



# Language Access Services at the Bronx County District Attorney's Office

## What questions did the audit look at?

- ▶ Is the Bronx County District Attorney's Office (BXDA) providing adequate language access services to the Non-English Language Preference (NELP) population?
- ▶ Do those services meet the needs of the NELP population?

## Why does it matter for New Yorkers?

Nearly one-half of all New Yorkers speak a language other than English at home, and almost 25% of City residents over the age of five are not proficient in English. For these NELP residents, interacting with City government and gaining access to services can be a challenge.

The City has enacted a series of laws intended to strengthen its language access, allowing agencies to reach a greater number of New Yorkers and opening doors that might have otherwise remained closed. This audit—which is focused on the Bronx County District Attorney's Office—is one of a series that our office initiated to assess the language access services provided by New York City's prosecutorial offices

The audit found that BXDA generally complies with translation standards set forth by the City's various laws and guidelines and that language access services generally meet the needs of Bronxites.

However, BXDA did not fully comply with certain aspects of Local Law 30. Specifically, BXDA did not translate all of its most commonly distributed documents into the City's top 10 non-English languages, nor did it develop policies to address language access complaints or standardize language access in public communications. It also did not designate a Language Access Coordinator to oversee these efforts.

## What changes did the agency commit to make following the audit?

- ▶ BXDA agreed to update public signage and webpages, ensure that documents are available in multiple languages, amend its Language Access Plan to include missing policies, and implement it as soon as possible.

## AUDIT FINDINGS



BXDA provides adequate language access services to NELP clients.



BXDA did not translate its most commonly distributed documents into all 10 of New York City's NELP languages.



BXDA's Language Access Plan did not include certain policies required by Local Law 30.



BXDA did not designate a Language Access Coordinator



Audit Recommendations	Agency Response
1 Update its language access signs to ensure they can be easily read	<b>AGREED</b>
2 Update its website to ensure all vital information on the Immigrant Affairs Unit page can be translated.	<b>AGREED</b>
3 Continuously monitor its website to ensure that any further malfunctions are corrected in a timely manner	<b>AGREED</b>
4 Ensure that all documents commonly distributed to the public are translated into the top 10 NYC NELLP languages while continuing to ensure that it translates those documents into languages that are likely to serve the local NELLP community.	<b>AGREED</b>
5 Amend the language access plan to include policies (1) to state that vital documents should be translated into the top 10 NYC NELLP languages; (2) for timely response to complaints; (3) providing language access in all public communications and emergency preparedness responses; and (4) for updating the Language Access Plan at least every three years in accordance with Local Law 30.	<b>AGREED</b>
6 Implement the revised language access plan with all due expediency and post it to its website along with the name and title of the LAC.	<b>AGREED</b>



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