ADDENDUM #1

April 8, 2022

RFP Title: **Language Services - Interpreters**

Owner: **County of Wake – Melissa England, Procurement**

RFP Bid No.:   **#22-041**

The following items provide answers to questions that were submitted for RFP #22-041. Wake County answers are in blue.

Section I: Current Vendors and Usage

1. *Who is the Incumbent Contractor(s)?*

    a. Language Line Solutions
    b. Certified Languages International, LLC
    c. Fox Translation Service

2. *How much did your organization spend on remote interpretation (phone/video) and written translation in 2021?*

    Wake County is on a July 1 through June 30 fiscal year. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 Wake County Health & Human Services spent approximately $370,000 for all types of interpretation services and approximately $2,000 for written translation. Projected spending for this year, based on actuals to date, are approximately $390,000 for interpretation and $5,000 for written translation.

    We do not have a further breakdown of video, phone, and ASL dollar volume available.

3. *Can you please provide the breakdown of the service usage report in the categories 1-10 as called out in this RFP?*

    The county's Health and Human Services department's primarily manages and utilizes language assistance services, in order to comply with the federal and state Offices for Civil Rights by ensuring that limited English proficiency (LEP) persons have equal access

and opportunity to participate in HHS-funded health care and human services programs as well as participate in health programs and activities administered by HHS.

Since 2019, these are the Top 10 most requested languages (in order most to least): 1- Spanish, 2- Arabic, 3- Vietnamese, 4- Swahili, 5- French, 6- Portuguese, 7- Mandarin, 8- Karen, 9- Tigrigna and 10- Burmese.

We unfortunately do not have this specific data readily available; about 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI. On-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services.

So, we are seeking and welcoming any bidders able to provide innovative solutions and/or service access systems that will allow us to improve and achieve centralization and standardization of these services throughout Wake County Government.

4. *Is this a new requirement or is/are there incumbent(s) providing these language services currently? If incumbent(s), could you please provide the incumbent provider(s)?*

    Yes, some of the proposal requests are new in order to better serve the needs of our customers. Our current incumbent providers are listed in the answer to #1 of this section.

5. *What is the anticipated and/or historical volume per month for phone interpretation and video interpretation?*

    Since 2019, about 75-80% of our interpretation services provided on-demand either over the phone interpretation (OPI) and about 20-35% via video-remote interpretation (VRI); we unfortunately do not have monthly utilization data readily available. But as a result of COVID-19, we have continued to see an increase for both OPI and VRI services amongst our staff and customers.

6. *What is the anticipated contract value?*

    Services are on demand, depend on programmatic needs over the term, and **have no guaranteed minimum.** However, we anticipate the next fiscal year's services to be approximately $400,000 to $450,000 annually.

7. *What is the current rate for OPI, VRI, ASL and on-site services?*

    Current rates are not publicly available.

8. *What is the language mix (by percentage)?*

The county's Health and Human Services department's most Top 10 requested languages are: 1- Spanish, 2- Arabic, 3- Vietnamese, 4- Swahili, 5- French, 6- Portuguese, 7- Mandarin, 8- Karen, 9- Tigrigna and 10- Burmese.

We unfortunately do not have this information available by percentage.

9. *Does the County have any information regarding service utilization for previous years? If so, could the number of requests for each of the requested services be provided?*

Since 2019, these are the Top 10 most requested languages (in order most to least): 1- Spanish, 2- Arabic, 3- Vietnamese, 4- Swahili, 5- French, 6- Portuguese, 7- Mandarin, 8- Karen, 9- Tigrigna and 10- Burmese.

We unfortunately do not have this specific data readily available; about 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI. On-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services.

So, we are seeking and welcoming any bidders able to provide innovative solutions and/or service access systems that will allow us to improve and achieve centralization and standardization of these services throughout Wake County Government.

10. *How many ASL interpreting hours did you use last year?*

We unfortunately do not have this specific data readily available at this time.

11. *If you have multiple locations, what is the usage by location?*

Varies depending on the needs of our staff and customers. Historical usage in not available.

