



Strengthening Language Access

Including People and Expanding Access through Accessible Language Strategies

Learning objectives



- Attendees will explore ways to identify language needs.
- Attendees will learn about essential items for a language access approach.
- Attendees will explore a variety of language resources.
- Attendees will be able to identify strategies and resources that support partnerships with culturally diverse people and organizations.



Access and Inclusion

When the Council supports language access,
inclusion can be achieved!

Benefits

- Increases mutual respect and understanding between people and the Council.
- Promotes inclusion.
- Increases participation and involvement.



Including people is essential!

Create a welcoming setting that embraces diversity and demonstrates cultural sensitivity.

Be culturally responsive by recognizing the unique needs, experiences, and strengths of each cultural community.

DD Act Foundation

Connection to Equity in Services and Supports

Featured Guest: Tedra Jackson

**DD Act Definitions
and their Connection
to Equity in Services
and Supports**

Cultural Competence

CULTURAL COMPETENCE. --*The term cultural competence means services, supports or other assistance that are conducted or provided in a manner that is responsive to the beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language and behaviors of individuals who are receiving services, and in a manner that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring their maximum participation in the program. DD Act, Sec. 102 (7)*

**DD Act Definitions
and their Connection
to Equity in Services
and Supports**

**Minority
Participation**

MINORITY PARTICIPATION—*The plan shall provide assurances that the State has taken affirmative steps to assure that participation in programs funded under this subtitle is geographically representative of the State and reflects the diversity of the State with respect to race and ethnicity. DD Act, Sec. 124 (C)(5)(I)*

**DD Act Definitions
and their Connection
to Equity in Services
and Supports**

Representation

REPRESENTATION.—*The membership of the Council shall be geographically representative of the State and reflect the diversity of the State with respect to race and ethnicity...*

DD Act, Sec. 125 (1)

DD Act Definitions and their Connection to Equity in Services and Supports

Integration

INTEGRATION.—*The term “integration”, used with respect to individuals with developmental disabilities, means exercising the equal right of individuals with developmental disabilities to access and use the same community resources as are used by and available to other individuals.*


DD Act, Sec. 102 (17)

- [DD Act](#), Section 101 (a)(8) states...there is a need to ensure that services, supports, and other assistance are provided in a culturally competent manner, that ensures that individuals from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds are fully included in all activities provided under this title;
- The [Final Rule](#) outlines definitions under the term accessibility which includes provisions for individuals who are limited English proficient.
§ 1385.3 Definitions (ii) (A-C)

Cultural and Linguistic Competence and Limited English Proficiency

YES!

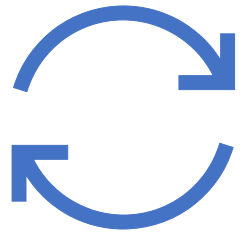
The DD Act requires Councils to be culturally competent. This means providing language access in a manner that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring maximum participation in the Council activity.



Councils do not provide direct services - do we still need to provide language access?

Look for State or Territory Agency resources

- If you have a Designated State Agency, do they have a Language Access Plan?
 - How would you know?
 - Check out the information at LEP.gov
 - Ask (start with public information offices or people).
- If there is a plan and services, how can the Council access those services?
 - Can language services be added to your Memorandum of Understanding with the DSA?
 - Can you share in the cost of the language services with the DSA or another agency?
 - Can this be part of the State's assurance that there will be reasonable State financial participation in the cost of carrying out the plan? Section 124(c)(C).



Language Access Planning

Special Guests: Cynthia Stewart and Jenny Munoz,
New York State Office for New Americans



NYS Office for New Americans (ONA) Presenters



Jenny Munoz

**Senior Manager, Policy and Strategic Partnerships
DOS Deputy Language Access Coordinator
New York State Office for New Americans
(She/Her/Hers)**



Cynthia Stewart, M.S.

**Ramirez June Developmental Disabilities Navigator
New York State Office for New Americans
(She/Her/Hers)**



**Office for
New Americans**



**Developmental
Disabilities
Planning Council**



**Department of State
Office for New Americans**



**Department
of State**



**Office for
New Americans**

**New York State
Office for New Americans
Ramirez June Initiative**

May 24, 2023

ONA Ramirez June Initiative

First initiative of its kind in the nation to build capacity at the state level to connect new Americans with developmental disabilities with vital resources, information, and services in partnership with the NY Developmental Disabilities Planning Council.





OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS

STATE NETWORK



Support for Language Access

National Support:

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or **national origin** in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.
- **Executive Order 13166 (2000):** "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency" - Requires Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with limited English proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them.

New York State:

- NYS language access law by Governor Hochul, on April 2022, require all Executive State agencies that interact with the public must provide interpretation services in any language with respect to the provision of agency services or benefits, and must translate vital agency documents into the top 12 most commonly spoken non-English languages among LEP New Yorkers based on Census data.



Intersection of Language Access & Accessibility

- **Plain language** – makes information accessible to people with different literacy levels, people who read English as a second language, and it makes material easier to translate into different languages.
- **Deaf new American communities** – language access is an accessibility need for these communities who use sign languages from their countries of origin.
- **Multilingual captions / subtitles**
- **Language access for non-English speakers with disabilities.**



Purpose of a Language Access Plan

- Provide equal access to services regardless of English speaking ability & national origin.
- Outline method for making information, education, and other materials accessible in languages other than English.
- Understand the steps required to provide language access services to individuals.
- Council staff and members can use as a guide when developing, revising, reviewing, distributing, and getting feedback on projects, activities, information, and education that is provided in other language(s).
- Leaders of community-based organizations that support people with I/DD with low English proficiency can use the document to know when and how to partner with the Council and how to contribute resources and feedback.

Resource: <https://www.lep.gov/>



Identify People who Need Language Access Services

- Use your data.
- Engage multilingual/multicultural communities and cultural brokers.
- Tell people about your free, available language services in a language/format they can access and understand.
 - Include multilingual information about LA services on outreach documents.
 - Post multilingual information and taglines on your website.
 - Use multilingual registration forms.



Keep the New American Community in Mind



- Recruit bilingual/multi-cultural staff and Council Members.
- **“Transcreation”** – Combines translation & creation, directly involving communities to review and inform the creation of multilingual information.
- Be aware of different literacy levels / Some languages are not written.
- Considerations for indigenous languages, dialects, “languages of limited diffusion.”



What are Language Access Services?

- Interpreter: Someone who conveys meaning orally through spoken word or sign language.
 - Telephonic
 - In-person
 - Virtual
- Translator: Someone who conveys meaning into a different language through written text.
- Subtitles, including translated subtitles
- Captions, including multilingual captions



Language Access Planning Questions

- Do you have an assigned Language Access Coordinator?
- What are the top languages spoken by non-English speakers in your community?
- Do you have a list of staff who are bilingual?
- Do you have a list of available language access vendors that provide interpretation services and translation of documents?
- Do your staff know how to access telephonic interpretation on demand?



Budgeting for Language Access Services

- Develop requirements for an effective language access vendor.
- When evaluating vendors, consider rates for your top non-English languages and how to meet the needs of your agency.
 - Flexibility of vendor: i.e. turn-around time for translations, availability of interpreters for weekends/ evenings.
- Assign primary and alternate vendors for different LA services.
- Train staff so they know how to access the services provided by vendors.
- Collect feedback on quality and report vendor deficiencies to the LA coordinator.

Identify Vital Information for Translation & Interpretation

- Determine what information should be translated.
 - Vital documents, websites, flyers, registration forms
- Engage staff and members to identify vital materials.
 - Does a document lead to access for a service or benefit? If yes, consider translating into the top languages of non-English speakers.
 - Consider different formats to provide multilingual information (audio, video, & written).
 - Ensure information about how to access language access services is provided in a language people can see or hear.



