

## Developing a language access plan

### Finding out what languages are spoken in local communities

You can look at several data sets and reach out to community members to determine the languages your practice is most likely to encounter. A common starting point is [the U.S. Census Bureau's Business Builder](#). To use this:

- Visit <https://cbb.census.gov/rae/#>.
- Define your region by typing in the name of the county you are interested in generating a report for and selecting the correct auto-populated option.
- At the top of the webpage, select the following options:
  - ▶ Under "Change The Sector" ensure "All Sectors" is selected.
  - ▶ Under "Change Your Location" ensure the county and state you are interested in is selected.
  - ▶ Under "Select Map Variable" ensure "Total Population" is selected as the 1st variable.
- At the bottom left side of the webpage, select "Create Report" to generate a detailed report.
- To save a copy of the report, you may download it as an Excel, CSV, or PDF file by clicking the downward facing arrow in the top right corner of the webpage.

Other potential data sources are:

- School district data
- Medicaid data
- Data from community partners in your area

### Can a provider use bilingual staff to provide interpretation?

Yes. Section 1557 states that this is permissible, but the bilingual/multilingual staff member must be qualified. Qualified is defined as:

- Proficient in speaking and understanding both spoken English and at least one other spoken language or sign language, including any necessary specialized vocabulary, terminology and phraseology and
- Able to effectively, accurately, and impartially communicate directly with individuals who use sign language or who have limited English proficiency.

If bilingual staff members do not meet these criteria, they can only provide interpretation services in an emergency involving imminent threat to the safety or welfare of an individual or the public.

### Where to find resources for interpreter services in Oregon

[Use the Health Care Interpreter Registry](#) to find qualified and certified health care interpreters in Oregon. The provider is responsible for ensuring that any interpreter used is a qualified or certified interpreter.

To learn more about federal and state interpreter service requirements, [read OHA's fact sheet](#) and visit OHA's [Health Care Interpreter Program page](#).

## Are there any tools for patients to inform providers about their language needs?

Yes, preferred language cards are a tool for patients to communicate their language needs. [Preferred Language cards are available in 10 languages.](#)

There are also [I Speak Identification Cards](#) that should be readily available at your reception desk to allow people with LEP to identify their language easily.

For individuals who cannot speak you may want to have a communication card available. Here are two examples: [COVID-19 Communication Card](#) and [Covid-19 Vaccine Communication Card](#)

## Where can I go for additional language access resources?

- [A Blueprint for Advancing National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\)](#)
- [United States Department of Health & Human Services Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients](#)
- [Civil Rights for Providers of Health Care and Human Services](#)
- [HHS OCR link to LEP Resources and Guidance Documents](#)
- [National Origin Discrimination](#) – to assist agencies with benefit applications and other administrative procedures, to ensure they do not deter or deny eligible national origin groups from obtaining services
- [Effective communication YouTube video on improving patient-provider communications](#)
- Medical School Curriculum Facilitator's Guide and PowerPoint: "*Stopping Discrimination before it Starts: the Impact of Civil Rights Laws on Healthcare Disparities.*" (MedEdPORTAL: [Pub Id #7740](#))
- [LEP Video on Breaking down the Language Barrier: Translating English Proficiency Policy into Practice](#)
- [Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool: A guide to walk you through your office to review for access](#)
- [How interpreters juggle two languages at Once Ted-Ed](#)
- [Hearing Hands Samsung Ad illustrating barrier reduction for Deaf Community Member](#)