ACCESSING AND PROVIDING: FRONTLINE VOICES ON LANGUAGE ACCESS

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The purpose of this project is to identify concrete recommendations for how DC government agencies can improve their services for non-English speaking clients. For a period of about a year, the Office on Latino Affairs conducted face-to-face interviews and surveys with both non-profit and government employees who work directly with limited and non-English proficient (LEP/NEP) clients and on-site observations of government service centers. Through a comparison of feedback collected from interviews with both frontline non-profit and government employees, and follow-up meetings with OLA, this project strives to identify Language Access issues and solutions to then work collaboratively with the agencies to implement concrete changes. These data were collected from:

- Sixty-eight (68) face-to-face interviews with frontline employees across twenty-nine (29) Latino LEP/NEP serving DC non-profits (primarily OLA grantees during fiscal year 2012), from June to October of 2012. Please note that forty-nine (49) of these interviews were conducted during FY2012, and nineteen (19) interviews were conducted during FY2013.

- Fifty-one (51) face-to-face interviews with frontline employees and twenty-eight (28) site visits at seventeen (17) service centers across five (5) DC government agencies, prioritized according to the non-profit interviewees' feedback, from April to September of FY2013: Department of Human Services (DHS), DC Housing Authority (DCHA), Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of Mental Health (DMH), and the Department of Employment Services (DOES). All five agencies are among the thirty-four agencies named under the DC Language Access Act of 2004.

Findings:

- The recommendations most supported from the DC government employees overlap with the areas of improvement most identified by the non-profit employees, for Language Access at the thirty-four DC government agencies named under the Act.

- The four main areas of improvement identified by <u>non-profit interviewees</u> are: lack of bilingual staff, language services by frontline staff (e.g. discriminatory remarks related to constituents' national origin, difficulties receiving language services), translated documents and information, and navigation of the office and its services.

- The five recommendations most supported by <u>DC government interviewees</u> are for agencies to: make website more accessible in different languages, provide more Language Access training, translate more documents / information, post more multilingual signage, and hire more bilingual frontline staff.

OLA's Recommendations:

1. Hire more bilingual frontline staff and create more certified bilingual positions.

2. Provide all frontline employees with more Language Access trainings, infrastructure and resources.

3. Prioritize new translations for legally binding forms, mailed notices requiring an immediate response and overall service/resource guides; and make already translated materials easier to find in print and online.

4. Translate and post more multilingual signage, with a quality control mechanism for new signage.

5. Promote available services and resources through more multilingual outreach.

INTRODUCTION

In the District of Columbia, the 2010 US Census counted a total of 54,749 Latino residents, representing almost ten percent of the city's whole population. Within this population, the 2007-2011 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates counted 14,664 Spanish-speakers, five years and over, whom speak English less than "very well." Looking across speakers of all non-English languages, the 2007-2011 ACS counted a total of 24,421 residents in the District who speak English "less than very well." This number, 24,421 individuals, represents the total limited and non-English proficient (LEP/NEP) population living in the District of Columbia.[i]
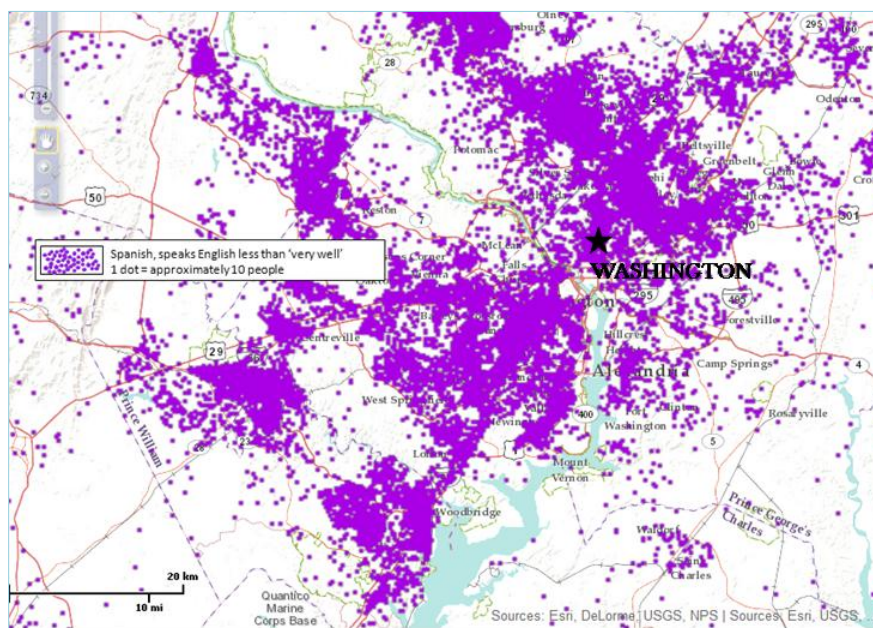

Figure 1. Map of the Spanish-speaking population that speaks English less than 'very well,' 2007-2011 ACS Estimates: Washington, District of Columbia Area. Note: 1 dot = approximately 10 people who speak Spanish, and speak English less than "very well."[ii]

With the central purpose of ensuring that all city residents receive equal access and participation in public services and programs without exclusion of the thousands of residents who do not speak or understand English very well, District government passed the Language Access Act in April of 2004. The law names thirty-four DC government agencies[iii] that are required to make their services accessible to residents with limited or no-English proficiency, through e.g. interpretation services, bilingual staff, and translated forms and information. Frontline and management employees receive trainings on Language Access compliance, and each agency designates a Language Access Coordinator to oversee all Language Access services as well as the agency's plan for implementation.

