

Mayor's Office of Housing Official Departmental L...



Mayor's Office of Housing Language and Communications Access Plan (LCAP)¹

INTRODUCTION

The Mayor's Office of Housing is responsible for creating and preserving affordable housing, housing the homeless, and managing the City's tax-foreclosed real estate. Some of that tax-foreclosed land is used to create housing, but we also create new open spaces, food forests, and work to create new urban agriculture opportunities. We also work to ensure that homeowners can find, maintain, and stay in their homes, and to stabilize Boston's renters in their homes.

PURPOSE

The Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) has prepared this Language and Communications Access Plan (LCAP) to define the protocols and procedures taken by MOH to ensure meaningful and universal access to MOH services, programs and activities on the part of persons who identify as speaking a Language other than English and/or persons with a disability.

Definition of Persons who speak a Language other than English (LOTE)

Persons who have a limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English and may be entitled to language assistance with a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.²

Definition of Persons with a Disability

Persons with a disability are persons who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities. A major life activity may include, but is not limited to, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

¹ We are continuously working to ensure all aspects of the departments are accessible and we are continuously working on accessibility with all departments. If you have any questions or feedback on any areas of this departmental plan, please contact: LCA@Boston.gov

² **Language Other than English Clause:** While we understand that the term Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is used by HUD, this policy instead adopts the use of the term Language other than English (LOTE).





This plan will be updated every 2 years and includes the following sections:

1. City of Boston Language Standards & Data on the number of persons who identify as LOTE or have a disability.
2. Programs most likely to be used by individuals who are LOTE and or have a disability
3. Accessibility for important programs and services
4. Resources available to individuals who are LOTE and persons with disabilities
5. Vital documents
6. Filing a Language and Communications Access Complaint

(1) City of Boston Language Standards & Data on the number of persons who identify as LOTE or have a disability.

In the City of Boston, 110,376 individuals, or 16.9% of residents, do not speak English as their primary language and have some language access need in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English. Overall, 15,886 individuals, or 2% of the Boston population, identify as having a hearing disability and 15,861 individuals, or 2% of the Boston population, identify as having a vision disability. For more information, view the [City's Language Demographic Data Report](#) and the City's [Disability Demographic Data Report](#). To view this report in multiple languages please visit: boston.gov/lca.

The City of Boston will follow the Language Standards below for City of Boston Sponsored events and City of Boston Documents and Information.

City-Wide Constituent Interactions

The City will provide a multilingual notice in the following languages, informing constituents that interpretation can be made available upon request. ASL is required for city-wide events with vital information. Departments will consult with LCA and Disabilities Commission on more guidance.

1. Spanish (Latin American)
2. Simplified Chinese
3. Traditional Chinese
4. Haitian Creole
5. Vietnamese
6. Cabo Verdean Creole
7. Portuguese (Brazilian)
8. Russian
9. Arabic (Standard)
10. French (European)
11. Somali





Vital documents/Information:

The City of Boston must provide Vital Documents / Vital Information in the following languages:

- Spanish (Latin American)
- Simplified Chinese
- Traditional Chinese
- Haitian Creole
- Vietnamese
- Cabo Verdean Creole
- Cantonese
- Portuguese (Brazilian)
- Russian
- Arabic (Standard)
- French (European)
- Somali

Neighborhood Events:

The City of Boston will provide interpretation and translation services for City of Boston events held in specific neighborhoods based on the languages below.

- **Allston** Chinese
- **Back Bay** none
- **Beacon Hill** none
- **Brighton** Chinese, Spanish, Russian, & Portuguese
- **Charlestown** Chinese
- **Chinatown** Chinese
- **Dorchester** Spanish, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, & Cabo Verdean Creole
- **Downtown** Chinese
- **East Boston** Spanish
- **Fenway** Chinese
- **Hyde Park** Spanish & Haitian Creole
- **Jamaica Plain** Spanish
- **Longwood** Spanish
- **Mattapan** Haitian Creole & Spanish
- **Mission Hill** Spanish
- **North End** none
- **Roslindale** Spanish & Haitian Creole
- **Roxbury** Spanish, Cabo Verdean Creole & Haitian Creole
- **South Boston** none
- **South Boston Waterfront** none
- **South End** Chinese & Spanish



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- **West End** *none*
- **West Roxbury** *Haitian Creole*

(2) Programs or services most likely to be used by individuals who are LOTE and or have a disability

The table below outlines the departments' divisions and their programs and services who are most likely to come in contact with persons who identify as LOTE or persons with disability.