Language Access Process





Language Needs Resources

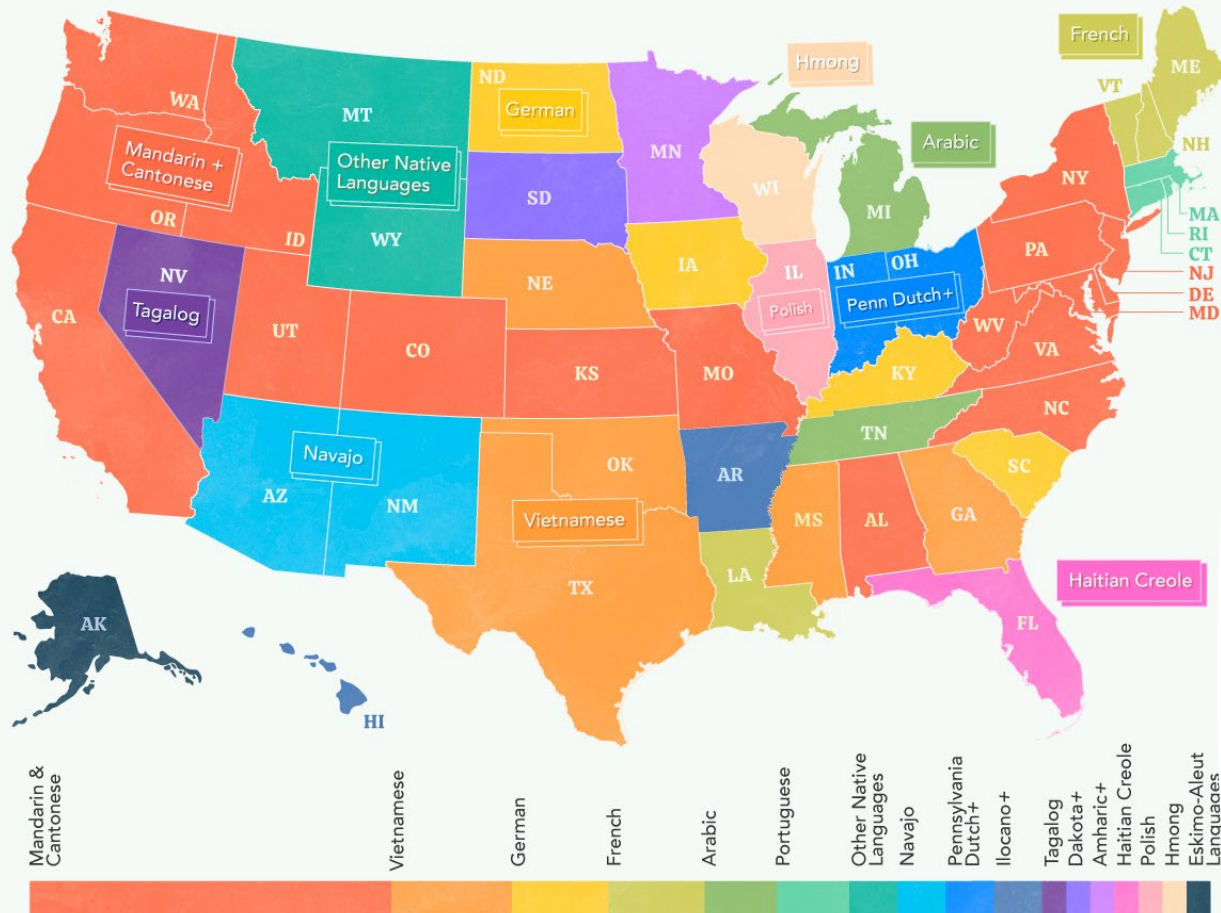
How can Council staff and members better understand the language needs of people in our State or Territory?

The Most Commonly Spoken Language in Every U.S. State

Besides Spanish & English

There are over 7,000 different languages spoken around the world. While most of the U.S. population speaks either English or Spanish, many additional languages are spoken across the country too.

Here's what the most commonly spoken language, aside from Spanish and English, in every state is:



• Ilocano+ includes Ilocano, Samoan, Hawaiian, Marshallese, or other Austronesian languages.

• Amharic+ includes Amharic, Somali and other Afro-Asiatic languages.

Stay informed on changing community demographics

- <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/most-common-language-spoken-in-the-u-s-map/>
- <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2022/12/languages-we-speak-in-united-states.html>
- <https://statisticalatlas.com/United-States/Languages>
- Refugee Resettlement organizations have information about different arrivals and the languages they speak.
- Language & Accessibility for Alert & Warning Workgroup - (LAAWW)
 - National group on language accessibility for alerts and warnings in case anyone is interested: <https://sites.google.com/view/laaww/?pli=1>

What about information for US Territories?

- 2020 [Island Areas Censuses Data](#)
- Demographic data charts have information on disability and language!

