

2020

**Cobb County
Language Access Plan**



August 2020

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Signed on August 11, 2000, Executive Order 13166 mandated that federal agencies must publish guidance on how persons whose primary language is not English and those who have a limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English will be provided Meaningful Access to federally funded assistance programs. On the same date, the Department of Justice issued guidance in accordance with the Executive Order which clarified the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Pursuant to Executive Order 13166, each federal agency was mandated to provide guidance specifically tailored to its recipients consistent with the LEP Guidance issued by the Department of Justice to explain how the general standards established in the LEP Guidance will be applied to the agency's recipients. On September 15, 2016, the Office of General Counsel (OGC) issued Guidance on Fair Housing Act Protections for Persons with Limited English Proficiency. In that Guidance, the OGC states that the Fair Housing Act prohibits housing providers from using LEP selectively based on a protected class or as a pretext for discrimination because of a protected class. The Act also prohibits housing providers from using LEP in a way that causes an unjustified discriminatory effect.

Cobb County as a recipient of federal funds is obligated to reduce language barriers that can preclude meaningful access by LEP persons in regards to the County's federal grant programs, which includes the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME) Program, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EFSP) and the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG).

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office has prepared this Language Access Plan ("LAP" or "Plan"), which defines the actions to be taken to ensure Meaningful Access to Agency services, programs, and activities on the part of LEP persons. In preparing this Plan, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office conducted a Four-Factor Analysis, considering

- 1) the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the Cobb County CDBG Program Office or its federally funded programs;
- 2) the frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the Cobb County CDBG Program Office's programs;
- 3) the nature and importance of the programs, activities, or services to people's lives; and
- 4) resources available to execute the programs and the costs of providing the LEP services.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

Cobb County CDBG Program Office administers federal programs including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME) Program, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EFSP) and the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), for Cobb County, Georgia.

SECTION 3: POLICY

It is the policy of Cobb County CDBG Program Office to comply with all federal statutes and regulations in the administration of federally funded programs. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will take timely and reasonable steps to provide LEP persons with Meaningful Access to programs and activities conducted by Cobb County CDBG Program Office. Access to Cobb County CDBG Program Office grant programs should not be impeded as a result of an individual's inability to speak, read, write or understand English. Cobb County CDBG Program Office will review and update its LEP Four-Factor Analysis at least every five years.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will train staff, contractors, and Subrecipient administrators (program administrators who are expected to conduct a Four-Factor Analysis and other efforts described within this LAP), and local government officials on procedures to implement and continuously monitor and evaluate the implementation of LAP in Cobb County.

Pursuant to the requirements of Title VI, subrecipients of federal funds received through an administration grant/award made by Cobb County CDBG Program Office is also required to make reasonable efforts to provide timely, Meaningful Access for LEP persons to programs and activities. In order to do so, Subrecipients should first conduct an assessment to determine the need for language assistance within their service area. This is accomplished by conducting the Four-Factor Analysis, which is described in this Plan. After completion of the Four-Factor Analysis, the Subrecipients will understand the languages spoken by LEP persons in their service area and can determine how to provide needed language assistance.

Based upon the findings of the Four-Factor Analysis, and when deemed necessary, the Subrecipients should prepare an LAP addressing the Subrecipient's plan for ensuring Meaningful Access to programs and activities for LEP persons. A Subrecipient may conclude that different language assistance measures are sufficient for the different types of programs or activities in which it engages. For instance, a Subrecipient may determine that certain activities are more important and/or have greater impact on or contact with LEP persons, and thus such programs or activities require enhanced language assistance. Although the Cobb County CDBG Program Office is providing Subrecipient with a template from which to develop a LAP, Subrecipients have flexibility in determining how to appropriately address the needs of the LEP populations they serve.

The Subrecipient is also required to select an individual responsible for coordination of LEP compliance, train staff involved in programs and activities on LEP requirements, keep records of assistance provided and actions taken, and update the Four-Factor Analysis and LAP, as needed.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor all Subrecipients to ensure LEP individuals receive meaningful access to federally funded programs in accordance with the terms identified in Section 12 of this LAP.

