

# **Right to Meaningful Language Access for Limited English Proficiency Individuals**



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## About this report:

Language access refers to the language barriers limiting access to government services that do not provide interpretative services or translated materials for Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 mandates that no person shall be discriminated against based on their nation of origin — which includes a person's inability to speak English. Any entity that receives any form of government funding must comply or risk a Department of Justice investigation and possible revocation of funds.

The Language Access Project focuses on agencies providing educational, health, housing, law enforcement, community center and legal-related services to the local immigrant, noncitizen and refugee community. By identifying which agencies are not compliant with Title VI, the HRAP can assist service providers in updating their existing plans and procedures — which in turn will result in the Louisville immigrant, noncitizen and refugee community having better access to much-needed resources.

## About the Human Rights Advocacy Program:

The first phase of the Program focused on liaising with local and regional human-rights-related organizations to identify human rights issues in the community and to understand the work of legal and other services providers to the international community. As it became clear that the needs of vulnerable populations, such as immigrants, noncitizens and refugees, extend beyond legal services alone, the list of organizations and providers that should be included in the discussion grew. The need for multiple services is often interrelated and to isolate one component for study would provide incomplete and less helpful information about the role that the Program can play.

The Program ultimately liaised with a variety of legal, medical, educational, and social service providers. The purpose of this work was to understand the scope and range of the services provided and to begin to identify any potential gaps in information available to the public about human rights issues, as well as information about the resources and the services available. This report is designed to share this information with the larger community and those organizations providing services.

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