Language Access is not just a series of translations and interpretations. Language Access is an intricate process of how a local public policy is implemented by people in actual practice: advocates in and outside government, policy-influencers and managers behind the scenes, frontline government employees serving the public, non-profit partners, and those residents themselves who speak various languages but are not fully proficient in English. Alongside many strides towards enhanced access in the last decade, there is still room for improvement from the perspectives of all its players.

This project aims to identify concrete solutions towards improving Language Access services in the District's government, in order to be in compliance with an Act that was passed ten years ago this upcoming April of 2014. With the Language Access Act in place, DC government agencies are not recommended but mandated to provide services without exclusion of residents with little or no proficiency in English. And many agencies and individuals are working within DC government to ensure that Language Access is provided, but some changes in the process of how Language Access is provided could help. This project aims to identify specifically where some of those changes may be needed.

OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

The approach to collecting data for this project combined interviews with people on the frontline providing services who work with limited English proficient clients on a regular basis, with observations from visits to government centers themselves where services are provided. To complement the analysis, OLA met with frontline employees at both Latino LEP/NEP serving non-profits and later five DC government agencies, which were prioritized according to the feedback of those non-profits. Questions asked during the interviews focused on any difficulties employees had when accessing and providing language services, and suggestions for how to make it better.
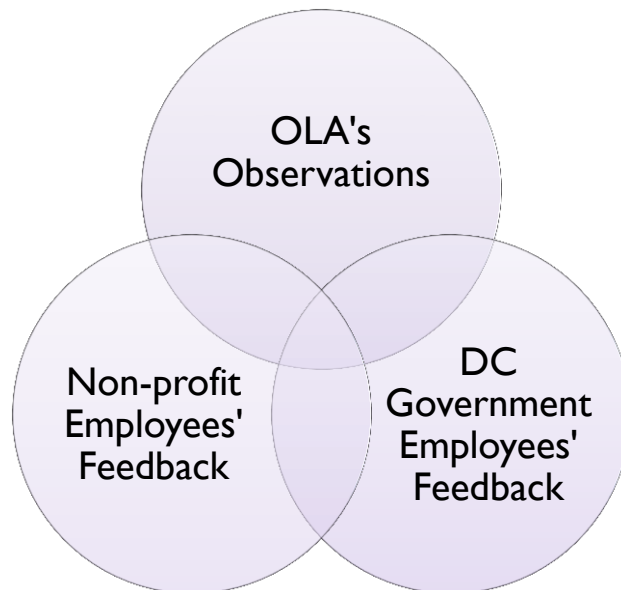

Figure 2. Triangulation of perspectives.

The purpose of this approach is to go beyond self-reporting by government agencies and proactively request feedback on how to improve Language Access from those public-serving individuals who are working directly with LEP/NEP clients, and by visiting the government service centers. A written survey accompanied each interview. Separate surveys for the non-profit feedback and DC government feedback were developed and implemented.[iv] In addition, OLA conducted a series of site visits to observe the service centers at the five agencies, through the coordination and support of each agency's Language Access Coordinator. Site visits included a tour of the physical space of the center, literally walking through the steps of how a client would apply for or receive services, as well as limited observation of client-employee interactions. The main focus areas for the interviews, surveys and observations

were based upon the main areas of compliance named in the Language Access Act. These include: data collection, translations, interpretation, bilingual staff, training, and outreach. OLA's three central questions in this project are:

- What are the difficulties when *accessing* Language Access services?
- What are the difficulties when *providing* Language Access services?
- What are the specific changes we can recommend each of the five agencies to consider, in order to improve Language Access services? And in what ways can OLA work collaboratively with the agencies towards implementing these recommendations?

In sum, there were a total of one hundred nineteen (119) face-to-face interviews, from FY2012 to FY2013. Sixty-eight (68) face-to-face interviews were with frontline employees at twenty-nine (29) Latino-serving non-profits in DC, from June to October of 2012. All except one organization were grantees of OLA during fiscal year of 2012.[v] The survey results from these non-profit employees identified the Department of Human Services (DHS), DC Housing Authority (DCHA), Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Department of Mental Health (DMH), and Department of Employment Services (DOES) as the prioritized agencies for bettering Language Access services. All five agencies are among the thirty-four agencies named under the DC Language Access Act of 2004.

OLA conducted the next round of interviews with public contact position employees, as well as observations, during twenty-eight (28) site visits to seventeen (17) service centers across these five prioritized agencies, from April to September of 2013.[vi] This included fifty-one (51) face-to-face interviews with frontline DC government employees. Please note that twenty-one (21) of the employees interviewed are bi/multilingual, the majority being Spanish-speakers, except for two (one Vietnamese/English speaker and one Yoruba/English speaker).

FINDINGS

The recommendations most supported from the DC government employees overlap with the areas of improvement most identified by the non-profit employees. When the non-profit workers were asked on the survey to identify areas of improvement at the DC government agencies named under the Language Access Act, they identified four main areas of improvement: first, the lack of bilingual frontline staff; second, the customer service by non-bilingual frontline staff (e.g. discrimination, language services not provided); third, translated documents and information; and fourth, the navigation of the office and its services. Please see Figure 3 on Page 5.