SECTION 4: PURPOSE AND PLAN OVERVIEW

The purpose of this Plan is to analyze the location and needs of Cobb County's LEP population through the Four-Factor Analysis of Census data. The Plan establishes guidelines in accordance with Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, 65 Fed. Reg. 50,121 (Aug. 16, 2000). The Plan will also describe how the Cobb County CDBG Program Office, and its Subrecipients, will provide Meaningful Access to programs, eliminate or reduce LEP as a barrier to programs and services offered in Cobb County.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office has outlined the reasonable steps to provide Meaningful Access to federally funded programs for LEP persons based on the classification of each federally funded program. Federally funded programs that Cobb County CDBG Program Office directly administers will provide written translations of vital documents in accordance with the results of the Cobb County CDBG Program Office's Four-Factor Analysis.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor the reasonable steps taken to ensure LEP individuals have Meaningful Access to federally funded grant programs. Cobb County Subrecipients (operating programs including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, HOME Investment Partnerships Act (HOME) Program, Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EFSP) and the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), will be monitored based on their independent LAPs as directed by their independently conducted Four-Factor Analyses. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor language access strategies and provide training and support language access activities.

Under this Plan, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office, and its Subrecipients, will provide two primary types of language access services: oral and written. Both oral language access services and written language access services will meet the standards for Meaningful Access as described in this Plan, including interpretation and translation services being conducted by a demonstrably qualified bilingual staff member communicating directly in an LEP person's language or a qualified contractor providing interpretation or translation services.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will continually monitor compliance with this Plan and the effectiveness of the Plan in eliminating barriers to Meaningful Access for LEP individuals and will engage in outreach efforts to ensure that LEP persons are aware of the language access services available to them.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will also provide training to Subrecipient grant administrators, local government officials, and direct service staff on methods of assistance available to LEP individuals in the implementation of this Plan. This training will be periodically updated and delivered as Cobb County CDBG Program Office's LEP needs and language access services evolve.

SECTION 5: REGULATORY AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

A. Section 109 of the Housing & Community Development Act of 1974

Section 109 states that "no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, or sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with Federal financial assistance."

B. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Implementing Regulations

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 601, 42 USC 200d, provides that no person shall "on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Section 602 authorizes and directs federal agencies that are empowered to extend federal financial assistance to any program or activity "to effectuate the provision of [Section 601] by issuing rules, regulations, or orders of general applicability."

The regulations in Section 602 prohibit recipients from utilizing "criteria or methods of administration which have the effect of subjecting persons to discrimination based on their race, color or national origin, or have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishments of the objectives of the program or activity as respect to persons of a particular race, color or national origin." On January 22, 2007, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) published the final rule "Notice of Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients, regarding Title VI Prohibition against National Origin Discrimination – Affecting Limited English Proficient Person" (HUD LEP Guidance).

C. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Implementing Regulations

Subtitle A of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 protects qualified individuals with Disabilities on the basis of disability in the services, programs or activities of all state and local governments.

D. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Implementing Regulations

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that, "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States, as defined in section 705 (20) of this title, shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

SECTION 6: DEFINITIONS

Beneficiary: The ultimate consumer of federally funded programs who receives benefits from a federally funded recipient.

Bilingual: A person who is bilingual is fluent in two languages and is able to conduct the business of the workplace in either of those languages. This is to be distinguished from proficiency in more than one language. Interpretation and translation require the interpreter or translator to be fluently bilingual and also require additional specific skills for interpretation and translation.

Customer: Any individual or organization communicating with a Cobb County CDBG Program Office program.

Direct “In-Language” Communication: Monolingual communication in a language other than English between a multilingual staff and an LEP person (e.g., Spanish to Spanish).

Effective Communication: Communication sufficient to provide an LEP individual with substantially equivalent levels of service access received by non-LEP individuals. Staff must take reasonable steps to ensure communication with an LEP individual is as effective as communication with non-LEP individuals when providing similar programs and services.

External Stakeholder: A person who is not a Cobb County CDBG Program Office employee and who has contact with, or is seeking information or services from, Cobb County CDBG Program Office programs or activities. External stakeholders include, but are not limited to, members of the general public, renters, homeowners, and small business owners.

Federal Financial Assistance: Grants, loans, and advances of federal funds, the grant or donation of federal property and interests in property, or any other assistance as specified in 24 CFR Part I § 1.2(e).

Focus Languages: Languages, specifically Spanish, identified through the Four-Factor Analysis as having a sufficient level of prevalence amongst LEP individuals in Cobb County to warrant efforts for written translations of vital documents.

