



REPORT AT A GLANCE

Language Access Services at the Staten Island District Attorney's Office

What questions did the audit look at?

- ▶ Is the Richmond County District Attorney's Office (RCDA) 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 Richmond 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 RCDA generally complies with translation standards set forth by the City's various laws and guidelines and that language access services generally meet Staten Islanders' needs.

However, RCDA did not fully comply with certain aspects of Local Law 30, which requires agencies to develop and implement LAPs. Notably, RCDA did not translate all of its most commonly distributed documents into the City's top 10 non-English languages, certain translation features on its website did not work correctly, and its LAP did not address some key areas as required by the law.

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

- ▶ RCDA agreed to translate its most commonly distributed documents into New York City's top 10 languages; update its public-facing signs to inform visitors of free interpretation services; and amend and implement its Language Access Plan (LAP).

AUDIT FINDINGS



RCDA provides adequate language access services to NELP clients.



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



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



Audit Recommendations	Agency Response
<p>1 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.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>2 Update its signs informing the public of the availability of interpretation services to specify that the interpretation services are free.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>3 Continuously monitor its website to ensure that any further malfunctions are corrected in a timely manner</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>4 Ensure all frontline staff receive training regarding language access services as required by LL30 and maintain documentation on all training attendance.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>5 Amend the LAP 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) for monitoring the effectiveness of the language access services RCDA provides; (4) providing language access in all public communications and emergency preparedness responses; and (5) for updating the LAP at least every three years in accordance with Local Law 30.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>
<p>6 Implement the revised LAP with all due expediency and post it to its website.</p>	<p>AGREED</p>



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