



ICE Language Access Plan

December 17, 2024



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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SECTION I - BACKGROUND

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) protects the United States from cross-border crime and illegal immigration that threatens national security and public safety. To carry out that mission, ICE focuses on smart immigration enforcement, preventing terrorism and combating transnational criminal threats.

The following ICE Program Offices and Directorates are involved in providing language assistance services:

- Office of the Director (OD): OD is responsible for overseeing the Agency's operations and leadership and includes leadership offices such as: the Office of External Affairs (OEA), which encompasses the Office of Congressional Relations; the Office of Public Affairs (OPA), the Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE); the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Policy (ORAP); and the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights (ODCR). Within OD, OPA is responsible for building public understanding and support for the Agency's mission by engaging with news media, federal, state, and local agencies, and non-governmental organizations. OPA ensures that all of ICE's publicly releasable information is accessible for limited English proficient (LEP) external stakeholders. ODCR, among other responsibilities, leads the Agency's efforts to enhance the language access services provided to ICE's external stakeholders and to assess programmatic compliance with ICE's established milestones and guidelines for augmenting language access.
- Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO): ERO identifies, arrests, detains, and removes noncitizens who present a danger to national security, are a risk to public safety, enter the United States illegally, or otherwise undermine the integrity of U.S. immigration laws and border control efforts. In carrying out this important mission, it is vital for ERO personnel to communicate effectively with a broad-spectrum of noncitizens, including those who are LEP. ERO is committed to ensuring that external LEP stakeholders (including members of the public seeking access to programs and noncitizens who are subject to ICE enforcement actions and/or are in ICE custody) have meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities by providing quality language assistance services in a timely manner. This includes identifying and translating vital documents into the most frequently encountered languages, providing interpretive services where appropriate, and educating personnel about language access responsibilities and how to utilize available resources. ERO also regularly reviews language services vendor performance to evaluate the quality of services provided as well as emerging trends. When conducting its business and strategic planning, ERO considers means of enhancing its language access services that do not also unduly burden the Agency mission.
- Homeland Security Investigations (HSI): HSI is the principal investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), responsible for investigating transnational

crime and threats, specifically those criminal organizations that exploit the global infrastructure through which international trade, travel, and finance move. HSI's mission is to investigate, disrupt and dismantle terrorist, transnational and other criminal organizations that threaten or seek to exploit the customs and immigration laws of the United States. As part of this mission, HSI is committed to providing language access during its law enforcement and operational activities.

- Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA): OPLA serves as the exclusive representative of DHS in removal proceedings before the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), litigating cases involving criminal noncitizens, terrorists, human rights violators, other priority noncitizens, and noncitizens seeking relief from removal. OPLA also provides a full range of legal services to all ICE programs and offices.
- Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR): OPR is responsible for upholding the Agency's professional standards through a multi-disciplinary approach of security, inspections, and investigations. OPR utilizes ICE language services during its inspections and investigations.

SECTION II - THE COMMITMENT

ICE is committed to providing free, accurate, timely, and effective language assistance services to external stakeholders who are limited English proficient (LEP) to communicate effectively and have meaningful access to ICE's programs, services, and activities. These external stakeholders include, but are not limited to, members of the general public; noncitizens in detention; friends, family members or visitors of noncitizens in detention; and individuals subject to ICE enforcement operations (e.g., suspects, witnesses, and victims of crime) who require language assistance services for access to, or participation in, ICE programs and activities. ICE's commitment is consistent with the principles of meaningful access as outlined in [Executive Order 13166](#), *Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency* (August 11, 2000) (EO 13166). EO 13166 requires, among other things, that each Federal department and agency "examine the services it provides to LEP persons and develop and implement a system by which LEP persons have meaningful access to those services without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of the agency." ICE is also committed to equitable access to underserved communities as outlined in [Executive Order 14091](#), *Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities through the Federal Government* (February 16, 2023), which calls on Federal agencies to, among other things, improve language access services to ensure that all communities can engage with agencies' civil rights offices. The ICE Language Access Plan (LAP) adopts the principles of both the [DHS 2023 Language Access Plan](#) and the [DHS Indigenous Languages Plan](#).

It is our commitment to provide quality language assistance services, while providing victim centered, trauma informed responses in a timely manner, at no cost to LEP and/or Deaf and/or

Hard of Hearing (D/HOH) individuals seeking access to our ICE’s programs and activities. ICE’s commitment extends to providing meaningful access to ICE’s public information available through our websites, blogs, social media, email, telephone, and in-person contacts. ICE routinely encounters noncitizens speaking diverse languages and dialects, including indigenous or rare languages from across the globe. The top five (5) languages spoken by noncitizens that ICE most frequently encounters fluctuate from month-to-month and have typically included: Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Arabic, and Punjabi.

ICE’s commitment to language access services is documented through this updated LAP and is representative of ICE’s ever evolving plans and processes to augment the language access services it provides to its external stakeholders who are LEP and/or D/HOH. ICE issued its first [Language Access Plan](#) on June 14, 2015. ICE issued its [ICE Language Access Plan Supplemental Update Covering FYs 2019 and 2020](#) on July 21, 2020. This LAP supersedes the 2015 LAP and the 2020 LAP Supplement.

SECTION III - POLICY

ICE adheres to the DHS policy on language access set forth in the DHS LAP.¹ It is ICE policy to ensure that external LEP stakeholders have meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities by providing quality language assistance services in a timely manner at no cost to the LEP person. This includes providing timely and effective communication to members of the public who are seeking access to ICE’s programs, activities, and services; LEP individuals subject to ICE enforcement actions; LEP individuals in ICE custody; and LEP individuals that ICE works to protect.

This also includes identifying and translating vital documents into the most frequently encountered languages, providing interpretive services where appropriate, and educating personnel about language access responsibilities and how to utilize available language access resources. ICE will translate vital documents, or vital information found in a document, into the primary language of a person who is LEP or provide sight interpretation to communicate all the vital information in a document as it relates to rights, safety, and health.

ICE will not use minors or members of victims’ families for providing language services except in rare circumstances (e.g., exigent circumstances involving life and safety and only until such time as a qualified interpreter or translator is secured).

¹ Pursuant to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Language Access Plan, “[i]t is the policy of DHS to provide meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency to operations, services, activities, and programs that support each Homeland Security mission area by providing quality language assistance services in a timely manner. DHS Components, therefore, should incorporate language access considerations into their routine strategic and business planning, identify and translate crucial documents into the most frequently encountered languages, provide interpretive services where appropriate, and educate personnel about language access responsibilities and how to utilize available language access resources.” DHS Language Access Plan of November 2023, [DHS Language Access Plans | Homeland Security](#).

When conducting its business and strategic planning, ICE will consider processes for enhancing language access services for its programs and activities that include external stakeholders, provided that such processes do not unduly burden the Agency mission.

The ICE LAP applies to the Agency functions in which ICE employees interact with members of the public, persons involved in law enforcement interactions, persons detained in ICE custody, and persons subject to reporting requirements with ICE (e.g., orders of recognizance, orders of supervision), including victims and witnesses in HSI investigations. This includes, but is not limited to, websites, blogs, social media, email, telephone, and in-person contact.

ICE will comply with federal Section 508 accessibility and plain language guidelines when developing materials that are intended for the public. The use of plain language enhances accessibility and understanding for persons who speak English and helps to ensure that translated materials convey information in a clear and concise manner.