In comparison, when DC government employees were asked what recommendations they would suggest their agency to implement to better its Language Access services, each recommendation received at least 75 percent support from the fifty-one government employees surveyed. Overall, frontline employees appear to be very much in favor of all of the suggested changes. The five recommendations for agencies that received the most support were: first, to make the website more accessible in different languages; second, to provide more Language Access training; third, to translate more documents and information; fourth, to post more multilingual signage; and fifth, to hire more bilingual frontline staff. Please see Figure 4 on Page 5.

"Please identify the area(s) in which you have experienced the most difficulties in regards to Language Access"

Results from Sixty-Eight (68) Non-profit Frontline Employees, from June to October of 2012
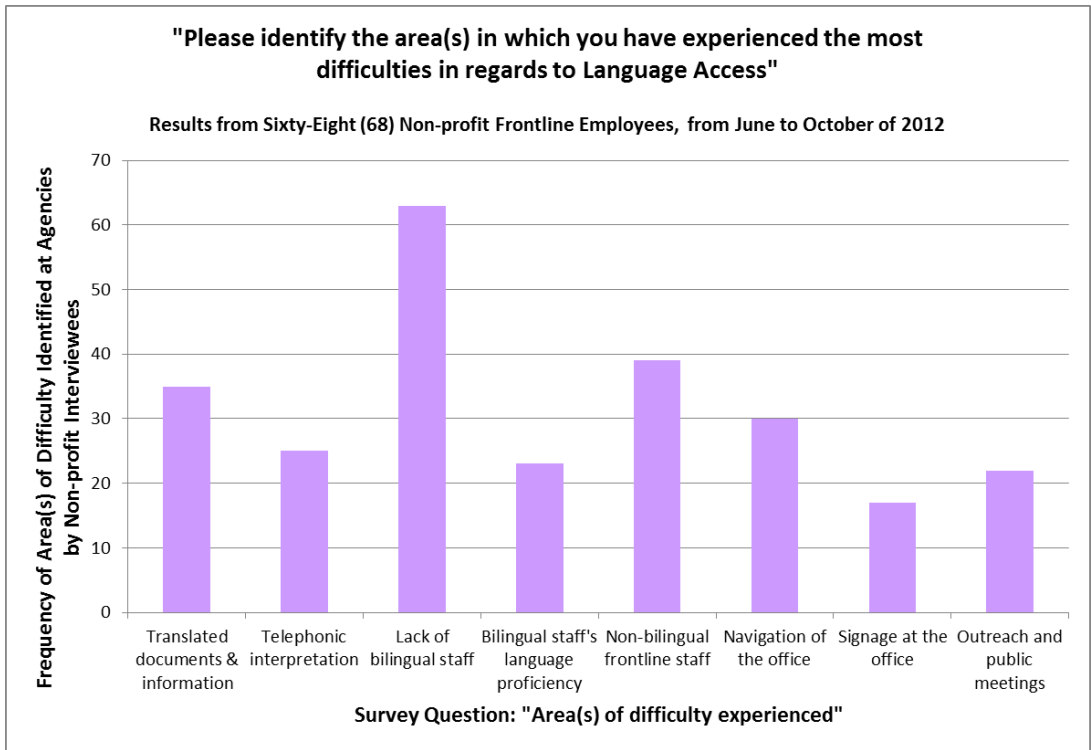

Figure 3. Non-Profit Interviewees' Main Areas of Difficulty in Regards to Language Access in DC Government.
Source: Surveys results from 68 frontline employees across 29 non-profits, from June to October of 2012.

"What recommendations for your agency, would you suggest, to improve your ability to provide Language Access services to limited and non-English proficient clients?"