Four-Factor Analysis: The analysis that Recipients of federal funding are required to use to determine what language assistance measures are sufficient to assist LEP persons in the different programs and activities in which the Recipient engages, as described in “Final Guidance to Federal Financial Assistant Recipients regarding Title VI Prohibition against National Origin Discrimination, affecting Limited English Proficient Persons” published in the Federal Register (January 22, 2007). The four factors include:

- 1.) The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered in the service population ("served or encountered" includes those persons who would be served or encountered by the Recipient if the persons received adequate education and outreach and the recipient provided sufficient language services);
- 2.) The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the program;
- 3.) The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program; and
- 4.) The resources available to execute the program and costs of providing the LEP services.

Fluent: A person who is able to express oneself easily and articulately in conversations and public speaking.

Interpretation: The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.
Language Access Plan (LAP): A written implementation plan that addresses identified needs of the LEP persons served.

Language Assistance Services: Oral and written language services needed to assist LEP individuals to communicate effectively with staff, and to provide LEP individuals with Meaningful Access to, and an equal opportunity to participate fully in, the services, activities, or other programs administered by Cobb County CDBG Program Office.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Individuals: Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English because of their national origin. For purposes of Title VI and the LEP Guidance, persons may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular service, benefit, or encounter. (HUD LEP Guidance). LEP individuals may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but still demonstrate LEP for other purposes (e.g., reading or writing).

Meaningful Access: LEP individuals' accurate, timely, and effective participation in, or benefit from, federally funded programs that is meaningfully equivalent to that of non-LEP individuals, at no cost to the LEP individual.

Multilingual staff or employee: A staff person or employee who has demonstrated fluency in English and reading, writing, speaking, or understanding at least one other language as authorized by his or her Division.

Primary Language: An individual's primary language is the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.

Proficient: The ability of a person to speak, read, write, and understand a language. An individual who is proficient in a language may, for example, be able to greet an LEP individual in his or her language or facilitate access to translation services, but not conduct Agency business in that language.

Qualified Translator or Interpreter: An in-house or contracted translator or interpreter who has demonstrated his or her competence to interpret or translate.

Recipient: Qualified applicants in compliance with 24 CFR §1.2(f) who are awarded federal financial assistance. The Voluntary Compliance Agreement defines Recipient as "the meaning specified at 24 CFR §1.2(0)." 24 CFR §1.2(f) defines Recipient as "any State, political subdivision of any State, or instrumentality of any State or political subdivision, any public or private agency,

Sight Translation: Oral rendering of written text into spoken language by an interpreter without change in meaning based on a visual review of the original text or document.

Subrecipient: Any public or private agency, institution, organization, or other entity to whom federal financial assistance is extended, through Cobb County CDBG Program Office for any program or activity, or who otherwise participates in carrying out such program or activity but such term does not include any Beneficiary under any such program.

Translation: The replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

VCA: Voluntary Compliance Agreement

Vital Document: Any document that is critical for ensuring Meaningful Access to the Recipients' major activities and programs by beneficiaries generally and LEP persons specifically. Whether or not a document (or the information it solicits) is "vital" may depend upon the importance of the program, information, encounter, or service involved, and any consequences the LEP person might face if the information in question is not provided accurately or in a timely manner. For instance, applications for auxiliary activities, such as certain recreational programs in public housing, would not generally be considered a vital document, whereas applications for housing would be considered vital. However, if the major purpose for funding the recipient were its recreational program, documents related to those programs would be considered vital. Where appropriate, recipients are encouraged to create a plan for consistently determining, over time and across its various activities, what documents are "vital" to the Meaningful Access of the LEP populations they serve.

SECTION 7: FOUR-FACTOR ANALYSIS

As described in HUD's 72 FR 2732, the starting point for ensuring Meaningful Access is to conduct an individualized assessment (Four-Factor Analysis) that takes into account the following four factors:

1. Number or proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population,
2. Frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the programs,
3. Nature and importance of the service provided by the programs, and
4. Resources available to execute the programs and the costs of providing the LEP services.