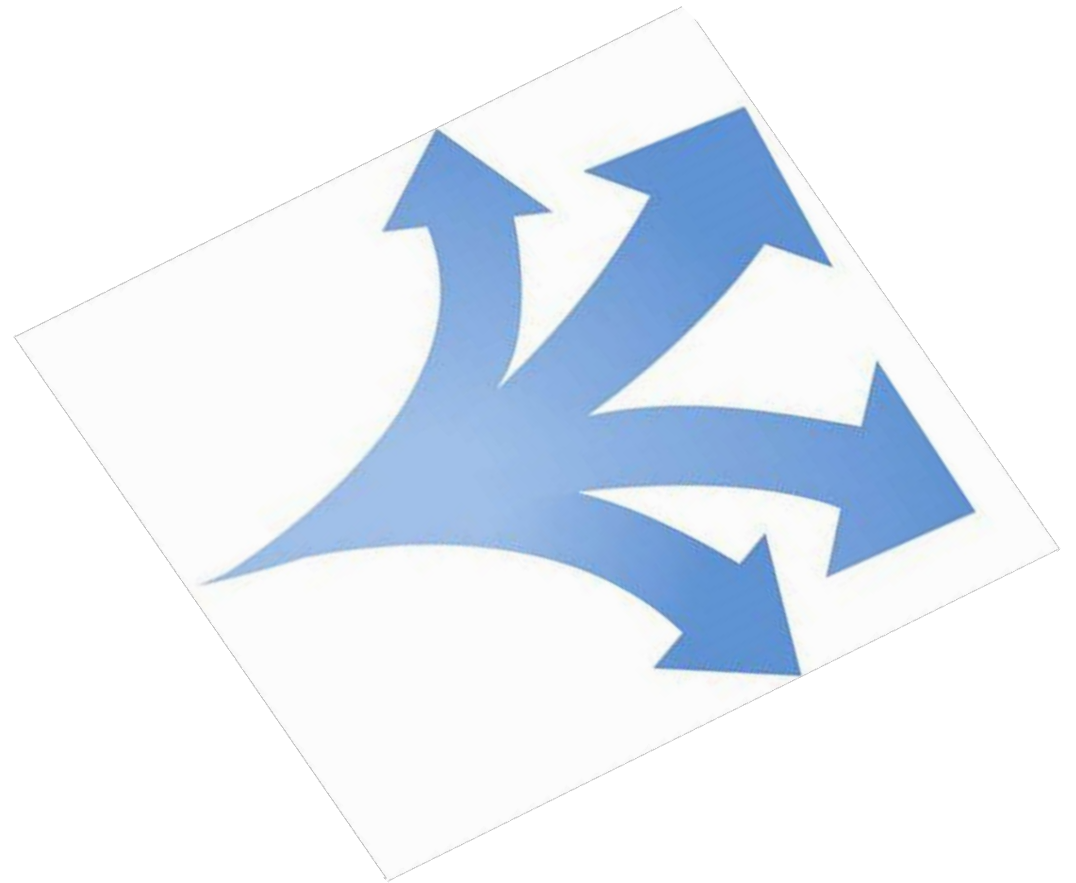
Available geographies within each island area:

- American Samoa—Districts, counties, and villages.
- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands—Municipalities, districts, and villages.
- Guam—Municipalities and census designated places.
- U.S. Virgin Islands—Islands, subdistricts, estates, towns, and census designated places.

Resources

What resources do you have available?

What resources need to be contracted?



Possible Community Resources

Find out who has language access programs in your areas

- Multicultural Community Based Organizations
- City offices
- Emergency Preparedness
- Adult literacy programs
- Office for New Americans
- Refugee Resettlement Agencies

Colleges and Universities

- Check out language teaching programs
- Students or faculty who are fluent speakers of languages other than English
 - Some Universities require Faculty to engage in community service
 - Explore clubs and organizations with international students or social work/human service students to help you learn about the needs of communities

Community Resources

Multilingual Faith-based Organizations

- Can help with your outreach efforts.
- Could be a source of skilled language speakers and writers.

Check out any English as a Second Language (ESL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

- Instructors could be helpful in connecting you with translators.

We Welcome Your Feedback!