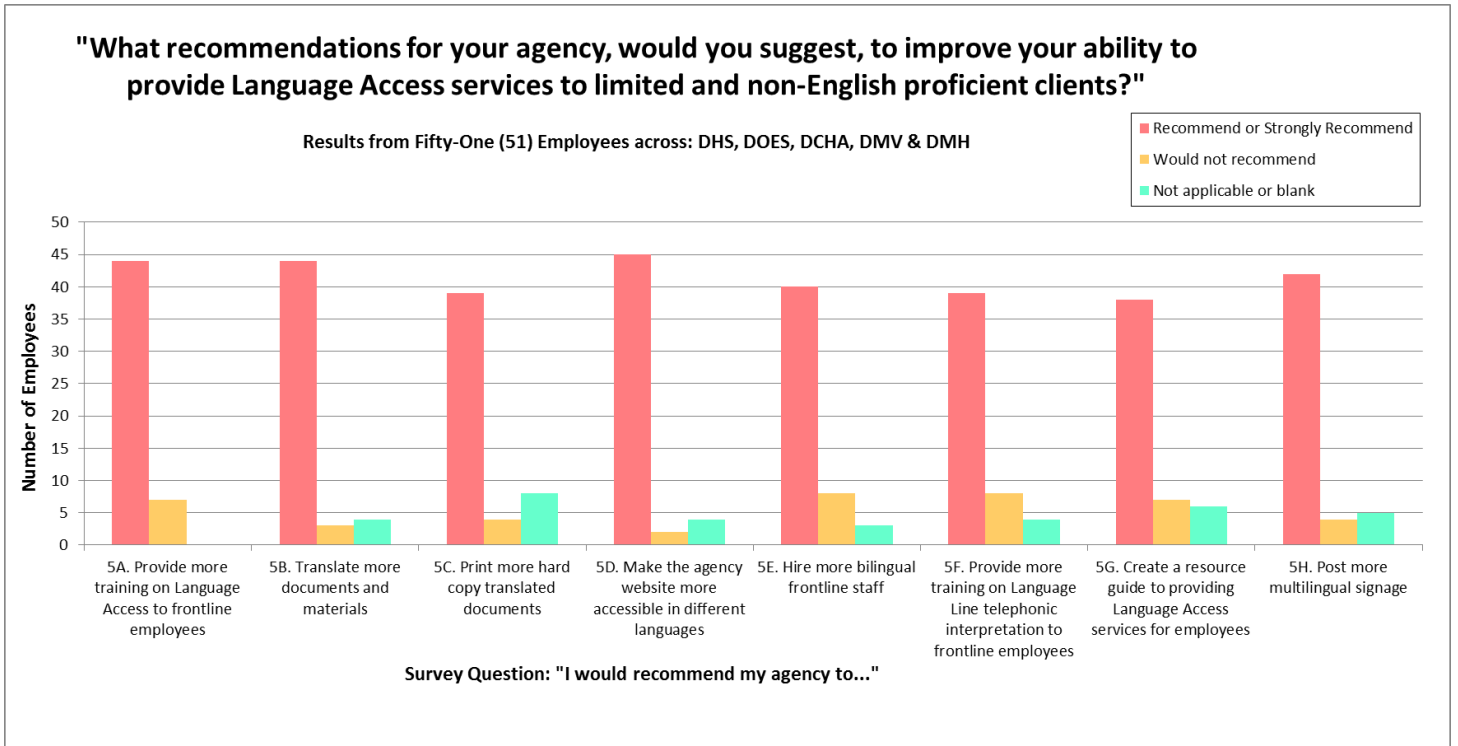Results from Fifty-One (51) Employees across: DHS, DOES, DCHA, DMV & DMH

Figure 4. DC Government Interviewee's Recommendations to Improve Language Access Services.
Source: Surveys results from 51 DC government public contact employees across DHS, DOES, DCHA, DMV and DMH, from April to September of 2013.

OLA's Recommendations

In response to these survey results, supplemented by additional qualitative data collected through the interviews that accompanied each survey and the observations during site visits, OLA developed five main recommendations. A large portion of this project was to provide agency-specific recommendations, given the uniqueness of each agency's services and methods of providing those services. Nonetheless a broader version of many of these recommendations can certainly be applied across agencies, and evidence from the non-profit and government interviewees supports the reality that many agencies are encountering the same challenges when providing Language Access services. Our overall five main recommendations are ideas for how all agencies can work towards minimizing these challenges, in order to better serve their limited or non-English proficient clients:

1. Hire more bilingual frontline staff and create more certified bilingual positions:

The frontline non-profit workers surveyed overwhelmingly selected the lack of bilingual frontline staff as a main concern, before all other areas of improvement, and this issue also landed within the top five recommendations by the DC government employees surveyed. Hiring more bilingual staff cuts down costs of extensive telephonic interpretation use (via e.g. Language Line) and decreases the time to serve each client, with more staff on hand to serve both English and other language speakers. According to feedback from interviewees, direct communication through bilingual staff, rather than relying upon an interpreter, is also more likely to relay clearer information and develop more trust-building relationships with LEP/NEP clients. Of course, when recruiting new bilingual staff, agencies should prioritize language skills according to the language(s) most often spoken by LEP/NEP clients being served or likely to be served at the center(s).

Establishing more certified bilingual positions, with a slight pay grade increase, will encourage more competitive bilingual job-seekers to apply. This bilingual certification opportunity may also encourage bilingual employees to maintain a longer term of employment, and ensure accountability and quality consistency when providing language services. The bilingual certification program at the DC Metropolitan Police Department, in place since 1999, could be utilized as a model for best practices.

2. Provide all frontline employees with more Language Access trainings, infrastructure and resources:

If services are easier to provide, employees are more likely to provide them and have the time to provide them, especially in high-stress and high-volume customer service environments. Language Access is not just about non-English speakers receiving services, but also about ensuring that government employees have the resources and infrastructure to provide language services. More training on Language Access protocols – covering the areas of compliance under the Act, the agency-specific protocols and resources, and how to use the telephonic interpretation services (e.g. Language Line) – assures that employees are prepared and knowledgeable when serving LEP/NEP clients. As one government interviewee explained is important "because more training makes them less afraid… more training they have more comfort." More training on cultural sensitivity would also be helpful "to really open up the culture and get rid of the negative stereotypes," as another government interviewee emphasized.