Classifying Federally Funded Programs

To determine what reasonable steps must take to provide Meaningful Access to federally funded programs for LEP persons, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office first determined which of its programs were federally funded. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office then characterized the federally funded programs accordingly:

- (1) Direct Beneficiary – Cobb County Grant programs administered by the Cobb County CDBG Program Office.
- (2) Subrecipients – Cobb County administered the Cobb County CDBG Program Office awards funds to organizations to conduct services (e.g. housing counseling agencies or housing developers). Awards to local governments, non-profit and other non-

entitlement/Subrecipients who are expected to independently conduct a Four-Factor Analysis and other efforts described within this LAP.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will ensure language access is provided to LEP persons to ensure Meaningful Access to Cobb County grant programs. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor whether its subrecipients have taken reasonable steps to ensure Meaningful Access for LEP persons to Subrecipient-operated, federally funded programs.

Factor I: the number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the County or its federally funded programs.

To determine need, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office considered language services needed by current program participants and applicants, as well as outreach to potential participants. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office updated the language needs by evaluating data from the US Census Bureau 2018 American Community Survey’s (ACS) One-Year Estimate.

According to ACS, among people at least five years old living in the in 2018, 20.8% spoke a language other than English at home. Census questionnaires ask respondents to rate their English proficiency, and people's ratings of their own English abilities contribute to LEP statistics. Of those speaking a language other than English, 7.2% indicated they spoke English less than “very well”, these persons are categorized as the LEP population. The ACS statistics break down as follows:

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME¹	PERCENT OF COBB COUNTY CDBG PROGRAM OFFICE PERSONS	NUMBER OF COBB COUNTY CDBG PROGRAM OFFICE PERSONS
English Only	79.2%	552,276
Language other than English	20.8%	145,124
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	7.2%	50,506
Spanish	11.6%	80,844
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	4.8%	33,656
Other Indo-European languages	4.7%	33,077
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	1.1%	7,750
Asian and Pacific Islander languages	2.7%	18,485
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	1%	7,099
Other languages	1.8%	12,718
<i>Speak English less than "very well"</i>	.3%	2,001

¹ Source: ACS, 2018

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Cobb%20County,%20Georgia%20Families%20and%20Living%20Arrangements&tid=ACSDP1Y2018.DP02&vintage=2018&hidePreview=false>

According to the demographic information above, those persons over 5 years of age speaking a language other than English at home make up approximately 20.8% of the population. Of those individuals, 7.2% speak English less than “very well” and would be considered to have Limited English Proficiency.

Spanish-speaking individuals make up the largest percentage of persons that could potentially qualify as having a Limited English Proficiency. 11.6% of those individuals are Spanish speaking and 4.8% speak English less than “very well”.

Persons speaking all other languages at home each make up less than 5% of the population. Of that population those persons indicating that they speak English less than “very well” make up less than 1% of the total area population. Since Spanish is the most common language encountered, the target audience for materials and outreach will be to Spanish speaking individuals.

Factor 2: The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with the Cobb County’s programs.

Although specific numbers have not been recorded in the past, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office has contact with Spanish-speaking individuals and some individuals with LEP. Those contacts are unpredictable and infrequent. Public contacts regarding activities are generally at public meetings held in preparation for an annual plan development or performance reporting period.

Implementation Plan

To more accurately assess the frequency of contact with LEP individuals, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office will initiate a simple tabulation procedure to document the number and type of encounters with LEP individuals. This will help the Cobb County CDBG Program Office better document and analyze the scope of language services required.

Factor 3: the nature and importance of the programs, activities, or services to people’s lives.

In general, vital documents are those critical for obtaining or maintaining the services or benefits offered under federal programs. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office recognizes the importance and benefit of outreach and communication with LEP individuals for program implementation, planning, and monitoring of federally funded programs.

In addition to the Consolidated Plan that is prepared or updated at least every 5 years, there are documents prepared on an annual basis that include the Annual Action Plan and the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report.

Cobb County grant Subrecipients will be required to comply with this LEP. LEP outreach will focus on the programs that provide critical services to program recipients, including but not limited to: homeowners, landlords, and renters. Those programs that provide a means of helping

individuals obtain or rehabilitate housing or supporting businesses are critically important to LEP individuals.