SECTION IV - A SAMPLING OF ICE’S KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

ICE has made measured progress in augmenting the language access services it provides since issuing its first [ICE LAP \(2015\)](#) and the [ICE Supplemental Language Access Plan \(2020\)](#). A sampling of key accomplishments and activities enhancing language access services at ICE are provided below and are organized according to an operational and engagement focus. For a more detailed listing of accomplishments and activities, see [Appendix B](#).

A. Operational Accomplishments and Activities in ICE’s Language Access Services

1. Office of Diversity and Civil Rights (ODCR)

- Provides Agency-wide program management, technical assistance resources, policy and guidance, and training to ICE personnel to facilitate the provision of language services in ICE programs and activities.
- 2022 - Developed and distributed a Pacific Region Languages identification poster to the workforce.
- 2023 - Launched the updated biennial mandatory Language Access Training Module for ICE employees encountering LEP external stakeholders.
- 2024 - Developed and issued technical assistance guidance for identifying vital documents to the workforce.
- Regularly updates information posted on the public-facing webpage, [Office of Diversity and Civil Rights \(ICE.gov\)](#), regarding the availability of language services.

2. Enforcement Removal Operations (ERO)

- 2020 - Launched the Compliance Assistance Reporting Terminals (CART), a tool used to support the supervision of non-detained noncitizens and automates the

reporting processes. ERO developed informational brochures and FAQs that are distributed to noncitizens enrolled in CART to assist with their understanding of the reporting process prior to their use of CART. The CART system, informational brochures and FAQs are available in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, French, Russian, and Haitian Creole.

- 2021 - Developed the ICE Appointment Scheduler allowing noncitizens to schedule required appointments at local ERO Field Offices in English, Spanish, French, Creole, Portuguese, Mandarin, Russian, Somali, Turkish, Vietnamese, and Arabic. Noncitizens can also call the Detention Reporting and Information Line (DRIL) to request ERO assistance and to answer questions and resolve concerns. The DRIL provides language assistance, including Spanish speaking operators.
- 2023 - Launched the [ICE Portal](#), a public-facing website available in ten (10) languages other than English, that centralizes communications between noncitizens and the federal government, including: scheduling required appointments, updating addresses, and checking immigration court hearing information in a consolidated location.
- 2024 - Translated the *ICE Sexual Abuse and Assault Prevention and Intervention Pamphlet*, a brochure available to detained noncitizens containing information on ICE sexual abuse and assault definitions, reporting methods, ways to avoid sexual abuse and assault, and what to expect after reporting, into two (2) additional languages, Pulaar and Uzbek, bringing the total count to 17 available languages.
- Since 2022, ERO has translated over 40 ICE forms that require a detained noncitizen's signature, to include into Spanish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Haitian Creole, French, Hindi, Russian, and Turkish.
- Updated the [ICE National Detainee Handbook](#) with specific language notifying noncitizens that they are entitled to language services for medical and detention related matters if they are LEP. The Handbook is translated into Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, French, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Portuguese, Mam, Pulaar, Punjabi, K'iche' (Quiché), O'eqchi' (Kekchí), Romanian, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese, and Wolof.
- The ICE Health Service Corps provides detained noncitizens with brochures on medical orientation, health information dealing with stress, and staying healthy, which are translated into Haitian Creole, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic, French Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, Turkish, and Urdu.

3. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)

- Uses language services to translate and transcribe priority documents and audio recorded telephone calls and interviews.
- Uses certified bilingual Special Agents for investigative purposes, consistent with the Foreign Language Proficiency Award (FLPA) Program.

- The [Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center \(HRVWCC\) \(DHS.gov\)](#) provides the public with information on ICE and HSI resources and programs, including information on how the public can report human rights violators and their crimes.
- HRVWCC maintains brochures available in physical form for use during outreach programs and events. The *Human Rights Violators & War Crimes Center Brochure* is available in English, Arabic, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS), French, and Spanish. The *Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Flyer*, a one-page document designed to inform the public that FGM is a federal crime, has been translated into French, Arabic, Somali and Farsi, and efforts are underway to create an Amharic translation. In the future, these documents will be made available on HSI's website.
- The HSI Office of Intelligence (HSI-Intel) uses and provides language access services during its collection, analysis and sharing of timely and accurate intelligence and in the operation of the ICE Tip Line.
- Led by HSI, the DHS Center for Countering Human Trafficking's (CCHT's) Blue Campaign is a national public awareness campaign designed to educate the public, law enforcement, and other industry partners to recognize the indicators of human trafficking, and how to appropriately respond to possible cases. Blue Campaign works closely with DHS Components to create general awareness training and materials for law enforcement and others to increase detection of human trafficking and to identify victims. Blue Campaign produces educational and outreach materials in multiple languages and makes these translated materials publicly available on its website. Translated materials have powerful potential to increase public awareness and reporting. Incorporation of language access considerations into Blue Campaign objectives will be reviewed periodically in accordance with DHS guidelines. Additionally, CCHT has personnel proficient in the Spanish language that provide counter human trafficking training, public awareness, and informational sessions on the Continued Presence Program to key stakeholders.

B. Community Engagement Work in Providing Language Access Services Across ICE

For years, ICE has engaged with communities to enhance the language access services provided.

- 2021 - ICE partnered with a non-profit organization to develop and translate COVID-19 informational videos into Chuj, Deguerro Mixtec, K'iche, Me'Phha, Mixtec, Q'eqchi, and Zapotec, with Spanish subtitles. These materials were disseminated across ICE detention facilities in electronic form and DVD and CD formats to provide information to noncitizens in detention on COVID-19.
- 2021 - ODCR assisted DHS in providing information to families about family reunification efforts by developing translations and audio recordings of the DHS family reunification website in Mam, Ki'che, Q'eqchi, and Qonjabal.
- 2022 - Participated in the DHS external stakeholder listening session with the Arizona Welcoming Committee/International Rescue Committee and the Florence Project with

Indigenous language speakers, and nine (9) DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) community engagements.

- 2023 - Participated in DHS Language Access listening sessions and a Department of Justice (DOJ) stakeholder listening session for language access; published a dedicated [ERO Language Access Information and Resources \(ICE.gov\)](#) section on the ICE public-facing webpage, serving as a repository for stakeholders of general information.
- 2024 - Participated in DHS-facilitated listening sessions with community organizations discussing language access needs for noncitizens in detention.
- 2024 - CCHT, in coordination with the Blue Campaign contract, facilitated the translation of the Continued Presence Webinar training into the Spanish language.

SECTION V - THE PLAN

ICE is committed to its daily work of providing language access services to its external stakeholders who are seeking meaningful access to ICE's programs, activities, and services, including members of the public, noncitizens in detention, crime victims, LEP individuals subject to ICE law enforcement activities, and LEP individuals that ICE works to protect. ICE is further committed to augmenting the language services it provides by implementing the following short term (1 year) and longer term (2-3 years) strategic objectives.

A. Short Term Strategic Objectives - FY25

- Draft and disseminate a series of technical assistance materials for ICE personnel explaining key steps in providing language access services.
- Develop and implement an awareness marketing campaign for this LAP for ICE employees and external stakeholders.
- Draft and finalize a charter to serve as the foundation for the ICE Language Access Working Group (LAWG) by FY25/Q1.
- Adapt the DHS/CRCL taglines, as appropriate, and publish on the ICE public-facing website advising the availability of free language access services.
- Update the public website by posting additional translated vital documents, as appropriate.
- Augment the language access resources and translated documents available on ICE digital platforms.
- Develop the structure and processes for language services compliance monitoring across ICE programs.
- Identify additional language services resources. Begin a study to assess the feasibility of establishing an in-house linguist program to augment the language services provided by ICE and support victim-centered interviews.

