



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance*

CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor



MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

KARYN POLITO
Lieutenant Governor

JEFF McCUE
Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2016-32
June 24, 2016**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

From:  **Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Program and Policy Implementation**
 **Paul Sutliff, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations**

Re: TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP – Policy Reminder: Language Access

Policy Reminder This Online Guide transmittal serves as a reminder about DTA's responsibility to provide interpreters at no cost to clients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) for the conduct of Department business. All DTA staff who interact with the public must advise LEP clients of the right to interpreter services and provide any needed interpreter services to those whose primary language is not English.

Interpreter services must be offered to clients with LEP during both face-to-face and telephonic interactions.

**Policy Reminder
(continued)**

An LEP client, who presents in person or by telephone, and intends to use their own adult interpreter, must be advised that DTA will provide an interpreter free of charge. After being informed of the option, the client may decline the use of professional interpreter services and choose to have the adult serve as his/her interpreter.

Important: Children over age 12 may interpret for DTA clients only to schedule an appointment.

DTA staff must not request that children age 12 and under interpret for any purpose.

Important: DTA Staff must indicate on the Narrative tab the means of interpreter services utilized, if a client declined the service or if the client opted to use their own interpreter.

**Department
Interpreter
Services**

DTA local office staff has three means of assisting clients with interpreter services:

- bilingual case managers;
- Human Services Assistants (HSAs); and
- telephonic and contracted in-person language interpreter services.

Central Office units that interact with clients primarily rely upon bilingual staff and telephonic language interpreters.

*Bilingual Case
Managers and
Human Services
Assistants*

Bilingual case managers are located in many TAOs. DTA also employs HSAs who act as interpreters for the following high incidence languages: Cape Verdean Creole, Chinese, Khmer, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. Each HSA is affiliated with a specific TAO. The list of HSA and their language is located on the DTA Online Intranet site. To access the list:

- click Administration & Finance;
 - select Interpreter Services under Administrative Operations; and
 - select TAO Interpreter List under Interpreter Services.
-

**Department
Interpreter
Services
(continued)**

*In-Person
Interpreter
Services*

Contracted organizations provide in-person statewide interpreter services. However, as there can be up to a 72-hour wait time for providing contracted interpreters, these services should generally be used for scheduled face-to-face appointments and not expected to meet immediate needs.

For in-person or telephonic communications with clients, bilingual case managers and HSAs must be used, if available. Telephonic language interpreters should be accessed whenever a bilingual case manager or an HSA is unavailable to assist. All TAO staff have direct access to telephonic language interpreters.

*Telephonic
Interpreter
Services*

**Online Guide
Pages Reference**

For detailed information about interpreter service requirements and instructions for accessing and using interpreter services, including how to use the telephone interpreter line, see:

- the Interpreter Services book in the Cross Programs section of the Online Guide;
- the Interpreter Services chapter, located in the Services book in the EAEDC, SNAP and TAFDC sections of the Online Guide;
- Using Interpreter Services Online Guide page, located here: Business Process Redesign -> Procedures -> Phone Procedures; and
- the Interpreter Services Information section of Policy Online.

Questions

If you have any questions, please email the DTA Mailbox. Systems questions should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.