Division	Programs
Office of Housing Stability	Eviction Assistance, Legal Clinic, Housing Search Assistance, Emergency Shelter, Fire and Disaster Assistance, Walk-ins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All related documents are translated into the City's 11 threshold languages and Interpretation services are available as needed. • For multilingual information about Housing Stability and The Housing Stability Notification act,
Boston Home Center	Home Buying Programs including mortgage/financial assistance and home buying lotteries, Home Repair Programs, Foreclosure Assistance, Deleading programs, and special programs for seniors in need of home repair or home mortgage refinancing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These programs have all related documents translated into the City's 11 threshold languages and Interpretation services are available as needed.
Affirmative Marketing	Metrolist , Rental Housing Lotteries , ads for affordable housing lotteries translated into the City's 11 threshold languages
Compliance	Documentation relating to mortgage loans, financial assistance, affordable housing covenants are translated into the City's 11 threshold languages
Supportive Housing	Emergency Shelter Multilingual intake forms

The goal for these programs will be to ensure that the listed populations have meaningful access throughout the process, as outlined in the Language and Communications Access Plan.



(3) Accessibility for important programs and services

Our office will work closely with the Office of Language and Communications Access for guidance to ensure meaningful access for activities, information, services, and programs of importance.

(4) Resources available to individuals who are LOTE and persons with disabilities

The City is a recipient of federal assistance. Thus, it has an obligation to reduce language and communication barriers that prevent meaningful access to government services and programs. Each department has the responsibility to pay for the following accommodations translation, interpretation and assistive technology for City provided services, information, programs or events. This includes:

- ☐ Spoken Language Interpretation: In-person, over the phone and through video remote interpretation
- ☐ Sign Language Interpretation
- ☐ Translation of Vital Documents and Vital Information
- ☐ Translation of Written Materials
- ☐ Communications Access in Real-Time (CART)
- ☐ Assistive Technology
- ☐ Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment

(5) Vital Documents

In 2023, the Mayor's Office of Housing began reviewing the forms, letters and documents used in administration of its programs, and identifying those documents considered vital. The Mayor's Office of Housing will translate vital documents as resources permit. Vital Documents that are not yet translated will include a multilingual Babel Notice. This notice provides constituents with contact information to request a translation free of charge. View our vital documents below:

Vital Documents List		
Document Title	Translations	Accessible formats available:
OHS Documents: What to do in a Fire- In case of a fire, it is important that tenants and landlords understand their rights and obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• English• Español/Spanish• Kreyòl ayisyen/ Haitian Creole• Tiếng Việt/ Vietnamese• Kriolu /Cabo Verdean Creole• Français/ French	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large Print



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Af Soomaali/Somali • 简体中文/Simplified Chinese • 繁體中文/Traditional Chinese • Português/ Brazilian Portuguese • Русский/ Russian • العربية/ Arabic 	
<p><u>Office of Housing Stability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability Notification Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Housing Stability Notification Act requires any landlord to provide renters with a Notice of Tenant’s Rights and Resources when planning to end a tenancy agreement. Multilingual information about the Housing Stability Act can be found on this website. • Legal Clinic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each week, the Office of Housing Stability hosts a virtual legal clinic for small landlords and tenants. You can request interpretation by filling out this form. • Housing Search Guide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learn the basics of searching for housing in the city of Boston. Find the Multilingual information on this website. • Renters Insurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multilingual information on how renters insurance helps cover costs related to unexpected events that occur within your unit. • Eviction Sealing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multilingual information on how to begin the process of sealing your eviction record. • Brokers Fees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multilingual information on broker fees. 		
<p>Boston Home Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreclosure Prevention and Intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Boston Home Center offers free foreclosure prevention and intervention counseling and home preservation services. Our services are free and confidential. You can find the multilingual information on this website. • Home Repair Loan Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learn about the home repair programs offered by the Office of Housing and how to apply. Multilingual applications available on this website. • Additional Dwelling Unit Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learn how to move forward with the process of adding an additional dwelling unit (ADU) to your property. Multilingual applications available on this website. ○ Educating homeowners potentially interested in building an ADU on the financial commitment and legal consequences of ADU construction. Multilingual presentation available in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole on this website. ○ To come: 		