B. Longer Term Strategic Objectives - FY26/27

- Leverage the ICE LAWG to study the different ways that language access services are being provided across the directorates and program offices (including the use of bilingual employees and the feasibility of establishing an in-house linguist program).
- Draft a report outlining the findings and recommendations for augmenting language services and for evaluating the volume and quality of language access services.
- Develop and conduct a study to assess the viability, effectiveness, and potential consequences of leveraging machine translation and/or artificial intelligence in the provision of language access services.
- Implement a pilot compliance monitoring program to evaluate the effectiveness of the ICE language access services program.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the language access services in custodial and non-custodial programs, and in support of victim interviews.

SECTION VI - RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Responsible Staff/Language Access Coordinator

The Assistant Director for ODCR is the Senior Executive and champion for the language access services program at ICE. The ODCR Chief of the Division responsible for managing external programs is the senior management official charged with overseeing the development and implementation of the ICE language access services program. The Lead Language Access Coordinator (LLAC) for ICE is an ODCR policy advisor within the Division responsible for managing external programs. The LLAC is responsible for the daily management and implementation of this LAP and the management of the ICE Language Access Working Group (LAWG). The directorates and major program offices are responsible for designating a Language Access Coordinator (LAC) for their program area. The LAC is responsible for managing the language access services program in their area and participating in the LAWG. See [Appendix C](#).

B. Oversight

ODCR provides comprehensive oversight for the ICE language access services program. ODCR leads the ICE LAWG and participates in the DHS and DOJ language access working groups. ODCR partners with the directorate and program office LACs and provides technical assistance and guidance. ODCR is codifying these oversight responsibilities through the development and implementation of a charter to serve as the foundation of the ICE LAWG.

C. Notice to Employees

ICE regularly provides technical assistance and notices to employees explaining their responsibilities to provide language access services to LEP stakeholders when applicable. Technical assistance is provided through several platforms, including internal webpages, a

weekly newsletter for ICE employees, and the ICE Communications Network. The directorates and program offices routinely provide targeted technical assistance outlining updated practices for providing language access services through their communications platforms and internal webpages.

D. Alignment to DHS Equity Plan

This LAP aligns to Section II (B) of the [Final DHS Equity Action Plan](#) by expanding the development and distribution of technical assistance materials, including training for the workforce and expanding access to language services for noncitizens encountered in and out of detention. See [Section VII](#) and [Appendix B](#).

E. Alignment with DHS Language Access Plan and Indigenous Languages Plan

This LAP aligns to Section VI of the [DHS 2023 Language Access Plan](#) and Sections II, IV, and VI of the [DHS Indigenous Languages Plan](#) by outlining how ICE will continue to provide language access services to its external stakeholders, including noncitizens in detention, and noncitizens who speak indigenous languages. See [Section VI](#) and [Appendix B](#).

F. Alignment with ICE Policy Efforts and Victims

All ICE personnel who encounter crime victims are required to do so through a victim-centered approach, which is adopted broadly by federal law enforcement agencies whereby equal value is placed on the identification and stabilization of victims and the deterrence, investigation, and prosecution of perpetrators. The goal of this victim-centered approach is to minimize any undue stress, harm, and trauma to the victim throughout the course of the investigation and prosecution of the offender, regardless of the victim's age, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, or language spoken.

This LAP should align with the ICE-issued Directive, *Using a Victim-Centered Approach with Noncitizen Crime Victims*, which sets forth policy regarding noncitizens who apply for and are beneficiaries of victim-based immigration benefit requests.

SECTION VII - ICE LANGUAGE ACCESS PROCESSES

A. Language Access Procedures/Protocols

ICE's language access processes provide directorate and program office specific instructions on both providing and obtaining professional language services. The internal processes include staff training and job aids to assist in identifying an individual's primary language and in providing qualified language services which can include sign language interpretation for individuals who are D/HOH. The use of minors as interpreters or translators is prohibited except in rare circumstances (e.g., exigent circumstances involving life and safety and only until such time as a

qualified interpreter or translator is secured). ICE Language services provide LEP individuals meaningful access to ICE programs, services and activities and are not provided to LEP individuals for communicating with other noncitizens, friends, family, their attorneys or legal representatives, other government agencies, or outside entities, for completing their applications or forms, or to translate their personal legal case filings and correspondence.

B. Definitions and Guiding Principles

ICE follows the definitions/key terms linked in [Appendix A](#) to guide the language access program. ICE abides by the following guiding principles for interpretation:

- Interpretation involves the immediate oral communication of meaning from one language into another.
- Interpreters may be physically present, or, in appropriate circumstances, may appear via videoconferencing or telephonically.
- When videoconferencing or telephonic interpretation is used, options include connecting directly to a specific professional interpreter with known qualifications or using a company that provides telephonic interpretation services and has in-place quality control and privacy safeguards.
- From the standpoint of the user, a successful interpretation is one that accurately conveys the meaning of the source language orally, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source message, without omissions, additions, or embellishments on the part of the interpreter.
- Professional interpreters are subject to specific codes of conduct and should be trained in interpretive skills, ethics, and subject-matter language.
- Language services contractors are required to provide information about certification of linguists, including assessments taken, qualifications, experience, and training.
- Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that bilingual staff who serve as translators or interpreters are competent to do so.

C. Prioritization

ICE conducts periodic assessments of language usage to ensure awareness of the changing needs for language assistance are addressed, which ensures appropriate services are available in consideration of the importance of the services or encounter, frequency of use, and demographics. ERO also regularly assesses language line usage statistics and detained population country of citizenship information to identify language needs and emerging trends in migration. ERO coordinates with its language services vendor to better ensure recruitment and availability of over-the-phone interpretation services for these populations. HSI has statutory authority and investigative responsibilities for many federal crimes involving victims, including human trafficking, child exploitation, child sex tourism, white collar and other financial offenses, human rights abuses, and other federal crimes within the United States and abroad. HSI special agents investigate potential violations of more than 400 federal statutes; many of these

investigations have the potential to identify a diverse range of victims. HSI's Victim Assistance Program (VAP) helps ensure that statutorily mandated services and rights are afforded to victims in HSI criminal investigations in accordance with federal law. HSI victim specialists assist victims and provide referrals for services and resources to victims in HSI criminal investigations. HSI forensic interviewers conduct trauma-informed forensic interviews of victims and witnesses as requested by HSI Special Agents in HSI criminal investigations. Through incorporation of a victim-centered approach in DHS policies, training, and practices, the CCHT's Victim Protection section is working to improve victim screening protocols through training and field support to ICE employees. CCHT also houses the Continued Presence Program which is a temporary immigration designation that enables victims of human trafficking to live and work lawfully in the U.S. in two-year increments while cooperating with an investigation. The Victim Protection section regularly works with Non-Governmental Organizations and the HSI Victim Assistance Program, as appropriate, to facilitate language accessible assistance to victims of human trafficking or related crimes.

D. Responding to Surges

ICE has instituted a language services contract with a provider that has noted its capability to provide interpretation and translation services in a surge or sudden change in demographics of the LEP population served or encountered. This contract also has linguists for rare and indigenous languages.

E. Demographic Assessments

ICE periodically assesses the available language usage statistics to identify the top languages/populations encountered or served in its programs and activities. The top five (5) languages spoken by noncitizens that ICE encounters fluctuate from month-to-month and have typically included: Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Arabic and Punjabi.

