



Language Access Services at the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office

What questions did the audit look at?

- ▶ Is the Kings County District Attorney's Office (KCDA) 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 Kings 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 KCDA 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 Brooklynites.

However, KCDA did not fully comply with certain aspects of Local Law 30, which requires agencies to develop and implement Language Access Plans (LAP). KCDA did not translate all of its most commonly distributed documents into the City's top 10 non-English languages, nor did it include in its LAP policies for updating its plan or providing language access in certain public communications. The agency also did not publicly identify its Language Access Coordinator (LAC).

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

KCDA agreed to translate its most commonly distributed documents into the top 10 NYC NELP languages, update documents to indicate that interpretation services are free, amend its LAP, and post its LAP and LAC on its website.

AUDIT FINDINGS



KCDA provides adequate language access services to NELP clients.



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



KCDA's Language Access Plan did not address all aspects of Local Law 30.



KCDA did not identify its Language Access Coordinator on its website.



Audit Recommendations	Agency Response
<p>1 Ensure that all documents commonly distributed to the public are translated into the top 10 NYC NELP languages while continuing to ensure that it translates those documents into languages that are likely to serve the local NELP community.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>2 Update its multilingual enclosure document to indicate that the interpretation services are free.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>3 Amend the Language Access Plan to include policies (1) for ensuring that vital documents are translated into the top 10 NYC NELP languages; (2) for incorporating language access in all public communications and emergency preparedness responses; and (3) for updating the Language Access Plan at least once every three years in accordance with LL30.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>4 Post the Language Access Plan and name and title of the Language Access Coordinator on its website.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>



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