Implementation Plan

- All program documents will contain a notice that alternative format versions will be made available if requested.
- All legal notices and publications intended to inform the public of meetings, the availability of documents, or opportunities for public comment will be published in English and Spanish. In addition to the legal notices published in the official newspaper, notices and public service announcements will be transmitted to the local Spanish language paper and radio stations.
- Any application forms for direct assistance utilizing federal funds whether through the Count or a subrecipient must be provided in English and Spanish.
- All public notices will contain a notification that translation services and/or documents in an alternate format will be made available upon request.
- Signs will be posted in intake areas and other entry points regarding the availability of free language services to those persons in the target audience.
- Stating in outreach documents that language services are available from the agency.
- Working with community-based organizations and other stakeholders to inform LEP individuals of the agency's services, including the availability of language assistance services.

Factor 4: Resources available to execute the programs and the costs of providing the LEP services.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office takes all reasonable steps to ensure Meaningful Access for LEP persons to grant programs and activities. The availability of resources, however, may limit the provision of language services in some instances. “Reasonable steps” may cease to be reasonable when the costs imposed substantially exceed the benefits.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office’s LAP balances the needs of the LEP community with the funding resources available. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office has identified those vital documents for Cobb County’s federally funded programs that directly faces LEP individuals and for which a delay in service provision might significantly, negatively impact the wellness of any individual that program serves. The County CDBG Program Office has prioritized those documents for which either the following statements are true, according to direct program contacts: 1) Without this document, an individual could not access the program; 2) This document allows access to a major activity within the program. In addition to any vital documents, the County CDBG Program Office will also disseminate federally provided fair housing documents and brochures to clients, whenever applicable.

Implementation Plan

- Utilize a Language Line Services or equivalent service provider for on-call translation services.
- Staff will be trained on policies and procedures of the organization’s language assistance activities.

- The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will make available the “I Speak” cards provided to identify individuals with limited English proficiently. Use of the cards will be tabulated. This identification provides a means to monitor changing demographics in the community to better anticipate future needs. See Appendix I for sample.
- The Cobb County Website portal will provide opportunities to instantly translate pages as well as links to English and Spanish versions of any materials posted.

If resources limit the provision of services already laid out in this document, Cobb County CDBG Program Office will keep record of both the service requested and financial reasoning for the limitation.

SECTION 8: STAFF TRAINING ON LEP NEEDS AND LAP

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office CDBG Program Office is responsible for ensuring adherence to the language access plan, policy directives, and procedures to provide Meaningful access to LEP persons. Responsibilities include coordinating and facilitating delivery of related services, staff training on the plan’s policies and procedures, and ongoing monitoring and assessment of the plan’s effectiveness.

The County designates the Cobb County CDBG Program Office CDBG Program Office, as responsible for oversight and implementation of the Limited English Proficiency Plan.

Cobb County CDBG Program Office
 192 Anderson Street, Suite 500
 Marietta, GA, 30060
 Phone: (770) 528-1455
 E-mail: info@cobbcountry.org

Subrecipient Point of Contact

All Subrecipients will be responsible for securing language access services as applicable for their federally funded program(s).

Development of a Language Bank

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office and all Subrecipients identify staff who are professionally proficient or fluent in a language other than English. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office maintains a roster of staff, along with their contact name, language proficiency for each self-identified language, work schedule, telephone number, and email address.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will disseminate this list to all programs having direct contact with the public and is responsible for verifying and revising it as needed, depending on changes in staff and demand for LEP services.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office’s current Language Bank is included in Appendix I. The Language Bank will be used to facilitate the provision of interpreter services in all locations

that have regular interactions with the public. All staff professionally proficient in a language besides English receive training in providing language assistance support. Bilingual staff members wishing to serve as translators or interpreters may receive additional training in translation or interpretation. Those staff members are assessed and receive regular training on the following:

- Role and responsibility of a Language Bank Interpreter;
- Interpretation ethics;
- Specialized terminology; and
- Program specific information as needed.

If there are significant populations in areas where no staff fluent in the language is available, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office will identify locally available interpretation services. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will provide guidance to individuals identified in the language bank to insure the appropriate level of interaction with LEP individuals. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office recognizes that the use of the language bank does not supplant the need for certified translation services but augments the availability of immediate LEP services.

Training Staff as Resources

Mandatory training on LEP awareness and current protocols will be developed for all staff. This training will be conducted on-line and in-person.

