



MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE ORDER

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

Subject Executive Order "Access to Government Services for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency"	Executive Order No. 046-10	Subject Suffix
Originating Department CE's Office of Community Partnerships	Department Number	Effective Date 03/04/10

**Montgomery County, Maryland
Office of the County Executive**

**Executive Order 046-10
Access to County Government Services for Individuals
with Limited English Proficiency**

WHEREAS,

It is a priority of Montgomery County government to build a linguistically accessible and culturally competent government to ensure meaningful access to government services for all communities throughout Montgomery County; and

Montgomery County prides itself in being a responsive and inclusive government that effectively works toward removing barriers to quality services to all regardless of their countries of origin or English language proficiency; and

According to the latest Census data, the County's foreign-born population has doubled since 1990, now accounting for 30 percent of the County's total population or nearly half (45 percent) of the entire state of Maryland's immigrant population; and

Today in Montgomery County, one in three residents speaks a language other than English at home, and one in seven (14.5 percent) is considered limited English proficient (LEP), more than any other county in the state of Maryland; and

Federal and state laws, regulations and policies, including Federal civil rights laws and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) guidelines, require local governments to provide meaningful access to their services for LEP individuals by providing language assistance; and

Implementation of guidelines ensuring effective delivery of County services to all residents regardless of English language ability will enhance public safety, health, economic prosperity, and overall quality of life in Montgomery County; and

Montgomery County adopted the guidelines issued by the Civil Rights Division of DOJ in June 2002, which provide a four-factor analysis for determining "reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access," including 1) number or proportion of LEPs likely served, 2) frequency of contact with the program, 3) nature and importance of the program, and 4) resources available and the costs of providing language services; and



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In May 2003, Montgomery County's Executive Branch adopted the LEP Policy, requiring that departments, offices and programs take reasonable steps to provide equal access to public services for persons with limited English proficiency; and

In September 2004, the Office of Legislative Oversight released "*Limited English Proficient Persons: Access to County Government Services*," a comprehensive report focused on LEP access to emergency public safety and health and human services and included recommendations to the County Council for improving LEP policy and implementation; and

Montgomery County's current language access framework includes:

- a. LEP policy and a compliance framework that applies to all executive branch departments, offices and programs,
- b. A Web site dedicated to language access at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/lep,
- c. Resources for translation and interpretation services,
- d. An LEP Leadership Team led by the Language Access Coordinator that oversees countywide policies and practices on language access; and LEP Department Liaisons designated by department directors responsible for implementing the LEP Policy for the Executive Branch's departments, office and programs,
- e. Mandatory LEP Training for all frontline staff and, subject to discussion with certified employee representatives as appropriate, mandatory Community Interpreter Training for all certified bilingual employees,
- f. An evaluation and accountability system that measures the progress of LEP work and level of compliance with Title VI and County policy on language access,
- g. A process within the Montgomery County Human Rights Commission for investigating complaints regarding the County's compliance with Title VI and this Executive Order and offering recommendations for resolution; and



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NOW, THEREFORE, by the power invested in me as County Executive of Montgomery County, Maryland, it is hereby ordered:

SECTION 1. All Executive Branch departments, offices and programs that provide direct public services, regardless of whether they are recipients of federal financial support, must take reasonable steps to develop and implement plans for removing language barriers to public services for LEP individuals, consistent with aforementioned LEP Policy. Each executive department, office and program shall have:

- a. A Department Liaison to oversee the development and execution of a department-specific Language Access Plan and to ensure the department's compliance with applicable laws and policy on serving LEP individuals.
- b. A Department Language Access Plan updated annually to provide both policy directive and the necessary protocols, based on the four-factor analysis provided by DOJ to carry out the provision of language access services to LEP individuals.

SECTION 2. The Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) shall be responsible for the County's overall compliance with language access laws and policy; provide oversight and support for all departments, offices and programs in their language access work, and develop accountability mechanisms.

- a. The Language Access Coordinator shall provide leadership, guidance and support for all executive branch departments to ensure consistent and effective implementation of this Executive Order throughout the County government. The Language Access Coordinator reports to the Office of the CAO.
- b. To facilitate successful integration of immigrants in Montgomery County into the civic, cultural, economic and intellectual life of the County, the County Executive's Office of Community Partnerships shall take the lead in promoting language access to County services through outreach programs and through the County Executive's ethnic advisory groups and community partners.
- c. The CAO's office shall ensure that MC311, the County's customer service call center, reflects the County's best practices in language accessibility and cultural competency.



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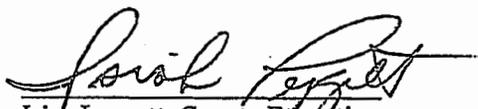
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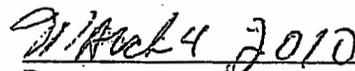
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SECTION 3. The Language Access Coordinator and the LEP Leadership Team shall constantly evaluate and improve the quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of all language resources by evaluating practices of other institutions and jurisdictions.

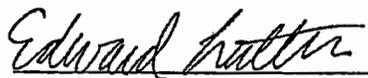
SECTION 4. The CAO's office shall collaborate with other public institutions and seek to establish a Language Access Council to include representatives from: Housing Opportunities Commission, Board of Elections, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools, and Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. The goal of such collaboration will be to improve language accessibility through LEP initiatives and English learning in Montgomery County.

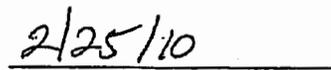
SECTION 5. This order shall take effect immediately.


Isiah Leggett, County Executive


Date

Approved as to form and legality
Office of the County Attorney


Edward Lattner,


Date