F. Indigenous and Rare Languages

ERO has instituted a contract specifically for indigenous languages that includes development of cultural awareness training and assessment of detention processes to better identify and address the language needs of Indigenous language speakers from Mexico and Central and South America. ERO has also developed an audio-visual tool to assist in identification of a noncitizen's primary rare or indigenous language spoken in parts of Mexico, Central and South America, and Africa. ICE has also facilitated the use of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) mobile application language identification feature to assist in identification of indigenous languages via pre-recorded audio files of the phrase "do you speak [insert language]?"

G. Data Tracking

In addition to regularly assessing available language line usage statistics and detained population country of citizenship information, ERO recently deployed updates to its data system, allowing officers to identify and record a noncitizen's LEP status and primary language and to edit or add this information, as needed. This documentation supports the Agency's ability to identify individuals who may be LEP and who may need language services.

H. Notice to the Public

ICE provides information on its website concerning some of the language access services provided to noncitizens in and out of detention. See: [Language Access Information and Resources \(ICE.gov\)](#), [Language Access Program \(ICE.gov\)](#), and the [Language Access Information Sheet \(ICE.gov\)](#). The publication of taglines to the ICE website are part of the short-term strategic objectives for FY25.

SECTION VIII - IMPLEMENTATION

A. Employee Duties

In some cases, ICE uses bilingual employees to provide some language services. Some ICE components, such as HSI, assess employee language skills through a Foreign Language Proficiency Award (FLPA) Program.²

FLPA participants are tested in the foreign language(s) they use in the performance of duties using tests based on the Federal Interagency Language Roundtable requirements. ERO requires all entry-level Deportation Officers (DOs-1801s) to successfully complete a basic Spanish course as part of their basic training. The course is designed to provide officers with a minimum Level 1 Spanish proficiency measured against the [International Language Roundtable Scale](#).

B. Resources

ERO staff serves as the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for the ICE-wide language services contract. Centralizing oversight over the contract allows better coordination with the vendor regarding language needs and sudden changes in LEP population demographics, and the establishment of processes for obtaining regular reports.

² The HSI FLPA Program awards an annual cash payment of up to 5 percent of basic pay to law enforcement officers for demonstrated proficiency and substantial use of one or more foreign languages in the performance of their official duties.

C. Quality Control Procedures

ODCR collaborates with ICE Directorates and Program Offices to monitor progress and document completion of LAP priorities and objectives. ODCR created new data analytic dashboards to report on language services usage, emergent needs, activities, and priorities. ODCR monitors and addresses language access concerns from external stakeholders. ODCR conducts a biannual evaluation of Plan implementation and develops updates to reflect current usage, activities, and priorities.

Contract language service providers are required to develop and maintain a quality control plan (QCP), which includes internal quality controls and methods to test, train, evaluate, and certify language specialists. The QCP must include methods to track timeliness and performance with the means to identify deficiencies in services and procedures to correct deficiencies and prevent recurrence.

ICE and ERO Oversight - ICE employs a robust and multi-level oversight and compliance program. At ICE detention facilities nationwide, ERO Field Office staff are responsible for working in close collaboration with facility staff to ensure compliance with the ICE detention standards and resolving deficiencies and areas of non-compliance as they arise. To complement ERO Field Office compliance efforts, ICE also uses inspectors from the Agency's Office of Detention Oversight (ODO) to conduct various on-site (ad-hoc, unannounced, special reviews, spot-checks, targeted investigations) and remote (contingency) inspections at ICE detention facilities.

D. Training

ICE provides training to its employees on the responsibilities to provide language access services to LEP stakeholders. *Language Access 101* is a biennial training requirement for all law enforcement officers, managers, and supervisors. Additionally, ODCR sends updates and reminders to the ICE workforce on new and existing language access resources through ICE communication platforms including ICE newsletter articles and the ICE Communications Network.

E. Outreach to LEP Communities

ICE Directorates and Program Offices work with and through the Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE) to participate in community engagement and listening sessions. ICE OPE remains available to assist, coordinate, and guide engagement activities with stakeholders and communities as needed and deemed appropriate.

F. Technologies

ICE continues to assess technology to facilitate translation capabilities.

G. Compliance/Contacts

ODCR will continue its responsibility of coordinating, overseeing, and providing guidance to ICE Program Offices and assist in the overall improvement of language access services.

Inquiries related to this Plan may be directed to the ICE Lead Language Access Coordinator, at ICECivilLiberties@ice.dhs.gov.

No Private Right: These guidelines, which may be modified, superseded, or rescinded at any time, are not intended to, do not, and may not be relied upon to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by any party in any administrative, civil, or criminal matter.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS / KEY TERMS

The following definitions/key terms apply for purposes of this Plan.

Bilingual Person - A person who is bilingual is fluent in two (2) languages and can conduct the business of the workplace in either of those languages. This is to be distinguished from proficiency in more than one (1) language. An individual who is proficient in a language may, for example, be able to greet an LEP individual in his or her language, but not conduct Agency business in that language. Interpretation and translation require the interpreter or translator to be fluently bilingual and require additional specific skills for interpretation and translation, as described below.

Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing (D/HOH) - An individual who is D/HOH may have a limited proficiency in spoken or written English and may not be proficient in American Sign Language (ASL), or any other recognized sign language.

Direct Communication - Monolingual communication in a language other than English between a qualified bilingual employee or representative and an LEP individual (e.g., Spanish to Spanish).

Effective Communication - Communication sufficient to provide the LEP individual with substantially the same level of access to services received by individuals who are not LEP. For example, staff must take reasonable steps to ensure communication with an LEP individual is as effective as communications with others when providing similar programs and services.

External Stakeholder - A person who is not an ICE employee or contractor and who has contact with, or is seeking information or services from, ICE programs or activities. External stakeholders include, but are not limited to, members of the general public; noncitizens in detention; friends, family members or visitors of noncitizens in detention; and individuals subject to ICE enforcement operations (e.g., suspects, witnesses, and victims of crime).

Indigenous People and Languages - Indigenous peoples, also referred to as first people, Aboriginal people, or native people, are culturally distinct ethnic groups who are native to a geographic location and maintain traditions or other aspects of an early culture that is associated with a given region. Indigenous language is native to a region and is often an oral language with few speakers who can read or write the language.

Interpretation - Interpretation involves the immediate oral communication of meaning from one (1) language into another.

Language Access Services - Oral and written language services to enable LEP individuals to communicate effectively with staff to gain access to participate fully in the services, activities, or other programs administered by ICE.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) - An individual who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. LEP individuals may be competent in English for certain types of communication (e.g., speaking or understanding), but still be LEP for other purposes (e.g., reading or writing). LEP designations are also context-specific; an individual may possess sufficient English language skills to function in one setting, but these skills may be insufficient in other settings.

Meaningful Access - Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication to access ICE programs, services or activities and that is available at no cost to the LEP individual. Meaningful access denotes access that is not significantly restricted, delayed, or inferior as compared to program or activity access provided to English proficient persons.

Primary Language - The language in which a person communicates most effectively.

Proficiency - The ability of an individual to speak, read, write, and understand a language.

Sight Translation - Oral rendering of written text into spoken language by an interpreter without change in meaning based on a visual review of the original text or document.

Tagline - Taglines are short statements written in non-English languages that indicate the availability of language assistance services free of charge.

Translation - The process of converting written text from a source language into an equivalent written text in a target language as fully and accurately as possible while maintaining the style, tone, and intent of the text, while considering cultural differences and dialect.

Vital Document - Documents that contains information that is critical for obtaining any aid, benefit, or services, or is required by law. Vital documents can include applications; consent and other forms that require signatures; complaints; forms; notices of rights; notices on the availability of free language assistance; and letters or notices that require a response from the beneficiary, customer, or noncitizen.

