

County of Lexington
Limited English Proficiency Plan



May 2016

Limited English Proficiency Policy

The County follows Executive Order 13166 in identifying and engaging Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations to ensure their involvement and knowledge of transportation planning and projects in and around their communities. A LEP person is defined as one who does not speak English as his or her primary language and has a limited ability to read, write, or understand English.

Lexington County's policy for engaging individuals with Limited English Proficiency is to provide translation services to individuals who request them, if reasonable accommodations can be made. In addition, the County proactively identifies communities with high concentrations of LEP persons and employs tactics and strategies to effectively engage them in the planning process. The County trains staff to recognize individuals in community meetings and forums who may show difficulty or inability to read or write English, and to assist them accordingly.

Executive Order 13166

Executive Order 13166 "Improving Access to Services for Persons With Limited English Proficiency," reprinted at 65 FR 50121 (August 16, 2000), directs each Federal agency that is subject to the requirements of Title VI to publish guidance for its respective recipients clarifying that obligation. Executive Order 13166 further directs that all such guidance documents be consistent with the compliance standards and framework detailed in the Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Policy Guidance entitled "Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964--National Origin Discrimination Against Persons With Limited English Proficiency." (See 65 FR 50123, August 16, 2000 DOJ's General LEP Guidance). Different treatment based upon a person's inability to speak, read, write, or understand English may be a type of national origin discrimination.

Executive Order 13166 applies to all federal agencies and all programs and operations of entities that receive funding from the federal government, including state agencies, local agencies and governments such as the MPO, private and non-profit entities, and subrecipients.

Plan Summary

This Limited English Proficiency Plan has been developed to help identify reasonable steps to provide language assistance for persons seeking services provided by the County of Lexington as required by Executive Order 13166. In this plan, we discuss ways to identify persons who need language assistance, language assistance measures, staff training, and updates to the plan.

When it comes to identifying and assessing the frequency and resources required to meet the needs of our residents with Limited English Proficiency, the County of Lexington employs the use of the four-factor analysis which includes:

Four-Factor Analysis

1. The number and proportion of LEP persons residing within the County.

The County of Lexington's population estimates from the 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2010-2014) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau estimate total population at 270,263 and those five (5) years and older at

253,069. Of those five years and older, 7.2% speak a language other than English at home, with only 3.1% speaking English less than “very well”. Of those speaking English less than well, the breakdown of languages are as follows:

Language	Population estimate	Speak English less than “very well” estimate
Spanish or Spanish Creole	4.8%	50%
Other Indo-European	1.5%	23.1%
Asian and Pacific Island	0.9%	37.0%
Other Languages	0.1%	32.0%

Given this information, the County recognizes that relatively small portions of its population are LEP speakers. Language assistance is available upon request.

2. The frequency with which LEP persons come into contact with County services and programs.

The County of Lexington has not received any requests for translation or interpretation of its programs, services or activities into Spanish or any other language.

3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the County of Lexington.

The County believes all citizens should be able to access its nondiscrimination and public involvement policy. Title VI posters in English and Spanish have been distributed to all departments and our public involvement policy is available on our County website and by request.

4. The resources available and cost of LEP services.

To date, the utilization of bi-lingual employees has successfully provided assistance where staff has identified a need. Costs of translators and/or interpreters are built into some departmental budgets if the need for extensive language services develops.

How Lexington County Identifies LEP Persons Who May Need Assistance

- Examine requests for language assistance from past meetings and events to anticipate the potential need for assistance at upcoming meetings.
- A staff member will be placed at the entrance to public meetings to greet and briefly engage with attendees during sign-in to informally gauge each attendee’s ability to write, speak and understand English.
- Staff will be trained to identify non-verbal clues that a person may have Limited English Deficiency, such as reluctance to fill out surveys or sign-in at public meetings.

- Examine Census Bureau population numbers of those who report a primary language other than English and compare that to Census block data and map communities accordingly to determine high concentrations of LEP populations.
- Maintain a stream of communication with LEP community leaders, as well as seek to establish new relationships.

Implementing Language Assistance Measures

- Based on Census Bureau data, Lexington County will evaluate all documents, and translate those deemed most widely accessed, into any language other than English that is spoken by more than 5% of the population or by more than 1,000 people per neighborhood.
- The County will continue to search out venues that have been found to be frequented by LEP individuals and make information available at these locations in the most appropriate format and language.
- Lexington County takes a proactive approach in identifying LEP communities and will continue to host meetings in close proximity to these communities to distribute all necessary translated materials and documents.
- Lexington County remains committed to providing oral and written translation services upon request. Lexington County will maintain an active list of interpreters and translators to accommodate LEP individuals.
- All projects falling within a County LEP area are reviewed on a case by case basis. If the nature and importance of the program, activity, and service is deemed significant then the County and all entities conducting business on our behalf will follow these same LEP guidelines.

Staff Training

All Lexington County staff will be provided with the LEP plan and will be educated on procedures and services available. All training topics are listed below:

- Understanding the Title VI LEP responsibilities
- What language assistance services Lexington County offers
- How to identify LEP individuals in public meetings
- How to access an interpreter
- Documentation of language assistance requests
- How to handle a complaint

Monitoring and Updating the LEP Plan

This plan is dynamic and may be updated as more effective means of communication are developed. At a minimum, Lexington County follows the Title VI Program update schedule for the LEP plan. The County will update its LEP Plan as new Census data becomes available.

Dissemination of the County's Limited English Proficiency Plan

The County will post the LEP Plan on its website at www.lex-co.sc.gov.

Any person, including social service, non-profit, law enforcement agencies and other community members with internet access will be able to access the plan. For those without personal internet service, all county libraries offer free internet access. A hard copy of the LEP Plan will be provided to any person or agency upon request. Persons with Limited English Proficiency may also obtain translations of this plan upon request.

Any questions or comments regarding this plan should be directed to the Lexington County Title VI Coordinator.

Requesting Translation Services

Any individuals who wish to request oral or written translation services can do so through the County's website at www.lex-co.sc.gov or by contacting Lexington County's Title VI Coordinator:

Community Development
Attn: Title VI Coordinator
212 South Lake Drive, Ste 401
Lexington, SC 29072
803-785-8121
CDcustomerservice@lex-co.com