12. *Do you currently use Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) for ASL and who is the current provider?*

Yes. The current vendor is LanguageLine Solutions.

13. *What is the expected volume (hours per month, or similar) for on-site and over-the-phone interpreting services? Please list the volumes by language.*

- About 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI.

- On-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services and nearly 80-95% of our in-person interpreter assignments requested with more than 48 hours' notice.

14. *Can you please provide the total number of minutes that were billed in the last fiscal year for OPI and VRI interpretation?*

We unfortunately do not have the specific data metrics you have requested readily available, but we currently contract with 2 vendors in order to provide adequate interpretation services throughout Wake County Government. About 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI. As a result of COVID-19, we have continued to see an increase for interpretation services requests throughout Wake County Government and significantly in county's department of Health and Human Services.

15. *How many interpretation minutes per month do you anticipate needing? Can you please provide this by service line (Telephone, Video, Onsite)?*

We unfortunately do not have the specific data metrics you have requested readily available, but we currently contract with 2 vendors in order to provide adequate interpretation services throughout Wake County Government. About 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI. On-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services. As a result of COVID-19, we have continued to see an increase for interpretations services requests throughout Wake County Government and significantly in county's department of Health and Human Services.

16. *How many words per month do you anticipate needing to be translated?*

We unfortunately do not have the specific data metrics you have requested readily available; but since the beginning of 2021, we have continued to see an increase for translation service requests throughout Wake County Government and significantly in county's department of Health and Human Services in order to meet the needs of our customers and staff.

17. *Can you please provide a breakdown (raw numbers or as a percentage) of the most common languages for translation services?*

We unfortunately do not have the specific data metrics you have requested readily available; but Spanish to English has been and is the most frequently requested for translation services. But since the beginning of 2021, we have continued to see an increase for translation service requests throughout Wake County Government and significantly in county's department of Health and Human Services.

18. *How do you currently track language service metrics... use, spend, connect time, etc.?*

Currently, we primarily track our departmental spending for contracted language assistance services and rely on our contracted vendors to provide utilization data metric reporting. So, we are highly interested and welcome bidders able to provide innovative solutions and/or service access systems that will allow us to improve and achieve centralization and standardization of these services.

19. *At what frequency do you expect in-person interpreting to occur? Can you provide historical data and/or use case examples?*

We utilize one vendor to provide in-person interpretation services. Our staff must request this service with at least 48 hours' notice. Utilization of in-person interpretation varies depends based on the customer's needs and requested services.

20. *Do you ever require translations of less frequently used languages? If so, which languages and at what frequency are these requested?*

Yes. Varies depending on the needs of our staff and customers; we're anticipating an increase in the demand for Central Asian, Central African, and Middle Eastern spoken dialects like Hindi, Telugu, Jarai, Hmong, Dari, Pashto. Since 2021, we may encounter a request for one or more of these languages at least 1-3 times per month within the department of Health and Human Services.

21. *Do you have volume or can you anticipate the volumes for Jarai, Karen, Hmong, Dari and Pashto?*

Varies depending on the needs of our staff and customers; we're anticipating an increase in the demand for Central Asian, Central African, and Middle Eastern spoken dialects like Hindi, Telugu, Jarai, Hmong, Dari, Pashto. Since 2021, we may encounter a request for one or more of these languages at least 1-3 times per month within the department of Health and Human Services.

22. *How many vendors do you currently have for each modality and what is the spend for each?*
    - *OPI*
    - *VRI*
    - *Onsite ASL*
    - *Onsite Spoken*
    - *Written Translation*
    - *Bilingual Assessment and Testing*

- OPI - 2
- VRI-1
- Onsite ASL-1
- Onsite Spoken-1
- Written Translation-1
- Bilingual Assessment and Testing-1

23. *What were the total minutes for OPI/VRI in 2021 across all vendors?*

We unfortunately do not have the specific data metrics you have requested readily available, but we currently contract with 2 vendors in order to provide adequate interpretation services throughout Wake County Government. About 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI. As a result of COVID-19, we have continued to see an increase for interpretations services requests throughout Wake County Government and significantly in county's department of Health and Human Services.