APPENDIX B: ICE'S DETAILED LISTING OF LANGUAGE SERVICES ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

A. Homeland Security Investigations

HSI Special Agents use a variety of language access activities in the course of normal investigative duties. HSI Special Agents utilize the ICE-approved language line, transcription services, and written translation services, which are used to translate priority documents and audio recorded telephone calls and interviews, respectively. HSI Special Agents document foreign language activities in Reports of Investigations in the Investigative Case Management (ICM) System and update the investigative case when/if the need for a foreign language is needed. Agents have access to language access technical assistance resources through HSI's internal employee website and receive Agency guidance via the ICE Communications Network.

HSI has certified foreign language speakers who participate in the Foreign Language Proficiency Award (FLPA) Program and regularly coordinate with partnering agencies to satisfy additional needs. Agents may volunteer to participate in the program and are tested and certified in spoken language proficiency. Agents may request assistance from bilingual Special Agents or analysts, through their chain of command. Certified bilingual Special Agents using foreign languages for investigative purposes are required to document foreign language hours in the monthly hours reports within ICM and are compensated accordingly.

HSI Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center (HRVWCC) investigative program literature provides the public with information on ICE HSI resources and programs, including information on how the public can report human rights violators and their crimes. HRVWCC continues to maintain information brochures and outreach materials in multiple languages. The *Human Rights Violators & War Crimes Unit Rwanda* Brochure is available in English and French. The *Human Rights Violators & War Crimes Center* Brochure is available in English, Arabic, Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian, and Spanish. The *Fact Sheet on Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting* is available in Amharic, Arabic, Bahasa, English, French, Orimifa, Somali, Swahili, and Tigrinya. Recently, an investigative tool, "Notification of Law" Form, distributed to the public during human rights violation cases, was translated into French, Arabic, Somali, and Farsi. The "Notification of Law" Form is currently being translated in Amharic. HRVWCC utilizes ICE approved translation and interpretive services for its investigative needs.

The HSI Office of Intelligence (HSI-Intel) is committed to providing language access during its collection, analysis, and sharing of timely and accurate intelligence available to ICE. HSI-Intel's language access priority is the translation of critical documents. HSI-Intel runs the ICE Tip Line, a 24/7 intake center that processes tip information relating to the federal statutes enforced by HSI. Every day, the ICE Tip Line receives information through calls and the [online form](#) from external stakeholders located throughout the United States and worldwide. Several ICE Tip Line staff participate in the FLPA Program and can provide effective communication in the language in which they are bilingual. Additionally, the ICE Tip Line utilizes ICE's approved language

vendors to provide interpretative and translation services in over 250 languages. HSI-Intel currently allocates \$150,000 to support ICE language service contracts. Additional funds can be allocated for surges in activity.

HSI's Domestic Operations Division is responsible for managing, directing, coordinating, and supporting all investigative activities of HSI domestic field offices. HSI has 30 Special Agent in Charge (SAC) Offices across the United States. HSI SAC Offices utilize ICE approved interpretation and translation services to provide language access to their law enforcement and operational activities, including for witnesses, victims, and suspect interviews. The ICE-approved language line operates seven (7) days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, for various services such as oral interpretation, written translation, and audio to text transcription. HSI domestic operations regularly requests validation of the language line charges from the SACs. Agents track their usage of language access services and/or provision of FLPA foreign language hours in ICM. SACs provide email broadcast messages regarding the LAP, ICE language access trainings, and language access resources to all employees, including the ICE Directive 1007.1, *Foreign Language Proficiency Awards for Non-Bargaining ICE Law Enforcement Officers* (July 25, 2007), along with its attachments "Foreign Language Testing Application" and "Foreign Language Reporting Document."

B. Enforcement and Removal Operations

ICE/ERO Language Services Contract

Until the end of FY22, ERO utilized two (2) language lines (via an Interagency Agreement with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Language Services Section (USCIS LSS) and an Agency-wide contract for professional language services) to provide over-the-phone interpretation, translation, and transcription services in more than 200 languages, including rare and Indigenous languages. As of October 2022, ERO no longer has an agreement in place with USCIS LSS; instead, ERO continues to use its professional language line via the Agency-wide contract for language services.

ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) historically had a separate language line contract available 24/7 for use by IHSC healthcare staff. ERO recognized the many benefits of combining language line contracts with IHSC, including increased sharing of available ICE-cleared linguists and recruitment efforts for rare languages, as well as more comprehensive ERO-wide language data and usage tracking. Accordingly, as of May 1, 2022, ICE instituted an Agency-wide, 24/7 language line contract that covers all ERO (including IHSC) and other ICE offices.

ERO staff serves as the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for the Agency-wide language services contract. Centralizing oversight over the contract allows for better coordination with the vendor regarding language needs and sudden changes in LEP population demographics, and the establishment of processes for obtaining regular reports.

To ensure ERO personnel are familiar with services, ERO created and periodically updates a *ERO Language Services Resource* Flyer, a user-friendly tool cataloguing available language services. The Flyer is available on the ERO internal webpage and has been disseminated to ERO Field Office staff on several occasions via broadcast and email correspondence.

DHS Blanket Purchase Agreement for Language Services

Where the ERO contract language services provider is not able to fulfill a request for a specific language, ERO personnel can utilize vendors through a Federal Emergency Management Agency-led DHS-wide Language Services Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA). This contracting vehicle provides DHS components the ability to purchase language services at volume discounts and pre-negotiated terms and conditions. To facilitate the use of the BPA, ERO created and disseminated a “how to” document detailing steps that alternate CORs or Points of Contact from other ICE offices can follow to solicit and secure language services through this vehicle. The guidance is accessible through the ERO internal webpage and has been shared with ERO Field Office and ICE staff on several occasions via email correspondence.

Bilingual ERO Field Office Personnel

ERO utilizes its Field Office personnel who have a sufficient level of proficiency in one or more languages other than English to communicate with detained and non-detained LEP persons in their primary language, at the level of importance and difficulty of the employee’s foreign language skills. For more complex interactions such as medical care and legal processes, personnel must recognize any limitations of using their foreign language skills and instead use available professional language services.

Language Access Outreach

Between 2021 and 2024, ERO coordinated with the ICE Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE) to host, and participate in, listening sessions with select legal and nongovernmental organizations. In these sessions, participants share feedback on their experiences with ICE language access challenges in and out of detention. Most recently, this included a DHS Language Access listening sessions (March 2023); a Department of Justice stakeholder listening session for Language Access (April 2023); and listening sessions on language access concerns for Mauritanians in detention (March, May, and August 2024).

In 2023, ERO coordinated with the ICE Office of Public Affairs to publish a dedicated [ERO Language Access Information and Resources](#) section on the ICE public-facing webpage ([ICE.gov](#)). The new section serves as a repository for stakeholders of general information on ERO language access authority and responsibility and promotes awareness about select ERO activities and resources.

The ERO Contact Center of Operations (ECCO) serves as a conduit for reporting a wide range of issues that are central to the efficiency of ICE enforcement and detention operations. Through the ECCO, detained noncitizens and external stakeholders can call dedicated toll-free phone lines to communicate directly with ERO about specific programs, case inquiries, or general concerns. These include the Detention Reporting and Information Line (DRIL), Victims Engagement and Services Line (VESL), and DHS Victim Information and Notification Exchange (VINE) Helpdesk. Each phone line is staffed by English and Spanish-speaking operators who also use professional language services to communicate with callers who are not proficient in English or Spanish. ERO has also identified Field Office and Headquarters personnel who review and respond to such concerns and questions about language access, as needed.