- (i) The Basic LEP/LAP Training will cover an overview of the definition of LEP persons, overview of the state and federal regulations governing language access, roles and responsibilities of Cobb County CDBG Program Office staff, Cobb County CDBG Program Office language access procedures, and the LAP complaints/appeals process.
- (ii) The Advanced LEP/LAP Training will cover an overview of the definition of LEP persons, overview of state and federal regulations governing language access, basic customer service skills and telephone etiquette, cultural sensitivity, roles and responsibilities of Cobb County CDBG Program Office staff, how to identify the language needs of an LEP individual, use of the “I Speak” card, Cobb County CDBG Program Office language access procedures, how to track the use of language services, and the LAP complaints/appeals process.

SECTION 9: LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE MEASURES

Guidance and Technical Assistance for Subrecipients

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will develop guidance and technical assistance, including webinar training, in providing language access services for Subrecipient grant administrators. This training will cover components of a meaningful LAP, LAP file review, LAP reporting requirements, and the LAP complaints/appeals process.

Subrecipient Notice

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office staff will provide information about language assistance planning requirements to Subrecipients in all phases of the grant process including:

- Notices of funding availability (NOFAs)
- Grant application webinars and workshops
- Grant contracts
 - Post award training
- Grant close out monitoring

Subrecipient Training

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office staff will provide Language Access Plan training to Subrecipients as part of the preapplication and post award webinars and workshops. Training topics will include:

- General information about Language Access Plans
- How to perform the four-factor analysis
- How to provide Meaningful Access to programs and activities
- Technical assistance for translation and interpretation services
- How to maintain records for close out monitoring

Subrecipient Technical Assistance

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office staff will provide ongoing technical assistance to Subrecipients to ensure compliance with the LAP requirements. Technical assistance will include informational webinars posted to the Cobb County CDBG Program Office website about LAP requirements, review of Subrecipients plans and Four-Factor Analyses to determine if they meet HUD standards, and access to resources for translation and interpretation services.

Subrecipient Monitoring

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor Subrecipients to ensure that they have completed policies in line with the sample LAP and related guidance materials and are taking reasonable steps to provide Meaningful Access to LEP persons.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office intends to meet its responsibilities to ensure Subrecipients are compliance with Title VI and the Title VI regulations through the process of monitoring, provision of technical assistance, and referral of complaints to HUD for further investigation. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will include as part of a regular

Subrecipient project monitoring, an evaluation of a Subrecipient's compliance with LEP requirements.

This will include the following:

- (i) Determining whether the Subrecipient has identified a LEP contact person;
- (ii) Determining whether the Subrecipient completed a Four-Factor Analysis;
- (iii) Determining whether the Subrecipient has a LAP;
- (iv) Determining whether and how LEP persons are being provided Meaningful Access to programs and activities; and
- (v) Whether the Subrecipient is maintaining records regarding their efforts to comply with Title VI LEP obligations.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will inform a Subrecipient of any findings of compliance or noncompliance in writing. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will attempt to resolve the findings by informal means such as seeking corrective action. If the Cobb County CDBG Program Office determines that compliance cannot be secured by voluntary means, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office may require repayment of Subrecipient funding received, refer the matter to HUD, or use any other appropriate enforcement mechanism.

SECTION II: LEP OUTREACH

Outreach and Notice to LEP Individuals

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office shall maintain notices on its website of the availability of translation and interpretation services. Staff who use email messaging services to keep participants informed of available resources will add a link to the Cobb County CDBG Program Office's website which will contain information related to the availability of interpretative services offered in Cobb County and will inform LEP persons of the availability of language assistance, free of charge, by providing written notice in languages LEP persons will understand. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor, maintain, and update LEP requirements as required by HUD at least annually and/or as changes occur. The LEP plan will be provided to any person or agency requesting a copy. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office is in the process of updating the website. As part of this update, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office will provide a clear, targeted link for LEP individuals to access the page where translated notices, program descriptions, fair housing brochures, and Vital Documents will be available.