Additional infrastructure and resources could further assist frontline employees when serving clients who do not speak or understand English very well. More communication and regular discussion of Language Access issues between frontline and management employees, and regular check-ins by senior level management at the centers, would help track problems as they arise and keep management informed of any needed improvements. Agencies could also be more proactive in identifying language needs of clients. For many agencies, requiring a separate "language preference for services" question during the beginning of the intake at the first point of contact is an effective way to catch language preference up front. Then each case can be tagged with that language preference so that future employees working with the client are aware and prepared for his/her language needs. Also, dual handset phones (as shown in Figure 5 on page 7) are a great resource for employees, to limit noise and privacy concerns when communicating with their clients

through an interpreter via speaker phone, and to limit time and germ-sharing concerns when communicating with an interpreter by passing one handset back/forth with the client.

Figure 5. Photo of a Language Line dual handset phone at the DMV.

3. Prioritize new translations for legally binding forms, notices requiring an immediate response and overall service/resource guides; and make already translated materials easier to find in print and online:

Written language helps assure uniformity and facilitate sharing of information. Government agencies are constantly reproducing and sharing written information, such as resource guides, lists of documents necessary to apply for a service, or immediate notices informing a client that for example, a car will be towed or a business did not pass inspection. Given the large portion of LEP/NEP DC residents, government agencies are also constantly in need of sharing this information in various languages other than English. By translating written information into additional languages most often spoken by LEP/NEP clients, and conducting trustworthy quality control of all translations (including uniformity of translated legal terms and document names), the agency safeguards itself from misinterpretation of information if the conveying from one language to another is done in the moment by a bilingual individual or interpreter without any quality control. Even if the client is not fully literate, the written translation provides a baseline of translated information for the bilingual government or non-profit employee, or in-person interpreter to utilize.

When deciding what to translate, agencies should prioritize information-packed overall service/resource guides, documents that are legally binding, and notices that require an immediate response, including notices delivered via mail or email or placed on a vehicle/building. For delivered notices requiring an immediate response, if a translation is not feasible financially, a second option is to include a translated disclaimer listing a phone number e.g. "For free, you can request interpretation over the phone or in-person, and have some documents translated for you. Please call ____ if you do not understand or need help with this document." Before using the disclaimer, we recommend to first check that the person answering the phone number listed will be able to respond quickly and provide information in multiple languages.

Translated information is only as useful as it is accessible. We recommend agencies to make translated forms, documents or other materials easily available both online and in print, for LEP/NEP clients and for the non-profit or government employees working with those clients to access. For example, for agencies with a daily high influx of limited English proficient clients, which rely upon paper applications or forms – keep hard copies of those forms printed out in the different languages most often needed, so an employee or a client may have easy access to a copy and skip the hassle of locating the document online and printing it out. Nonetheless, agency websites can also be a great platform for sharing translated information, especially agency-specific instructions that are good to know before going to a service center or submitting online applications. To make translated information easy to find online, we have recommended agencies to follow a model of best practices currently in place by the DC Public Schools' central website: dcps.dc.gov. Language tabs, e.g. "Español" [Spanish], are listed at the top of every page and clicking the tab opens a page where all of the translations available in that one language are available. Please see Figure 6 below.
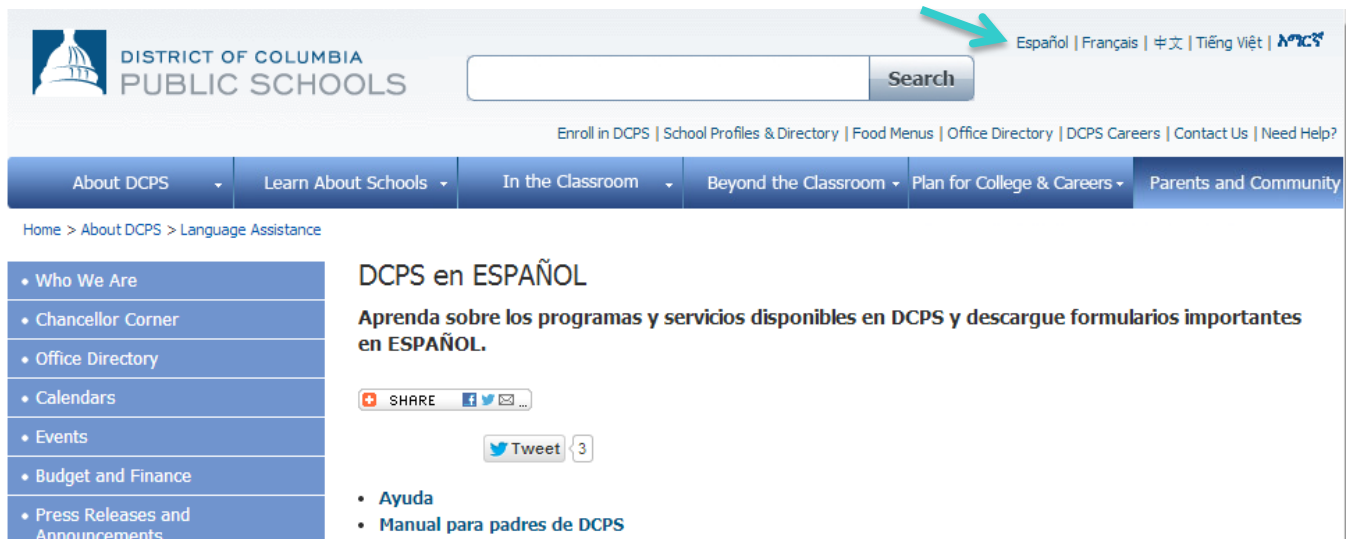
Figure 6. Screenshot of "DCPS en ESPAÑOL" [DCPS in SPANISH] website page.
Link: http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/spanish.