ERO runs the ERO Non-Telephonic Reporting (ENTR) Program to process correspondence and information from different email boxes such as the ERO.JIC (Joint Intake Center) and ERO.INFO. The ENTR Program uses professional translation services and/or bilingual staff, if needed, to process and respond to an inquiry received in a language other than English. Again, ERO has also identified Field Office and Headquarters personnel who review and respond to such concerns and questions about language access, as needed.

The ICE [Victims Engagement and Services Line \(VESL\) \(ICE.gov\)](#) serves as a streamlined and all-encompassing access point for victims of crime seeking a variety of victim support and service options. Through VESL, ICE and OPE continues its unwavering support for victims of crime and their families. The VESL Office is supported by trained victim liaisons, community relations officers, and the ERO ECCO VESL call center staff. Through VESL, crime victims receive assistance, referral support, information, and registration for the DHS-Vine Notification System, regardless of their immigration status. Internally, OPE works with ERO and DHS to improve victims' ability to register and receive timely custody notifications and other releasable case information.

[DHS-VINELink](#) is an external, free, and confidential service that provides crime victims/witnesses, their family members, and victim advocates with confidential notification of changes in custody status. The main [DHS-VINELink](#) page that provides information about VINE services and how to register, is available in 15 languages other than English. The [DHS-VINELink](#) homepage is available in English and Spanish.

The [Online Detainee Locator System \(ODLS\)](#) is a public system available on the internet that allows family members, legal representatives, and members of the public to locate detained noncitizens. The ODLS webpage is available in English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Vietnamese, and Simplified Chinese. The ODLS can also be found on the ICE public webpage ([ICE.gov](#)).

ERO Modernization Efforts

In 2023, ICE launched the [ICE Portal](#), a public-facing website available in ten (10) languages other than English, that centralizes communications between noncitizens and the federal government. Within this online portal, noncitizens can schedule appointments, update their address, and check immigration court hearing information in a consolidated location. The portal is part of ICE's efforts to modernize, streamline, and encourage compliance with immigration enforcement processes. In 2023, ICE also awarded a contract to expand ICE Portal content and access to detained noncitizens, which will include a user-friendly version of required law library resources in multiple languages.

In 2021, ICE developed the [ICE Appointment Scheduler](#), a public-facing website which allows noncitizens that were released by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) via prosecutorial discretion to schedule an appointment at a local ERO Field Office. ERO Law Enforcement Systems and Analysis (LESA) Division translated the ICE Appointment Scheduler website into Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, French, Russian, Mandarin, Turkish, Arabic, Somali, and Vietnamese, encompassing many languages spoken by the noncitizen population that will be using the tool. Noncitizens can also call the DRIL for translations of the ICE Appointment Scheduler interface in Punjabi, Bengali, Hindi, and Gujarati.

In 2020, ERO launched Compliance Assistance Reporting Terminal (CART), which automates non-detained reporting processes, decreases the number of persons in waiting and lobby areas, and enhances social distancing. CART is used by ERO Field Offices as a tool to support supervision of non-detained noncitizens. ERO developed informational brochures and FAQs that are distributed to noncitizens enrolled in CART to assist with their understanding of the reporting process prior to their use of CART. The CART System, informational brochures, and FAQs are currently available in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, French, Russian, Haitian Creole, Hindi, and Punjabi with additional languages planned, including Farsi, Turkish, and Arabic.

Language Access in Detention

In terms of the provision of language access in detention facilities, all versions of [ICE Detention Standards](#)³ establish standards of care, expected practices, and expected outcomes for detention facilities when staff communicate with detained noncitizens who are LEP. ICE standards require all detention facilities to provide information to detained noncitizens in a language and manner they can understand throughout the detention process (e.g., during admission/intake, medical, classification, grievance system, discipline, legal rights group presentations, telephone access, transfer, and visitation). In general, ICE Detention Standards remind facility partners of their obligation to provide LEP noncitizens with meaningful access through professional language services and/or bilingual personnel; that all written materials provided to detained noncitizens

³ See <https://www.ice.gov/factsheets/facilities-pbnds>.

should be translated into Spanish and other frequently encountered languages; and/or that oral interpretation must be provided to any detained noncitizen who is illiterate or speaks a language in which written material has not been translated.

Facility staff typically use their own contracted language line, as needed and when available, to communicate with LEP noncitizens in detention. In instances where a facility does not have its own language line contract, or there is an issue finding an interpreter for a certain language via the facility's language line, facility staff may utilize the ERO language lines to fulfill the need. Monitoring, oversight, and compliance with language access obligations under ICE Detention Standards is ensured through the ERO annual inspections process and other on-site and ongoing monitoring initiatives.

Medical Care in IHSC Staffed Detention Facilities

At ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC) staffed clinics, IHSC uses open-ended questions as its operational practice when collecting medical information from detained noncitizens. If the noncitizen is unable to communicate in English, the medical provider may use the [I Speak...Language Identification Guide](#) materials to identify their language and the telephonic interpretation services to facilitate conversations. These services are available and utilized for medical consultations, during the intake process, and for other important communications between ICE staff/contractors and detained noncitizens. IHSC documents the LEP status, language spoken, and source of translation and/or interpretation services used in detained noncitizens' medical records.

IHSC has processes in place for the provision of patient education. IHSC has the responsibility of providing to every patient, regardless of disease or condition, three (3) mandatory brochures on: medical orientation and health information, dealing with stress, and staying healthy. Two (2) of these brochures are provided during the intake screening process and one (1) is provided during the physical examination. The brochures are available in English, Haitian Creole, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Vietnamese, Russia, Arabic, French, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Turkish, and Urdu. The brochures were updated and posted to IHSC's SharePoint site in 2020.

IHSC also has other brochures provided to patients at the discretion of the provider based on the patient's disease or condition, including brochures on high blood pressure and diabetes. To provide these brochures in a language the patient can understand, IHSC utilizes the ERO language service provider for translation services and has a list of the 26 languages into which it typically asks the vendor to translate education materials. IHSC also has clinician support tools whereby staff can provide patients materials on diseases, treatments, and medications in 20 languages.

Annually, each IHSC facility disseminates a patient satisfaction survey to 50 patients to ascertain their level of satisfaction, relative to access to and quality of care. Among the questions on this

survey is one (1) that asks the patient if they were provided information about their medical condition in a language they understand. Through its Quality Review Program (QRP) and internal audits, IHSC conducts encounter reviews to determine whether an interpreter was utilized, and whether the name or ID number of the interpreter was documented.

Job Aids

Between 2020 and 2024, ERO developed several job aids aimed at assisting personnel with meeting language access obligations. ERO also created and translated various materials into various languages selected, based on prevalence among LEP noncitizens such as Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, Turkish, and Simplified Chinese.

In 2023, ERO developed and disseminated to Field Offices an *Illiteracy: Disability vs. Language Access* Tip Sheet, reminding them and detention facility staff that they must provide communication assistance to detained illiterate noncitizens and allow for effective communication for noncitizens with communication disabilities. The Tip Sheet also explains that the type of assistance (i.e., disability modification or language services) and required process varies, depending on the underlying reason(s) for the illiteracy (i.e., disability v. limited English proficiency).

In 2021, ERO developed a *Language Access Toolkit* providing a summary of language access obligations and available resources. The Toolkit, which was updated in 2023, can also be used as a go-by for providing guidance to facility partners on language access requirements, training needs, and suggested aids. The accompanying broadcast required the Toolkit to be forwarded to all ERO Field Office staff, including compliance personnel, and ICE detention facilities and hold rooms within the Field Office's Area of Responsibility (AOR).

