



BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GENERAL ORDER 18-06 SECTION H

LIMITED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY Approved: June 12, 2018

This General Order contains the following numbered sections:

- I. Directive
- II. Purpose
- III. Definitions
- IV. General
- V. Guidance
- VI. LanguageLink
- VII. Effective Date

I. DIRECTIVE

It is the policy of the Baltimore City School Police Force (BCSPF) to provide essential law enforcement and public safety services to the community it serves. Due to the diversity of Baltimore, officers and civilian employees routinely come into contact with individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) skills. All employees of the department shall provide the same level of service to members of the public regardless of that individual's ability to communicate in English.

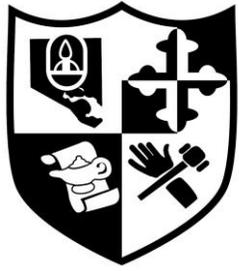
The department will utilize whatever reasonable means are available to effectively communicate with individuals and ensure their constitutional rights are not violated.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish language access procedures, consistent with federal, state, and local law, for BCSPF members to follow when encountering a LEP person. This General Order also defines the importance of effective and accurate communication between BCSPF members and the community they serve. Language barriers can impede such effective and accurate communication in a variety of ways. Language barriers can sometimes inhibit or even prohibit individuals with limited English proficiency from accessing and/or understanding important rights, obligations, and services, or from communicating accurately and efficiently in different situations.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Interpretation*- The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning.



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- B. *Limited English Language Proficiency (LEP) Person*- Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English.
- C. *Primary Language*- The language in which an individual is most effectively able to communicate.
- D. *Translation*- The replacement of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text into another language (target language).

IV. GENERAL

- A. Department members will have varying levels of contact with the LEP public requiring varying levels of interpretive services. Officers must examine the level of skill potential interpreters possess and the likelihood of the interpretation being used in court testimony. When using members of the public to translate, officers must be cautious of people who may intentionally mislead an investigation by means of their translation.
- B. There will be times during the early stages of emergency situations where any means of translation must be used in order to establish the initial elements of criminal occurrences or public safety threats. This General Order shall not limit department personnel from using emergency translation during these circumstances. Once situations have stabilized, then more formalized means of translation shall be provided to the LEP individual.
- C. A translation of the Miranda warning in Spanish is available as Annex C in General Order 10-25.

V. GUIDANCE

While working with an interpreter, department members should adhere to the following:

- 1) Identity themselves and their purpose clearly. They should speak at a slower than normal pace while maintaining first person dialogue and avoiding slang.
- 2) Be prepared to explain some things in more detail for the interpreter.
- 3) The interpreter should be asked questions to ensure they understand what you want to communicate with the LEP person.
- 4) The interpreter should be directed as to what the crucial information is that must be delivered to and/or obtained from the LEP person.



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- 5) Understand that there may be some delay before the interpreter can elicit the information you need from the LEP person due to cultural differences and/or a need on the part of the LEP person to establish trust.
 - 6) Be aware of linguistic differences. It may take more words in Spanish, for example, than English to communicate a certain idea.
 - 7) Request input from the interpreter as to what extraneous information the LEP person is conveying.

VI. LANGUAGELINK

In the event that a qualified interpreter or bi-lingual department member is not available, BCSPF members shall have access to “LanguageLink”, a live interpretation service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

To access the service, department members will:

- a) Enter their account number followed by #
- b) Select the desired language to be interpreted

VII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Order shall be effective on the date of publication.

I certify that I have read and fully understand this Order.

Signature _____ Date _____