4. Translate and post more multilingual signage, with a quality control mechanism:

Posting signage is a fairly quick means of making the physical space of a center easier to navigate, and given its shortness in length by nature, the language included in signage is generally low-cost to translate. Effective signage can help prevent clients from going to the wrong room or service center, or waiting in the wrong line. When translating new signage, we recommend agencies to prioritize translating and posting information on: service center locations and hours of operation (on the front doors, facing outwards); room names and a brief list of services available there; deposit box instructions, if applicable; and any pertinent notices e.g. schedule or service changes.

Multilingual signage can also encourage clients to self-identify their language needs, for those clients who do not understand English very well. Thus we also recommend agencies to prioritize translating and posting signage right at the first point of contact / front desk, which reads "Free interpretation assistance is available, please ask at the front desk." Agencies must also utilize the desktop and poster signs created by the telephonic interpretation service, e.g. Language Line, as shown in Figure 7 on page 9, and post copies of the "I Speak" cards created by the DC Office on Human Rights.[vii]

Languages for new translations of signage should be prioritized according to the languages spoken by those LEP/NEP populations most served or likely to be served by the agency. This is according to the requirement stated in the Language Access Act that once an agency reaches a threshold of 3% or 500 clients, whichever is less, indicating a preference for a non-English language, the agency must provide translations in that language. When creating new multilingual signage, just as when creating new documents in different languages, it is important to have a trustworthy quality control mechanism in place to ensure the accuracy of information being provided.

Figure 7. Photo of the front desk inside the DMV Inspection Station.

5. Promote available services and resources through more multilingual outreach:

We recommend agencies to conduct more outreach to limited and non-English proficient populations, so that they know services are available and accessible in their language. Especially if a center never or rarely sees clients who speak different languages, this may be due to a lack of knowledge amongst residents that the center does have free language services. With the minimal exceptions of government services where English proficiency is required, such as federal restrictions when applying for a Commercial Driver's License, city services are relevant to many different sectors within DC's LEP/NEP populations. Furthermore, agencies are mandated by the Language Access Act to ensure that services are accessible to all city residents regardless of English proficiency. Of course, before multilingual outreach efforts begin, agencies should first check that the services to be promoted are fully accessible in those languages. For example, we recommend agencies not to post signage in Amharic or Spanish advertising a website resource that is only available in English.

We recommend agencies to utilize demographic data, from the US Census or other sources, and local partners to determine which populations to reach out to and target outreach efforts. If there are 7,768 Latino children under the age of ten living in DC,[viii] and an agency center providing children's services sees no Latino children, this could be due to a lack of information about available programs and resources at the center being provided to their parents – who may be limited in English proficiency. The DC Mayor's Offices on Latino Affairs, African Affairs and Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, as well as local non-profit organizations may also assist in guiding an agency's outreach efforts and identification of various sectors of the population to target.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

This is not a set of finite findings, but an ongoing process of talking to people, observing the centers and how services are provided, and pursuing a deeper understanding into where the breaks are in the line of processes in place to serve residents with limited or no-English proficiency. This project will continue into the next fiscal year of 2014 as OLA begins working with senior management at the five prioritized agencies, in order to see which recommendations are feasible or need to be modified, or new recommendations to add. This project will also continue as OLA keeps meeting with new government and non-profit frontline employees to request more feedback on difficulties providing and accessing Language Access services, respectively. We strive to continue collaboration between these three sectors – non-profit organizations, DC government agencies under the Act, and OLA's Language Access Program – to open the dialogue on needed Language Access improvements in city government from multi-faceted perspectives.

Please direct all inquiries about this document to the Office on Latino Affairs, Language Access and Advocacy Program: Cecilia Castillo Ayometzi, Ph.D., Language Access Coordinator, Cecilia.Castillo@dc.gov, and Kelsey Chatlosh, Language Access Monitor, Kelsey.Chatlosh@dc.gov, November 2013.

ENDNOTES:

[i] "Selected Social Characteristics in the US, 2007-2011, American Community Survey Five-year Estimates: Washington city, District of Columbia," American FactFinder, US Census Bureau, accessed September 18th, 2013, http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_5YR_DP02.

[ii] "2011 Language Mapper," US Census Bureau, accessed September 18th, 2013, http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/language/data/language_map.html. Data source: US Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey.

[iii] For a list of the thirty-four agencies named under the DC Language Access Act, and the Language Access Coordinators at each agency, please visit: http://ohr.dc.gov/publication/language-access-coordinator-list.

[iv] To view a copy of the surveys administered to the non-profit and DC government employees, please see Appendices 3 and 4, respectively.

[v] For a list of the non-profits where interviews were conducted, please see Appendix 1.

[vi] For a list of the DC government agency service centers where interviews and site visits were conducted, please see Appendix 2.

[vii] For more information of the use of the "I Speak" cards, please visit: http://ohr.dc.gov/languageaccess.

[viii] "Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010, 2010 Census Summary File 2: Washington city, District of Columbia, Hispanic or Latino (of any race) (200-299)," American FactFinder, US Census Bureau, accessed September 19th, 2013, http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_SF2_SF2DP1&prodType=table.