In 2020, ERO created and disseminated to Field Offices a *Noncitizen Notice of Language Services* Flyer, notifying LEP noncitizens that ERO and facility staff can provide language services free of charge when communicating with them about medical and ICE or detention-related matters. The broadcast issuing the Flyer directed ERO Field Offices to have it posted in view of noncitizens in every detention facility and hold room, including at intake, medical, and in housing units. This notice, which was updated in 2022, is also included as an appendix to the ICE National Detainee Handbook.

ICE National Detainee Handbook

Upon admission to a detention facility, each noncitizen is provided an ICE [National Detainee Handbook](#)⁴ in either English or another available language. The Handbook was revised in 2020 and again in 2023 to include a specific language access section notifying noncitizens that they are entitled to language services, free of charge, for medical and ICE or detention-related matters if they do not speak or understand English or cannot read or write English. The ICE National

⁴ See <https://www.ice.gov/detain/detention-managment//national-detainee-handbook>.

Detainee Handbook is currently available in 19 languages: English, Arabic, Bengali, French, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Portuguese, Pulaar, Punjabi, K'iche' (Quiché), Q'eqchi' (Kekchí), Mam, Romanian, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese, and Wolof.

Indigenous Languages

In 2022, ERO awarded a contract to a leading Indigenous organization. The first of its kind for DHS, the contract provides for cultural awareness and sensitivity consultation and assistance with the development of training and job aids.

In 2022, ERO developed a *Tip Sheet* of best practices for identifying and communicating with indigenous speaking noncitizens, and a *Language (and an Indigenous) Pocket Card* with the “I speak” phrase in 10 languages on one (1) side, and phonetic listing of commonly encountered Indigenous languages on the other side. ERO recurrently disseminates these tools to ERO Field Office staff via broadcast and email correspondence and makes them available on the ERO internal webpage. ERO also specifically distributed some of these tools to contractors running the Emergency Family Staging Centers established by ICE to process and temporarily house noncitizen families apprehended at the border, some of whom speak Indigenous languages.

In 2021, ERO coordinated with the ICE Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE) to host a listening session with select national Indigenous-led nongovernmental and community-based organizations. Participants shared general information related to their organizations’ mission, Indigenous population history and cultural considerations, as well as overall language access needs and challenges in the immigration system. ERO continued to collaborate with one of these Indigenous lead organizations throughout FY21 and FY22, to host a Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training for select ERO and ICE Headquarters staff and to consult while developing Indigenous-focused job aid(s).

Since 2020, ERO participates in a DHS Central American Indigenous Languages Roundtable Working Group with other ICE offices and DHS entities. The Working Group collectively discusses DHS-wide challenges, solutions, and best practices in identifying and providing language services to Indigenous speakers. Over the years, the Working Group has hosted at least three (3) events with non-governmental subject matter experts. In 2022, ERO also began participating on a DHS Working Group on Indigenous Migrant Languages. The Committee drafted and issued a DHS *Indigenous Languages Plan* in 2024 and continues to explore ways the Department can strengthen language services for Indigenous migrants served in DHS programs, activities, and operations.

ERO collaborated with the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights (ODCR) to secure and repurpose videos from an Indigenous-led nongovernmental organization that provide general information on COVID-19 and safety precautions. The videos were produced in multiple Indigenous languages including Chuj, Mixtec, K'iche, Me'Phha, Q'eqchi, and Zapotec, and were

accompanied by corresponding Spanish and English scripts. The videos and scripts were posted on the ERO internal webpage.

COVID-19 Language Access Activities

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, ICE published *COVID-19 Guidance* and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in English and Spanish on the ICE public-facing webpage ([ICE.gov](https://ice.dhs.gov)). ERO also specifically facilitated the translation and posting of the FAQ related to modified immigration enforcement efforts into other languages, including Haitian Creole, French, Portuguese, Russian, Punjabi, and Simplified Chinese.

The ICE COVID-19 [FAQ](#) related to “Immigration Enforcement & Check-ins” directs individuals to contact the local ERO Field Office by phone for further instructions if they have or have missed a scheduled ICE check-in. On two (2) separate occasions, ERO disseminated broadcasts instructing ERO Field Offices to take necessary and reasonable steps to ensure they provide updated reporting instructions and related information in a language the caller understands. The broadcasts suggested checking ERO Field Office phone systems to ensure caller instructions, including automated options, are up to date and available in both English and Spanish; utilizing ERO Field Office personnel who have some level of proficiency in Spanish or another language to communicate with LEP persons in their primary language; and identifying Spanish-speaking officers and tasking them with checking for and returning phone messages from Spanish-speaking callers. The broadcasts also reminded ERO Field Office staff that ERO has access to professional language lines offering over-the-phone interpretation services with three-way calling options.

ERO created and disseminated to ERO Field Offices a flyer titled, “*COVID-19 For Detained Noncitizens*,” outlining steps ICE has taken related to COVID-19; what noncitizens can do to remain safe; and temporary changes to ICE’s visitation policies. In addition to English, the Flyer was made available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Portuguese, Russian, Punjabi, and Simplified Chinese.

Tracking of Languages and Services

ERO added questions into the electronic ICE Enforcement Integrated Database (EID) Arrest GUI for Law Enforcement (EAGLE)⁵ application to identify and record a noncitizen’s LEP status and primary language. The entered information is also displayed in the ICE ENFORCE Alien Removal Module (EARM)⁶ application (in the Encounters tab) for officers to view throughout the immigration enforcement lifecycle. In late 2023, ERO notified personnel via broadcast of further system updates allowing officers to edit or add information in the LEP and primary

⁵ EAGLE is a universal booking system that supports criminal and administrative arrests, with improved biometric capabilities for fingerprints, and continued expansion of biometric identification.

⁶ EARM provides ERO Detention and Deportation Officers an automated workflow for managing detained noncitizens from apprehension to detention, to removal.

language fields. While the intent of this enhancement is to capture a noncitizen's primary language more accurately and better identify ERO-wide encountered languages, the updates are too recent to yield reliable information.

ICE's language services vendor regularly provides ERO with comprehensive reports, including a weekly usage report containing several points of information, such as the volume and fulfillment for all over-the-phone interpretation requests along with a series of monthly reports summarizing usage, fulfillment percentages for each language, and the associated translation and interpretation costs. ERO tracks this information regularly to determine trends and gaps. ERO also regularly reviews data related to the detention population as well as the language line reports to determine top languages encountered and language trends and needs.

Language Access Training

ICE partners with state and local law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to perform certain immigration officer functions, as outlined within section 287(g)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Under the 287(g) Program, Designated Immigration Officers (DIOs) are provided initial and refresher training that includes ICE's commitments under Executive Order 13166, identifying LEP persons and their primary languages, and obtaining and documenting language services when appropriate.

All entry-level Deportation Officers (DOs-1801s) are required to successfully complete a basic Spanish course at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) as part of their basic training at the Academy. The course is designed to provide participants with a minimum Level 1 Spanish proficiency against the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Scale.⁷

In 2021 and in coordination with ICE Academy basic Spanish course instructors and managers, ERO created a *Spanish Course Refresher Pamphlet*, a user-friendly resource synthesizing much of the vast curriculum covered during the ICE Academy course, including pertinent commands, questions, answers, and other vocabulary terms exchanged during arrest, processing, and initial health screening. The Pamphlet, which is made available to all DOs at the end of the course, was also disseminated to ERO Field Offices.