- Defending against bad actors attempting to scam residents with dishonest ADU information.
- **Neighborhood Homes Initiative**
 - The Neighborhood Homes Initiative uses City-owned land to create affordable homeownership opportunities for Boston homebuyers. Multilingual applications available on this [website](#).

(6) Filing a Language and Communications Access Complaint

You have the right to file a complaint if you feel that you have been subject to discrimination. The City does not retaliate because an individual has filed a complaint alleging discrimination based on LOTE status or disability. Our department will work with the Office of Language and Communications Access to address complaints.

How to file a complaint:

- **In-Person: Ask us for a [complaint form](#) in your language.**
 - [Large Print Version](#)
 - [Español/ Spanish-Versión en Letra Grande](#)
 - [Kreyòl ayisyen/ Haitian Creole -Vèsyon an gwo lèt](#)
 - [繁體中文/ Traditional Chinese -大號字印刷版](#)
 - [Tiếng Việt/ Vietnamese -Chữ In Lớn](#)
 - [Kriolu/ Cabo Verdean Creole - Versón na Letra Grandi](#)
 - [Français/ French -Version en gros caractères](#)
 - [Af Soomaali/ Somali- Daabacaada farta weyn](#)
 - [简体中文/ Simplified Chinese- 大字版](#)
 - [Português/ Brazilian Portuguese -Versão em Letra Grande](#)
 - [Русский/ Russian -Текст крупным шрифтом](#)
 - [العربية/ العربية -نسخة بالخط الكبير](#)
- **Email: LCA@boston.gov with your complaint.**
- **Call: 617-635-3414 to file a complaint**
- **Mail: Download the [complaint form](#) and mail it to:**
 - 1 City Hall Sq. #500
 - Boston, MA 02201
 - Language and Communications Access
 - Room 817
 - [Large Print Version](#)
 - [Español/ Spanish-Versión en Letra Grande](#)
 - [Kreyòl ayisyen/ Haitian Creole -Vèsyon an gwo lèt](#)
 - [繁體中文/ Traditional Chinese -大號字印刷版](#)
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 - [Kriolu/ Cabo Verdean Creole - Versón na Letra Grandi](#)



- [Français/ French](#) - [Version en gros caractères](#)
- [Af Soomaali/ Somali](#) - [Daabacaada farta weyn](#)
- [简体中文/ Simplified Chinese](#) - [大字版](#)
- [Português/ Brazilian Portuguese](#) - [Versão em Letra Grande](#)
- [Русский/ Russian](#) - [Текст крупным шрифтом](#)
[العربية/Arabic](#) - [نسخة بالخط الكبير](#) ■

● **Online: Fill out our [online complaint form](#)**

- [Español/ Spanish](#)
- [Kreyòl ayisyen/ Haitian Creole](#)
- [繁體中文/ Traditional Chinese](#)
- [Tiếng Việt/ Vietnamese](#)
- [Kriolu/ Cabo Verdean Creole](#)
- [Français/ French](#)
- [Af Soomaali/ Somali](#)
- [简体中文/ Simplified Chinese](#)
- [Português/ Brazilian Portuguese](#)
- [Русский/ Russian](#)

[العربية/Arabic](#) ○

Tab 2