APPENDICES

The Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) conducted sixty-eight (68) face-to-face interviews with frontline employees across twenty-nine (29) Latino LEP/NEP serving DC non-profits (primarily OLA grantees during fiscal year 2012), from June to October of 2012. Each interview was also accompanied by a written survey – please see Appendix 3 to view the survey conducted with the non-profit employees.

Below is a list of all these non-profits, followed by the number of individuals interviewed at each:

CARECEN Latino Resource & Justice Center (2)   Housing Counseling Services (3)
Centro de Alfabetización en Español (CENAES) (1)   CentroNía (2)
The Family Place (4)   Ayuda (1)
Mary's Center (2)   Catholic Charities (1)
Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) (2)   Bread for the City (3)
*Legal Aid Society (2)   Andromeda (4)
Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) (3)   Mi Casa Inc. (2)
La Clínica del Pueblo (3)   Legal Counsel for the Elderly (1)
Jubilee Jumpstart (1)   Planned Parenthood (1)
DC Jobs with Justice (3)   Teaching for Change (1)
DC Doors (2)   LIFT-DC (3)
Capital Area Asset Builders (CAAB) (3)   ARRIBA Center (2)
Quality Trust (1)   Byte Back (3)
National Housing Trust, Meridian Manor (3)   VIDA Senior Center (8)
Columbia Heights Shaw Family Support
Collaborative (1)

*Please note that the Legal Aid Society of DC is the only organization included above that did not receive an OLA grant during FY 2012.

APPENDIX 2, LIST OF DC GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INTERVIEWED & VISITED:

The Office on Latino Affairs (OLA) conducted fifty-one (51) face-to-face interviews with frontline employees and twenty-eight (28) site visits at seventeen (17) service centers across five (5) DC government agencies, prioritized according to the non-profit interviewees' feedback, from April to September of 2013. Each interview was also accompanied by a written survey – please see Appendix 4 to view the survey conducted with the government employees.

All five agencies are among the thirty-four agencies named under the DC Language Access Act of 2004. Below is a list of all these DC government agencies and service centers, followed by the number of individuals interviewed at each center:

Department of Human Services (DHS)
>   Taylor Street (4)
>   H Street (4)

DC Housing Authority (DCHA)
>   1133 North Capitol NE (5)

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
>   Adjudication (2)
>   Brentwood (2)
>   Inspection Station (1)
>   Penn Branch (1)
>   Rhode Island Ave (2)
>   Southwest Center (2)

Department of Mental Health (DMH)
>   35 K Street NE (9)
>   Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP), including Psychiatric Emergency Services, Homeless Outreach Program, & Mobile Crisis Unit (6)
>   Children's Services (2)
>   Call Center / Access Helpline (2)

Department of Employment Services (DOES)
>   Bertie Backus American Jobs Center (2)
>   Reeves Center American Jobs Center (2)
>   Southeast American Jobs Center (2)
>   Minnesota Ave American Jobs Center (3)

*Totaling 51 interviewees, not including additional supervisory and management staff, and the Language Access Coordinators.

*Also note that twenty-one (21) of the employees interviewed are bi/multilingual, the majority being Spanish-speakers, except for two (one Vietnamese/English speaker and one Yoruba/English speaker). This number is not reflective of a high proportion of multilingual employees in DC government, but rather the individuals that supervisors often selected to be interviewed by OLA on Language Access issues.

Feedback on Language Access

*DISCLAIMER: For this questionnaire, the Office on Latino Affairs would like to hear more about the organization's experience working with DC government agencies named under Language Access.

1. Please (circle) which DC government agencies listed below that <u>you work with the most</u>, in order to serve your clients.

   1. Department of Health (DOH)
   2. Department of Human Services (DHS)
   3. Department of Employment Services (DOES)
   4. Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)
   5. DC Public Schools (DCPS)
   6. Office of Planning (OP)
   7. Fire and Emergency Medical Services (FEMS)
   8. Office of Human Rights (OHR)
   9. Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
   10. Department of Mental Health (DMH)
   11. Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
   12. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA)
   13. Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA)
   14. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA)
   15. DC Human Resources (DCHR)
   16. DC Public Libraries (DCPL)
   17. Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
   18. Department of Corrections (DOC)
   19. Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP)
   20. Department of Public Works (DPW)
   21. Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR)
   22. DC Office on Aging (DCOA)
   23. DC Housing Authority (DCHA)
   24. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA)
   25. Office of the People's Counsel (OPC)
   26. Department of Disability Services (DDS)
   27. District Department of Transportation (DDOT)
   28. Office of United Communications (OUC)
   29. District Department of the Environment (DDOE)
   30. Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)
   31. Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD)
   32. DC Office of Zoning (DCOZ)
   33. Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA)
   34. DC Lottery (DCLB)

2. Please identify the area(s) in which you have experienced the most difficulties in regards to Language Access and please list the agencies where you have encountered these difficulties. (Please choose agencies from the list in question (1) above.)