24. *Please provide usage breakdown by language for ASL and in-person/on-site interpretation?*

We unfortunately do not have this specific data readily available, but ASL assignments and in-person/on-site interpretation determined on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services.

25. *When OPI is needed, is it mostly for inbound or outbound calls?*

Best estimate 30-40% inbound calls and 50-80% outbound calls to customers.

Section II: Selection Criteria and RFP Clarification

26. *We are interested in participating in this solicitation. We are requesting the County to consider prioritizing Wake County or NC local businesses for award as many other counties around the country are doing to promote their local businesses.*

We appreciate the suggestion. For this RFP cycle, awards will be made in accordance with the current Wake County's Procurement Policies and Procedures.

27. *We suggest the followings: Wake County requires this acquisition be set aside for only North Carolina HUB/MBE certified small businesses to provide a level playing field for Wake County / North Carolina small businesses only? Or*

Wake County will research the possibilities for future RFP cycles.

28. *Suggest All Bidders must subcontract with North Carolina HUB/MBE certified small businesses for at least 30% of the total estimated bid amount in order to be eligible for contract award. This will help to promote local businesses and limit competition.*

   Please see answers to number 26 and 27 above.

29. *Can companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (Like, from India or Canada)?*

   Yes. Proposals will be accepted regardless of geographical location.

30. *Can we submit the proposals via email?*

   Yes. Please review Section 2 of the RFP document for guidance.

31. *Can offerors provide teaming solutions to satisfy the ten (10) service components Wake County is requesting?*

   Yes, that is welcomed.

32. *Section 1.3.1 states that the County seeks to meet its needs with as few vendors as possible, will vendors who can provide all services be favored over those who can only provide some of the listed services?*

   All service components will be evaluated separately. We encourage you to send in a proposal even if it is for a single component.

33. *Please confirm if there is a page count limit for proposals.*

   No, there is no limit.

34. *Please list the 'Other Non-English Languages' as stated on Page 2.*

   Since 2019, these are the Top 10 most requested languages (in order most to least): 1- Spanish, 2- Arabic, 3- Vietnamese, 4- Swahili, 5- French, 6- Portuguese, 7- Mandarin, 8- Karen, 9- Tigrigna and 10- Burmese.

   We do not have a comprehensive listing of other non-English languages; this is something that our current vendors provide, and historical bidders include within their proposals.

35. *Will there be one, or multiple awardees per each service category?*

   While the County would prefer a single vendor, however we will award contract(s) based on the current needs and proposals received.

36. *Page 3 of the RFP states, "Independent ASL interpreting contractors must possess and maintain a valid NC Interpreter/Transliterator License". Does this apply to all ASL interpreters (VRI included), or just On-Site ASL interpreters?*

No. This ONLY applies to Independent ASL interpreter contractors, submitting proposals; not larger companies.

37. *Page 12 of the RFP states, "Please provide a representative client list and indicate the number of persons employed". Could you please explain this a little better?*

Please provide a client list including types of agencies or other units of local government served and their approximate size.

38. *If multiple vendors are selected, how will work be distributed to the selected vendors?*

This is undetermined at the moment. Contracted vendor information will be available to all Program Managers and supervisors.

39. *When is the anticipated award date and how will vendors be notified?*

We anticipate the award will be made by the end of May. Vendors will be notified by email by Wake County Finance.

40. *If there is a delay in posting questions, will Wake County consider extending the submission deadline by that same length of time?*

Not applicable

41. *Can the County please clarify your expectations for Interpretation & LEP Training* **Services***? Who would the selected vendor be training and what is the County looking to achieve?*

We are seeking Interpretation and LEP training services for county employees and staff.

42. *Why is this RFP being held?*

County Policy and Procedures require competition on services every 3-5 years, the last time these services were competed was in 2019. Also, in order to comply with the federal and state Offices for Civil Rights; to ensure that limited English proficiency (LEP) persons have equal access and opportunity to participate in HHS-funded health care and human services programs as well as participate in health programs and activities administered by HHS.
   - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI)

- [Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (Section 1557)](#)

43. *Are any of the services covered in this RFP new to the county? If so, which services?*

Yes. Providing simultaneous interpretation during in-person and virtual trainings, centralized tracking of service utilization data metrics (based on language, interpretation type and time), bilingual employee language assessments and LEP continuing education, cultural competence training and/or Interpretation Code of Ethics.