Survey: <https://forms.office.com/g/7H16HgbzEY>



**Developmental
Disabilities
Planning Council**



**Department of State
Office for New Americans**



Plain
Language
Efforts



Plain language

- Plain language is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it.
- Resources – you can find plenty of them!
 - Plainlanguage.gov (lots of templates, checklists, and in-depth writing guidelines, training and training videos).
 - Center for Plain Language – features 5 steps, before and after examples, and templates and tools

Engage and Include

Guest: Leslie Connolly



**Ohio
Developmental
Disabilities
Council**

Engage Council members.

Make clear language the priority for all documents.

Opportunities for Language Access Systems Change

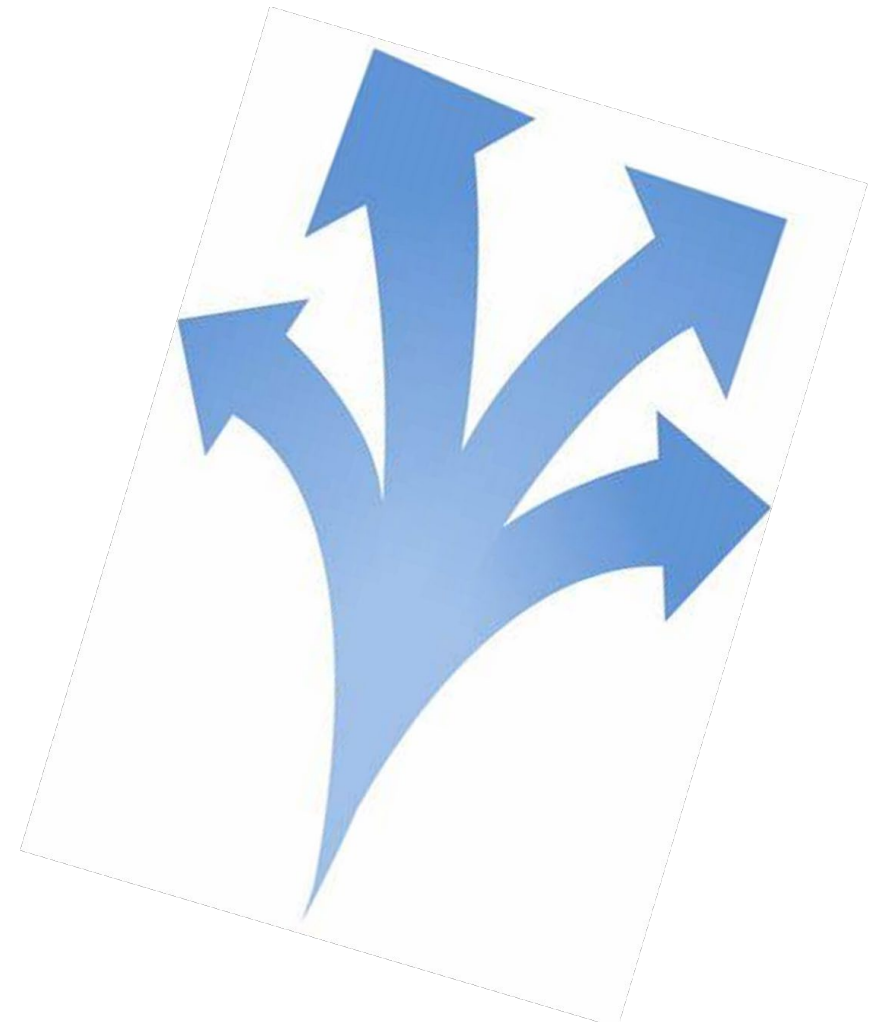
- Advocate for policies to reflect plain language communication.
 - Under New York City's Executive Order 120, agencies are required to follow guidance from the Mayor's Office of Adult Education to ensure language access policies reflect **plain language communication**.
- Advocate for literacy level considerations
 - Similarly, San Francisco's language access ordinance requires translations to "**match literacy levels of the target audience.**"
- **Advocate for plain language provisions for translated documents**
 - are intended not only to ensure LEP individuals can understand forms and documents in their own language but also to save time, money, and personnel resources by minimizing the need for explanation and/or follow-up due to confusion.

