

All City COVID-19-related news or announcements must go through the JIC for review and coordination. Once reviewed, translation can begin.

III. Translate

Translate messaging prioritizing the top four languages (Spanish, Vietnamese, Simplified Chinese, and Russian) and then work on getting the information out in these languages:

- Somali
- Ukrainian
- Romanian
- Nepali
- Chuukese

In compliance with Civil Rights laws, it is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any City program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, or disability. To request accommodations, translation and/or interpretation, to file complaints, or for additional information or services, please contact us at 503-823-4433, City TTY 503-823-6868, or Oregon Relay Service: 711.

Translations must be conducted by a professional language service provider. City staff should not be used for translating documents. To view City contracted language and American Sign Language service providers, staff can log in to this page: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/brfs/index.cfm?andc=63023>

Many of the City's contracted language service providers have video interpreting capabilities. Ask the vendor if they have the capability or check their webpage.

Procurement Services is the authority on vendors, process, payments, cost, and contracts. Bureaus can contact procurement at ECCFinance@portlandoregon.gov to get a quick response with updated information.

If you have any questions regarding Language Access, please see the attached guidance and contact Tatiana Elejalde: Tatiana.elejalde@portlandoregon.gov if you have further questions.

IV. Information Delivery

During a crisis response it's especially critical to get clear, accurate information out quickly. We need to rely on media and community organizations to help disseminate news and information. Many foreign language media outlets subscribe to Flash Alert, but consult the attached media and community organization lists to ensure you are sending the information to all available/appropriate outlets.

Send translated materials to the JIC so they can get the messaging linked to Multnomah County's COVID-19 webpage under each language tab. That way, a Spanish-speaker, for instance, can get all essential information from one place.

Additional Resources

Please see the attached:

- Language Access Guidance document for background and more information about the City's Language Access requirements
- List of media outlets that subscribe to Flash Alert service
- Spreadsheet of cultural media outlets and community organizations

For all other COVID-19-related Equity and Accessibility questions, please contact Jeff Selby: jeff.selby@portlandoregon.gov