



Language Access Services at the Independent Budget Office

What questions did the audit look at?

- ▶ Is the New York City Independent Budget Office (IBO) 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 IBO—is one of a series that our office initiated to assess the language access services provided by City agencies.

IBO provides non-partisan information on the City budget and revenue. This can range from a review of a particular agency's spending to in-depth analysis of program costs, historical trends, debt, etc. IBO also produces various reports and materials for elected officials, community boards, civic groups, and other organizations. Further, it testifies at public hearings and City Council meetings.

The audit found that IBO's website is compliant with Local Law 25 and allows NELP users to translate the text into languages other than English. The website is translatable into 249 languages, including English and the top 10 designated citywide languages. The website's main purpose is to provide the public with information about IBO's main functions and responsibilities and to publish the reports and studies it produces.

Additionally, the audit team found that even though IBO's reports, studies, and testimonies are not required to be translated into languages other than English (because the agency does not provide direct or emergency services to the public), IBO is prepared to translate as needed.

AUDIT FINDINGS



IBO's website is compliant with Local Law 25, offering translation capability into 249 languages.



IBO is able to provide translations of reports and testimonies in NELP languages when requested.



Audit Recommendations

Agency Response

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Continue to ensure that IBO's website remains accessible to NELL populations by maintaining the translation feature that supports the top 10 designated citywide languages.

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