

Language Assistance Plan for Northwest Regional Development Commission

**Effective:
05/10/2020**

Purpose

The purpose of this Language Assistance Plan (hereinafter “plan”) is to meet Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA’s) requirements to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. As a subrecipient of FTA funds, this transit system is pledged to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its transit services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The FTA refers to these persons as Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

The completion of this plan for persons with Limited English Proficiency conforms to the requirements of the FTA Circular 4702.1B Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients.

The U.S. DOT’s FTA Office of Civil Rights’ publication “Implementing the Department of Transportation’s Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients’ Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons – A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers,” dated April 13, 2007, was used in the preparation of this plan.

The plan for Northwest Regional Development Commission contains:

- A. A needs assessment based on the four-factor analysis
- B. Language assistance measures
- C. A staff training plan
- D. Methods for notifying LEP persons about available language assistance
- E. Methods for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan

A. LEP Needs Assessment – the Four-Factor Analysis

Factor 1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in our service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a transit program, activity, or service.

We assessed the following information (as checked) about LEP persons to determine the number or proportion of LEP persons who might use or want to use our transit services:

- X 2010 US Census data/American Community Survey data
- Survey results:
- Local school district data
- Locally Coordinated Human Services Plan
- Other Human Services data

- Area/Metropolitan Planning Organizations/Regional Development Commission data
- X Information from local organizations (religious, legal, social service, etc.) about LEP persons in our service area
- X Reports from drivers, dispatchers, and others about contact with LEP persons
- Other information: Describe:

According to data provided by Mn/DOT from the 2010 American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year estimate:

- 1) The total number of LEP persons in our service area is 1,513.
- 2) The total eligible population in our service area is 85,533.
- 3) The proportion of LEP persons to the total eligible service population is 1.77%.

Factor 2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with our transit programs, activities, or services.

Although data from the 2010 census indicates we have approximately .1.6% of our service areas population that has limited English, Northwest Regional Development Commission has not experienced any of those individuals that have language difficulties.

The conclusions drawn from examining this information about LEP persons seeking transit services with Northwest Regional Development Commission servicing the Cities of Thief River Falls, Crookston, East Grand Forks, Hallock, Ada, Fosston and Counties of Kittson, Roseau, Marshall, Pennington, Red Lake, Polk, and Norman does not have individuals with limited English using our services or that need or may need language assistance.

Factor 3. The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided to the LEP population.

Northwest Regional Development Commission feels it is very important to serve everyone in our service area, including individuals with limited English. Currently we do not have any individuals requesting service that meet that criteria, but if an individual or group of individuals come into our service area and are needing language assistance we have Tri-Valley Opportunity Council and the Tri-Valley Bus that has Spanish speaking translators on staff. University of MN-Crookston and the University of MN-Duluth have staff available for translation purposes. We also would plan to use the MN DHS Language Line for interpretation services.

Factor 4. The resources available to our transit system and the overall cost to provide language assistance.

Our current budget for marketing to or communicating with LEP persons in their language about transit services that are available to them is \$0. We have included funding of \$2,500 for language line fees, staff training, translation services, brochures, flyers, posters, newspaper ads, radio ads, and website publications in the RTCC position.

B. Language Assistance Measures

There are several language assistance measures that are available to Northwest Regional Development Commission. These include: Check off any items below that are relevant and provide a short narrative to explain your future efforts.

X Translation of key documents in the following language(s): ____Spanish____

X Arranging for availability of oral translators

X Communication with LEP persons' groups about transit services

Posting notices in appropriate languages informing LEP persons of available services

X Other: Describe: MN DHS Language Line will coordinate for the LEP population.

The Northwest Regional Development Commission is currently coordinating services with the language line when the services are required for LEP persons.

C. Staff Training

To ensure effective implementation of this plan, the transit system will schedule training at orientations for new staff and for all relevant employees on an annual to review:

- the transit system's Language Assistance Plan
- demographic data about local LEP population
- printed LEP persons' materials
- how to handle verbal requests for transit service in a foreign language
- responsibility to notify transit manager about any LEP persons' unmet needs.

D. Notice to LEP Persons about Available Language Assistance

NWRDC plans to notify LEP persons in their own language about the language assistance available to them without cost by using the following methods:

signs on buses or at bus stops

X brochures

posters

X sending information to local organizations that work with LEP persons

telephone messages

local ads (newspaper, radio, TV)

website notices

information tables at local events, grocery stores, pharmacies, and churches

Other: Describe: _____

E. Annual Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating Plan

The transit system will review this plan during its annual review with its Mn/DOT transit project manager by:

- assessing its effectiveness (e.g., comparing numbers of LEP persons served by year, number of requests for language assistance received during the year),
- assessing the sufficiency of staff training and budget for language assistance,
- reviewing current sources for assistance to ensure continuing availability, and
- reviewing any complaints from LEP persons or about their needs that were received during the past year.

This plan will be reviewed by our transit system annually. Revisions of this plan will be approved by the Executive Director and dated.

F. Dissemination of Plan

This Language Assistance Plan is available on our website at:

<https://docs.wixstatic.com/>

This plan is also available at no cost in English upon request by telephone, fax, and mail or in person.

If requested to be provided in another language and it is feasible to have it translated, information will be provided at no cost to the requester.

G. Contact Information

Questions or comments about this plan may be submitted to:

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