Language Access Outreach

ERO coordinated with the ICE OPA to publish a dedicated [ERO Language Access Information and Resources](#) section on ICE's public website ([ICE.gov](http://ice.gov)). The main [DHS-VINELink](#) page, that provides information about VINE services and how to register, is available in 15 languages other than English. Upon request, the ERO Headquarters Language Access Team provides language access training to various ICE and ERO personnel and contractors, including ERO Custody and Resource Coordinators, ERO Detention and Monitoring staff, and a yearly training to newly hired PREA Auditors. The training generally covers language access requirements; tips on

⁷ For information on the ILR, see <http://www.govtilr.org/>

identifying LEP individuals, including indigenous speakers, a summary of the types of language services and available resources; and a review of cultural awareness and sensitivity.

C. Office of Public Affairs

OPA ensures information about the availability of ICE's language services, as well as publicly releasable information relevant and appropriate to LEP members of the public, is posted on ICE's public website ([ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov)), in Spanish to [ICE.gov/es](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/es), and ICE's social media accounts.

Additionally, OPA conducts international media outreach, as appropriate, especially with members of press in Spanish-speaking countries to achieve Agency goals in communicating U.S. policy. Through OPA, ICE communicates with Spanish-speaking audiences on Spanish media channels. Interview requests and media queries for OPA in a language other than English are infrequent and are predominantly in Spanish. These cases are handled by members of OPA who are fluent in the language.

OPA maintains ICE's public website in English and Spanish to provide information about the Agency to the public. For maximum access and exposure, OPA links to the Spanish site from the header of every webpage (top right navigation) on [ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov). The main contact page, which is also accessible from the top navigation bar, features a TTY number for deaf individuals, advertised in both English and Spanish. OPA also prominently links on both the [ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov) and [ICE.gov/es](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/es) homepages to ODLS, a web application managed by ERO that provides information on noncitizens in detention currently in ICE custody or who have been released from ICE custody for any reason within the last 60 days. The ODLS is available in English, Arabic, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Vietnamese, and Simplified Chinese and can be found at [ICE.gov/locator](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/locator).

The ERO DRIL is also highlighted on the homepage of [ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov) and [ICE.gov/es](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/es). The website indicates that stakeholders may reach the DRIL by dialing 1-888-351-4024. Live, trained operators are available Monday through Friday (excluding holidays) from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) to respond to inquiries from those in ICE detention and from community members. Language assistance, including Spanish operators, is available as well. ICE's website also includes copies of the DRIL flyer in English and Spanish. OPA displays the Spanish DRIL information prominently under "Contáctenos" in the top menu of [ICE.gov/es](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/es). Additionally, OPA maintains an official presence in the most prominent social media networks to advance ICE's communication goals for the public. OPA runs an X (formerly known as Twitter) account ([@ICEEspanol](https://twitter.com/ICEEspanol)) in Spanish to advance these goals for Spanish-speaking audiences. OPA uses standard web analytics software to measure the performance of all [ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov) webpages, including the Spanish site and ODLS. OPA uses this information to determine online audience size, popularity of content, usefulness of material, and requirements and scope of foreign language web presence.

OPA's Spanish writer-editor translates ICE's news releases and media-specific content, as appropriate and relevant to Spanish-speaking audiences. Such translations include FAQs such as

“Using a Victim Centered Approach with Noncitizen Crime Victims” to communicate ICE policy to Spanish-speaking audiences via [ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov). Working with ERO, OPA provided professional layout, design, and editorial support for the creation of the ICE National Detainee Handbook. The Detainee Handbook, available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, French, Haitian Creole, Hindi, Q’eqchi’(Kekchi), Mam, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Turkish, Vietnamese, K’iche’ (Quiché), Pulaar, and Wolof, is provided to every detained noncitizen during the intake process. OPA also drafted and published an informational webpage with ERO about the new ICE Appointment Scheduler. The page includes FAQs, a video tutorial, office locations and hours, and ERO bond acceptance facilities. This webpage is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, French, Russian, Mandarin, Turkish, Arabic, Somali, and Vietnamese. The ICE Appointment Scheduler also provides a toll-free number for additional language service assistance. OPA links to this check-in page from the header of every webpage on [ICE.gov](https://www.ice.dhs.gov) and [ICE.gov/es](https://www.ice.dhs.gov/es) for maximum access and exposure.

D. Office of Professional Responsibility

The OPR Inspections (ISP) Program Office continues to use the language services provided by ICE language service vendors during its activities. ISP currently adheres to the ICE LAP. Specifically, ISP routinely utilizes language interpretation services while on-site to effectively communicate with noncitizens. In addition, if needed, ISP uses transcription services to appropriately analyze written materials provided during ISP reviews. As such, ISP inspectors and contract staff are required to utilize the available language access services when conducting their activities to support the ISP mission. ISP tracks its language service usage data to confirm staff compliance with the use of interpretation services and forecast ISP usage needs for budget purposes.

ISP manages the DHS Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Audit Contract and ensures DHS PREA audits are conducted within the regulatory timeframe. During these audits, each facility is assessed for compliance with the DHS PREA standards. Compliance includes ensuring LEP noncitizens are provided written and verbal information in a language they can understand about the facility’s zero tolerance policy for sexual abuse and assault and how they can report allegations. Furthermore, these facilities have language access services, including interpretation and transcription services, which are utilized throughout multiple facets of the PREA process.

The OPR Investigations (INV) Program Office continues to utilize language access services during its criminal and administrative investigations and will employ these services whenever necessary for effective communication. INV adheres to the OPR and ICE LAP. If necessary, during an investigation agents will utilize the language access services for assistance while conducting interviews, translating documents, and any other instances where it will assist with an investigation. INV primarily interacts with ICE employees who speak English. Given this, OPR does and will continue to utilize forms that have been translated by HSI and/or ERO when speaking with LEP individuals, as needed. INV tracks its language service usage and activities using case notes in its case management system.

ISP and INV employees complete the ICE Language Access Training located in the ICE Training System. Additionally, OPR will continue to work with ODCR regarding deployment of training material.

E. Office of Principal Legal Advisor

OPLA continues to utilize ICE language services as a litigation tool for evidentiary submissions. This most commonly involves obtaining translations of documents from a source language into English for submission to the court. OPLA rarely interacts directly with LEP individuals from the public. When OPLA does interact with LEP noncitizens who require language access services, it is usually in court where the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) provides live interpretation services.

APPENDIX C: LEAD LANGUAGE ACCESS COORDINATOR DUTIES

Component Lead Language Access Coordinator Duties

- Acquires and maintains a working knowledge of Executive Order 13166 (EO 13166) and its application to the Component;
- Has the ability and authority to reach across the Component's divisions and offices, including field offices across the United States, as needed;
- Has the time and expertise to lead the development and implementation of the Component's efforts (e.g., policy, training) to coordinate compliance with EO 13166;
- Works with representatives from across the Component's divisions and offices to serve as the central resource for the Component's compliance with EO 13166;
- Serves as the Component's primary point of contact for regional and field level Language Access Coordinators, providing guidance and technical assistance as needed;
- Serves as a point of contact for the DHS CRCL and the public regarding questions and issues with respect to the Component's compliance with EO 13166;
- Coordinates the Component's implementation of the DHS Language Access Plan and the Component's Language Access Plan and related policies;
- Conducts outreach to the public, including with communities that are LEP, on the Component's language access efforts;
- Serves as the Component's primary representative to the DHS Language Access Working Group, and coordinates with CRCL and other Component representatives, as needed, to strengthen the DHS community of practice on language access;
- Maintains awareness of the Component's procedures for providing language access to members of the public who are LEP in the Component's programs and activities; and
- Maintains awareness of language access complaints related to the Component's programs and activities, consistent with privacy protections, and when appropriate, takes actions to address issues that arise.