Complaint Procedure

For persons included in a regularly encountered Limited English Proficiency (LEP) group, written notification of the opportunity to file a discrimination complaint in accordance with federal regulations will be provided. For infrequently encountered groups, Limited English Proficiency persons may be advised orally of the opportunity to file a discrimination complaint pursuant to federal regulations. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will provide oversight of the complaint/appeal resolution process. To file a complaint, submit the written complaint to:

Cobb County CDBG Program Office
192 Anderson Street, Suite 500
Marietta, GA, 30060
Phone : (770) 528-1455
E-mail : info@cobbcounty.org

Additional Outreach

Additional Outreach for partnerships in LEP Communities the Cobb County CDBG Program Office will leverage existing relationships with community organizations including faith-based service groups, community associations, and service nonprofits to notify LEP individuals of Cobb County's language access services. Potential partners include, but are not limited to, Latin American Associations, Community Development Centers and Regional Commissions. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will maintain this list of partners. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office also anticipates that community partnerships will be shared with Subrecipients and Local Governments to coordinate language access services in their jurisdictions/areas.

SECTION 12: MONITORING, EVALUATING AND UPDATING THE LAP

For our language access program to continue to be effective, the Cobb County CDBG Program Office will periodically monitor, evaluate, and update the plan, policies and procedures. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will be responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the LAP.

On an annual basis the LAP will be updated to reflect any change in the plan based on the prior year's activity, as needed. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will annually review the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) to assess the population of Limited English Proficient residents within Cobb County, Georgia and update the LAP, as necessary. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will continue to conduct the Four-Factor Analysis every five years. As part of this monitoring and evaluation effort, Cobb County CDBG Program Office will review procedures for providing language access services, existing training programs, outreach activities, the Language Bank, and the language access data to periodically update the language access program.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office is responsible for evaluating, and updating the language access plan, as well as coordinating monitoring for CDBG, HOME, ESG, CSBG, JAG and EFSP programs. This LAP is a living document that, through monitoring and evaluation, may be updated as the needs of the LEP population and the demands on the Cobb County CDBG Program Office to service this population evolve.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will have in place processes to regularly identify and assess what the LAP is providing to our current customers as well as potential customers and how we can better meet their needs. Monitoring and evaluating the LAP will include:

- Tracking and assessing the Cobb County CDBG Program Office's interactions with LEP individuals

- Soliciting feedback from community-based organizations about the effectiveness and performance in ensuring Meaningful Access to our LEP customers.
- Maintaining current community demographics and needs by engaging with local resources who can assist with demographic changes.
- Monitoring the Cobb County CDBG Program Office’s response rate to complaints and/or suggestions offered by LEP individuals and employees regarding the language assistance services provided.
- Considering new resources, including funding, collaborations with other agencies, human resources, emerging technologies and other mechanisms for ensuring improved access for LEP individuals.
- Reviewing and evaluating the translation invoices from the language services to determine if translation requests are made for languages other than Spanish numbering more than 5% of the eligible population.
- Tracking categorized language interpretations requested of staff interpreters.
- Maintaining digital folders, organized by language for all vital documents.

Creating record of language assistance services can help inform programs whether there should be changes to the quantity or type of language assistance services. The monitoring and review of current policies and the types of language assistance services provided should occur on an annual basis.

Subrecipients will be required to comply with LEP obligations as a condition of award. The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will monitor all subrecipients for LEP compliance, including:

1. Subrecipient Acknowledgement Statement

Subrecipients will be required to acknowledge LEP obligations at application as a condition of award. Applicants for federal funds through the Cobb County CDBG Program Office must include an executed statement acknowledging their LEP obligations with their applications. This statement must include the applicant’s agreement to provide a LEP to the Cobb County CDBG Program Office within sixty (60) days of notification of award and agreement to provide evidence of compliance with the locally adopted LEP to the Cobb County CDBG Program Office during on-site and file review monitoring activities. Applicants who fail to execute and submit a LEP acknowledgement may be deemed ineligible for the award.

2. Submission of a Language Access Plan (LAP)

Subrecipients will be required to comply with the Cobb County CDBG Program Office’s LAP. Subrecipients II will be required to submit a locally adopted LAP, including the four-factor analysis conducted for the project/program area.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office will provide this LAP to all Subrecipients and monitor compliance with the LAP in accordance with regularly scheduled performance monitoring. Any Subrecipient found to be out of compliance with the Cobb County CDBG Program Office’s LAP, will be provided immediate instructions to cure the noncompliance. If the Subrecipient does not cure the non-compliance or continues to have repeated instances of non-compliance, the

Cobb County CDBG Program Office may require additional LAP training to the Subrecipient. The Subrecipient LAP must include:

- The name of the individual responsible for coordination of LEP compliance;
- LEP training plan for all staff involved in programs and activities on LEP requirements;
- Languages identified from the Four-Factor Analysis;
- Schedule for translating and disseminating vital documents;
- Policy for Updating the Four-Factor Analysis and the LAP.