[Area(s) of difficulty experienced]   [List agencies where difficulty encountered]

- Translated documents and information   Agency(s): _____

- Telephonic interpretation   Agency(s): _____

- Lack of bilingual staff   Agency(s): _____

- Bilingual staff's language proficiency   Agency(s): _____

- Non-bilingual frontline staff   Agency(s): _____

- Navigation of the office   Agency(s): _____

- Signage at the office   Agency(s): _____

- Outreach and public meetings   Agency(s): _____

- Other: _____   Agency(s): _____

- Other: _____   Agency(s): _____

- Other: _____   Agency(s): _____

3. Do you have any <u>formal or informal agreement(s) with any DC government agency(s)</u> to provide their clients with interpretation and/or translation services? For example, to assist clients in filling out paperwork or an application. (Please choose agencies from the list in question (1) above.)

[List agency(s) with which you have such agreement(s)]

Formal agreement(s):   Yes   No   Agency(s):   _____

_____

_____

Informal agreement(s):   Yes   No   Agency(s):   _____

_____

_____

[List agency(s) whose clients you provide services]

No agreement, but services provided: Agency(s):   _____

_____

_____

a. <u>How often</u> do you provide clients with these services before referring them back to the DC government agency?

Never   1-5 times/month   6-10 times/month   Over 10 times/month

4. <u>Additional comments, questions or concerns</u> about Language Access services by DC government agencies:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Or, please feel free to contact Kelsey Chatlosh, Language Access Monitor at OLA, Kelsey.Chatlosh@dc.gov, or Dr. Cecilia Castillo-Ayometzi, Language Access Coordinator at OLA, Cecilia.Castillo@dc.gov, or by phone: 202.671.2825.

<u>CONTACT</u>: If we have any questions or clarifications regarding this Language Access questionnaire, where may we contact you?

Name: _____

Organization: _____   Position Title: _____

Email: _____   Phone: _____

Survey for DC Government Employees
On Providing Language Access Services

DISCLAIMER: For this questionnaire, the Office on Latino Affairs would like to hear more about the experiences of DC government public contact position (PCP) employees when providing Language Access services to limited and non-English proficient Latino DC residents. The identity of each individual employee will remain confidential within OLA and the employee's respective agency.

Agency: _____

Location: _____

*Are you in a Public Contact Position (PCP):   Yes   No

1. BILINGUALISM: In your job title and duties, are you officially a "bilingual" employee?
    [Please circle one of the following, and fill-in or circle the corresponding language(s), if applicable.]

    Yes – I am officially a bilingual employee and I speak/understand these non-English language(s):
    Spanish Amharic French Korean Chinese Vietnamese Other: _____

    No – I am not officially a "bilingual" employee, *but* I do speak/understand these non-English language(s):
    Spanish Amharic French Korean Chinese Vietnamese Other: _____

    No – I only speak and understand English.

2. FREQUENCY SERVING LEP/NEP CLIENTS:

    a. How often do you serve limited or non-English proficient (LEP/NEP) clients at the agency center where you work, on average?
        [Please circle one of the following.]
        Never   1-5 per day   6-10 per day   Over 10 clients per day

    b. If more than "Never," what language(s) are spoken by the LEP/NEP clients that you serve?
        [Please circle one or more of the following, and fill out the corresponding fill-in-the-blank, if applicable.]

        Spanish   Amharic   French   Vietnamese   Korean   Chinese

        Other: _____   Other: _____   Other: _____

3. <u>RESOURCES UTILIZED</u>: If you are serving a client whose language preference is a non-English language you do not understand, what resource(s) do you utilize or rely upon the most in order to serve the LEP/NEP client?
[Please circle one of the following.]

Language Line   Bilingual Staff   Other: _____

4. <u>AREAS OF DIFFICULTY</u>: Which aspects of providing Language Access services to limited or non-English proficient (LEP/NEP) clients are challenging?
☑ [Please mark the level of difficulty corresponding to each aspect of providing Language Access services listed below.]

	Major Challenge	Minor Challenge	No challenge	Not applicable
A. Identifying which clients are LEP/NEP and need language services	◯	◯	◯	◯
B. Accessing / providing translated documents	◯	◯	◯	◯
C. Connecting LEP/NEP clients with bilingual staff who speak their preferred language	◯	◯	◯	◯
D. Administering telephonic interpretation (via Language Line)	◯	◯	◯	◯
E. Providing outreach and public meetings that are accessible to LEP/NEP clients	◯	◯	◯	◯
F. Directing LEP/NEP clients on how to navigate the physical office space	◯	◯	◯	◯
G. Other: _____	◯	◯	◯	◯

5. RECOMMENDATIONS: What recommendations for your agency would you suggest, to improve your ability to provide Language Access services to limited and non-English proficient clients?

☑ [Please mark which item(s) listed below that you would recommend your agency to implement.]

I would recommend my agency to…	Strongly Recommend	Recommend	Would not recommend	Not applicable
A. Provide more training on Language Access to frontline employees.	○	○	○	○
B. Translate more documents and materials.	○	○	○	○
C. Print more hard copy translated documents.	○	○	○	○
D. Make the agency website more accessible in different languages.	○	○	○	○
E. Hire more bilingual frontline staff.	○	○	○	○
F. Provide more training on Language Line telephonic interpretation to frontline employees.	○	○	○	○
G. Create a resource guide to providing Language Access services for employees.	○	○	○	○
H. Post more multilingual signage.	○	○	○	○
I. Other: _____	○	○	○	○

6. Additional comments, questions or concerns about Language Access services at DC government agencies:

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