Diverse Media and Engaging the Community

Guests:

Tianna Faulkner

Maria Pinkelton



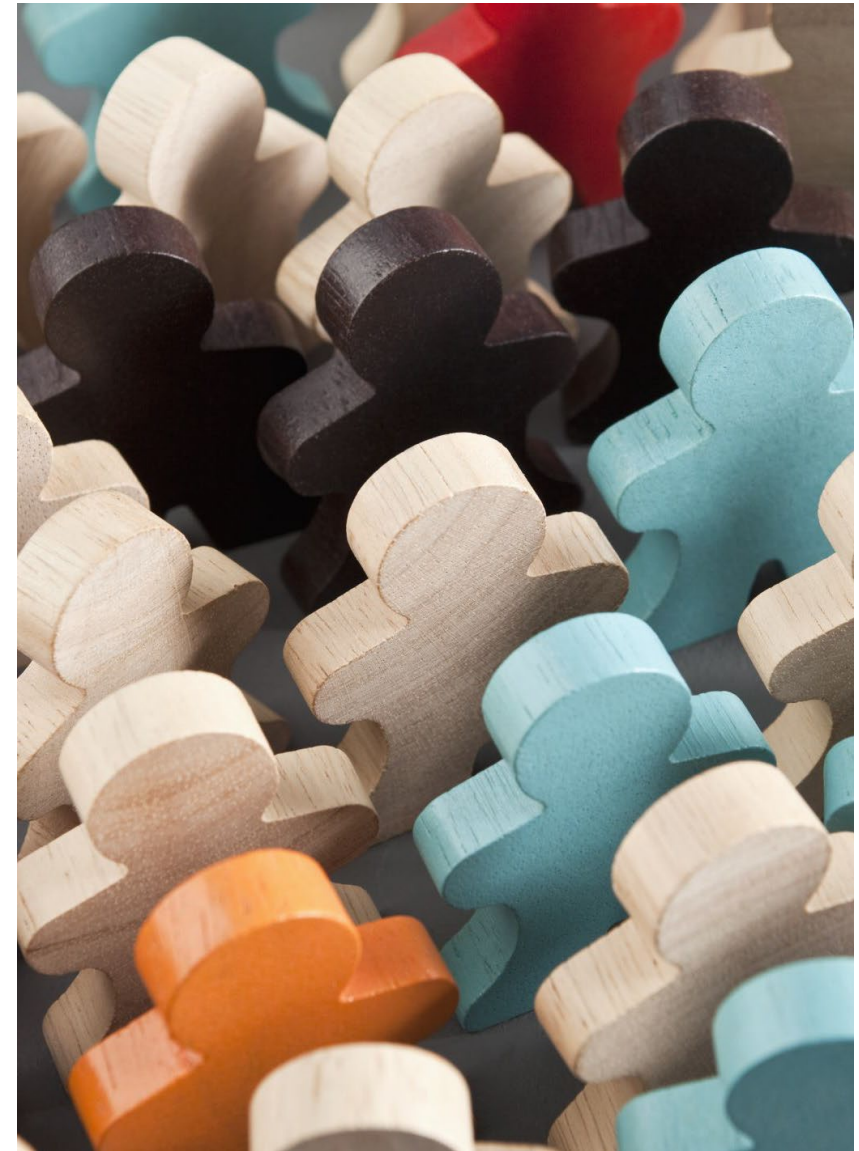


Reach out to diverse media

- If your Council is doing outreach work, include funding for ads in diverse media (often, they will translate and design your ad at no cost).
- If you don't have funding, pitch stories to local editors or reporters.
- If you have partners from diverse groups or other heritages, they may help you get the word out to their communities and connect to their media contacts.
- Where do you find your diverse [media sources](#)?

Engage the Community and Community organizations!

- Before you make your translated materials widely available, let people in the community review them (establish an advisory committee, hold a public hearing, or conduct usability testing).
- Some community-based organizations are ethnic, cultural or heritage organizations and they know best what is going on with their members and can be a good resource for translators and interpreters.




Engaging Members and Partners in Language access efforts

- Do your Council members have connections in their communities to people with language skills? Can they introduce you?
- What about your grantees or contractors? Who do they know, and can they introduce you?



Questions?
Answers!





More
Information



ITACC Information

Website: Itacchelp.org

Staff:

TA Director

Sheryl Matney, EdD

202-506-5813 ext. 148 | smatney@nacdd.org

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