The Cobb County CDBG Program Office's program staff will monitor Subrecipients for compliance with the submitted LAP during monitoring events performed in association with the award. Cobb County CDBG Program Office program staff will document findings in the monitoring file and report any non-compliance to the Cobb County CDBG Program Office.

Subrecipients who have documented non-compliance with the LAP will be provided a plan to remedy the non-compliance or to reduce the likelihood of future recurrence of non-compliance. Any Subrecipient II who remains in non-compliance by violating the compliance agreement may incur a range of penalties, including, but not limited to, required, additional LAP training and ineligibility for continued or future funding.

APPENDIX I: LAP PROGRAM CONTACTS

First Name	Last Name	City	State	County	Certification #	Certification Expires	Cell Phone	Email	Language
Carlos	Lares		GA	Cobb	C-01011	9/30/2020	(404) 662-9684	carlostlares@gmail.com	Spanish
Ed	Pedraza	Marietta	GA	Cobb	4866-2296-2594-6112	9/30/2020	(443) 324-5941	pedrazaed@hotmail.com	Spanish
Gabriel	Rueda	Marietta	GA	Cobb	C-06064	9/30/2020	(770) 971-1080	gruedap@gmail.com	Spanish
Viking	Merceron	Acworth	GA	Cobb	4510-5163-5553-0752	9/30/2020	(678) 557-1055	haitian_creole_interpreter@yahoo.com	Haitian Creole

APPENDIX 2: “I SPEAK” CARD

I SPEAK ...



ARABIC أنا أتحدث اللغة العربية	FRENCH Je parle français	LAOTIAN ຂອບປາກພາສາລາວ	SPANISH Yo hablo español
ARMENIAN Ես խոսում եմ հայերեն	FRENCH CREOLE <small>(HAITIAN CREOLE)</small> M pale kreylò ayisyen	LITHUANIAN Aš kalbu lietuviškai	SWAHILI Ninaongea Kiswahili
BENGALI আমি বাংলা কথা বলতে পারি	GERMAN Ich spreche Deutsch	<small>我講國語</small> MANDARIN (CHINESE) 我讲国话/普通话	SWEDISH Jag talar svenska
BOSNIAN Ja govorim bosanski	GREEK Μιλώ τα ελληνικά	NORWEGIAN Jeg snakker norsk	TAGALOG Marunong akong mag-Tagalog
BULGARIAN Аз говоря български	GUJARATI હુ ગુજરાતી બોલુ છું	POLISH Mówi' po polsku	THAI พูดภาษาไทย
BURMESE ကျွန်ုပ်တို့က မြန်မာစကားပြောနိုင်ပါတယ်။	HEBREW אני מדבר עברית	PORTUGUESE Eu falo português do Brasil (Brasil)	TURKISH Türkçe konuşurum
CAMBODIAN ខ្ញុំនិយាយភាសាខ្មែរ	HINDI मैं हिन्दी बोलता हूँ।	Eu falo português de Portugal (Portugal)	UKRAINIAN Я розмовляю українською мовою
CANTONESE (CHINESE) 我講廣東話	HMONG Kuv has lug Moob	PUNJABI ਮੈਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲਦਾ/ਬੋਲਦੀ ਹਾਂ।	URDU میں اردو بولتا ہوں
CROATIAN Govorim hrvatski	HUNGARIAN Beszélek magyarul	ROMANIAN Vorbesc românește	VIETNAMESE Tôi nói tiếng Việt
CZECH Mluvím česky	ITALIAN Parlo italiano	RUSSIAN Я говорю по-русски	YORUBA Mo nso Yooba
DUTCH Ik spreek het Nederlands	JAPANESE 私は日本語を話す	SERBIAN Ja govorim српски	
FARSI (PERSIAN) من فارسی صحبت می کنم	KOREAN 한국어 합니다	SLOVAK Hovorím po slovensky	

* Registrars should use this tool to guide patients in identifying their spoken language when they do not speak English at all.
Source: Adapted from the State of Ohio's Office of Criminal Justice Services and recommended by the US Department of Health and Human Services - Office of Civil Rights for use by healthcare facilities