Section III: Operational Questions

44. *Whether we need to come over there for meetings?*

Yes. In-person meetings will be expected and scheduled as needed.

45. *Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (Like, from India or Canada)*

Yes, as long as criteria in the RFP are met.

46. *What is defined as "after-hours" for the purpose of requesting and engaging interpretation services?*

Having available and accessible on-demand interpretation services after 5 PM EST; Monday-Friday.

47. *Given that services are to be rendered for medical and health operations, are there HIPAA compliance requirements in place for this contract?*

Yes. A Business Associate Agreement (BAA) will run concurrently with the contract.

48. *Is Wake County seeking both Consecutive and Simultaneous interpretation styles for remote and on-site? The RFP lists only Simultaneous.*

Yes, we're seeking both.

49. *If an interpreter(s) is to travel from out of Wake County in order to fulfill a language requirement which cannot be satisfied by those in-county, will the additional mileage be approved on a case-by-case basis?*

You can include these details in your proposal. Please list whether the price will be inclusive of mileage, billed separately, or inclusive within a certain range.

50. *Will Wake County be hosting Video Remote Interpretation (VRI) assignments? Or is the bidder to provide the preferred platform? If Wake County is currently utilizing a VRI platform, can you please provide the platform Wake County is utilizing?*

No. The bidder will be expected to provide this platform and/or the necessary equipment in order effectively access and utilize this platform.

51. *What % of the ASL assignments are remote?*

Remote ASL assignments are determined on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services and the percentage of remote ASL assignments is not readily available at this time.

52. *Do you require specialty ASL interpreting services for Legal, Medical, Tactile, CDI or any other interpreting type?*

Yes. To ensure Title VI compliance and that we prioritize the needs of our customers' bidders knowledgeable and staffed with specialty ASL interpretation services are highly encouraged and welcomed.

53. *What percentage of your interpreting assignments are for last minute needs (less than 2 full business days' notice)?*

We currently contract with 2 vendors in order to provide adequate interpretation services throughout Wake County Government and our current vendor generally does not have the capacity to provide same day onsite in-person interpreters.
- About 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI.
- On-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services and nearly 80-95% of our in-person interpreter assignments requested with more than 48 hours' notice.

54. *What is the average length of an interpreting assignment?*

It varies depending on the needs of our staff and customers.

55. *Do you or your current vendors maintain translation memory databanks, and will you provide these to the new vendor?*

No for both questions.

56. *What are the formats in which the documents are sent for translation? Will the documents require formatting / Desktop Publishing?*

Translation request formatting varies. Depending on pricing and turnaround time, the request for translation documents to be format also may vary.

57. *Do you have a desired turnaround time for translation projects? If so, please expand on the anticipated volume of words and expected turnaround time.*

As soon as possible in order to meet the needs of our agency and customers. Please list your normal turnaround time and the price for standard or expedited requests.

58. *What is the average lead time/notice for interpreting services?*

We currently contract with 2 vendors to provide adequate interpretation services throughout Wake County Department of Health & Human Services. About 75-90% of our interpretation services are provided on-demand either over-the-phone or via VRI. On-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services and nearly 80-95% of our in-person interpreter assignments requested with more than 48 hours' notice.

59. *Item E on the bottom of page 3 asks vendors to include any applicable device fees for video interpreting. This can vary greatly depending on need. Can Wake County please specify your equipment needs and expectations?*

Due to the current and projected population growth throughout Wake County, we are anticipating the needs of our staff and LEP customers to grow as well. We're seeking bidders who are able to provide the VRI platform and the necessary equipment in order to effectively access and utilize this service in a robust manner.

60. *Please provide a breakdown of WCHHS' average connect time per language, per vendor?*

For on-demand telephone and video interpretation services, during normal business hours and frequently requested languages; we expect our awarded contractor(s) to be able to connect our staff and customers to an interpreter within 60-90 seconds; and less than 3-4 minutes for rarer spoken dialects and languages.

61. *Do you require multimedia services (i.e., audio and video recording), eLearning?*

Multimedia services for eLearning is not a requirement but highly encouraged and welcomed.

62. *Do you require or will you require web site translation/localization in the future?*

We're unsure at this time.

63. *How many projects and spend per week, month, year require translation?*

Varies depending on the needs of our staff and customers.

64. *Which departments use translation the most?*

Wake County Department of Health & Human Services

65. *What content management system do you use?*

Not sure what you're referring to regarding "content management system" as it relates to LEP Language Services.

66. *What is the minimum appointment time per assignment?*

Varies depending on the needs of our staff and customers.

67. *What is the percentage of in-person assignments requested same day?*

We currently do not have the ability to schedule and provide same day in-person interpreters, but we welcome any bidders that have the ability to provide this service to our organization.

68. *What is the percentage of in-person assignments requested more than 48 hours' notice?*

Nearly 80-95% of our in-person interpreter assignments requested with more than 48 hours' notice. Our current service provider does not have the capacity to schedule and provide same day in-person interpreters, so we welcome any bidders that have the ability to provide this service to our organization.

69. *What kinds of employee assessments do you currently have?*

Oral bilingual proficiency skill assessments.

70. *Which departments or municipalities require bilingual employee language assessments?*

Health and Human Services.

71. *How many employee assessments are administered annually?*

Varies depending on departmental hiring and staffing needs.

72. *Can you please review and confirm the main languages below, especially for On-Site Interpreting requests?*

The county's Health and Human Services department's most Top 10 requested languages are: 1- Spanish, 2- Arabic, 3- Vietnamese, 4- Swahili, 5- French, 6- Portuguese, 7- Mandarin, 8- Karen, 9- Tigrigna and 10- Burmese.

We're anticipating an increase in the demand for Central Asian, Central African, and Middle Eastern spoken dialects like Hindi, Telugu, Jarai, Hmong, Dari, Pashto; on-site interpretation is requested on a case-by-case bases depending on our customer's needs and requested services.

73. *What, if any, are the minimum qualifications for non-medical interpreters and medical interpreters? (e.g. 40hrs Professional Interpreter Training)*

We rely on our contracted vendors' recruitment, training, and personnel management practices to screen and validate interpreter credentials, qualifications, and skills.

74. *What are the credentialing requirements of on-site interpreters, aside from background checks? (e.g. vaccination records)*

We rely on our contracted vendors' recruitment, training, and personnel management practices to screen and validate interpreter credentials, qualifications, and skills.

75. *What, if any, are the minimum qualifications/credentials for written translators? Or, would a description of our own recruitment and quality standards suffice?*

We rely on our contracted vendors' recruitment, training, and personnel management practices to screen and validate translator credentials, qualifications, and skills; so, a description of your own recruitment and quality standards is welcomed and encouraged.

76. *Section 1.3, J) asks that we "state expected wait time, capacity and service guarantees". In regard to wait time can you elaborate on which wait times and how wait time might be measured? For example, we can provide average connection times (in seconds) for Over the Phone Interpreters. But, if there are specific metrics you'd like to see for other services, please give examples.*

Regarding wait time, we're referring to the "average connection time in seconds or minutes" and a listing per language or overall guarantee is most appreciated.

77. *Section 1.3, L) goes into the topic of late arrivals and/or "no-Shows" is this referring to the interpreter arriving late or the Limited English Person (LEP) arriving late?*

Both, if applicable for your company.

78. *Could you please provide detail on how these services are requested by the county now? To what extent is it centralized?*

Currently, for on-demand over-the-phone interpretation many departments and programs throughout the county have established a vendor account and been provided an access code. Some programs utilize on-demand video remote interpretation via a tablet, mobile phone app or web portal via a laptop. Written translation requests are managed via a centralized email address. So, we welcome any innovative solutions and/or service access systems that will allow us to improve and achieve centralization and standardization of these services throughout Wake County Government.