

DATE: February 5, 2018

TO: Mayor Chelminiak and City Councilmembers

FROM: Elaine Acacio, Diversity and Inclusion Program Administrator, City Manager's Office

SUBJECT: Two new language access resources

Summary

Public transparency and participation are improving with new technology. The US Census Bureau reports that one in six Bellevue residents (over 23,000) speaks English less than very well and two in five residents over five years of age speak a language other than English in the home.

1. Now available at municipal buildings, public meetings, and public events of the City of Bellevue are audio transceivers that relay the voice of a live interpreter from English to another commonly spoken language in Bellevue. The device and interpreter can be scheduled by request at least 48 hours in advance.
2. Residents who speak the following languages may now call directly to a toll-free number for assistance regarding any City service:

Spanish	1-844-590-8948	Punjabi	1-844-590-8946
Cantonese	1-844-537-0364	Russian	1-844-590-8947
Mandarin	1-844-590-8495	Vietnamese	1-844-590-8949
Korean	1-844-537-0365		

Residents who speak other languages not listed above may call 425-452-6800 and request an interpreter.

Law and Policy

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act requires agencies that receive federal funds to ensure that all people have access to government services, regardless of national origin, which includes persons of limited English proficiency ([LEP](#)).

In the City Council's vision, the slogan "Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength." promotes access and inclusion of all residents to their local government.

From the vision came the [Diversity Advantage Plan](#) including recommendations that target language assistance for enhancement of public engagement and enjoyment of municipal services.

1. Establish Citywide standards for translation of written material, interpretation services at meetings, and for physical access to meetings and programs.
2. Conduct a comprehensive review of public information tools, protocols and resources to identify strategies and methods for more effective communication with diverse populations.
3. Dedicate resources for City departments to innovate and adapt to provide culturally competent services and improve public outreach and civic engagement.

Other Current Multilingual Resources

1. Telephonic interpretation.
2. Drop-in interpretation services at Mini City Hall.
3. Connection to professional services for interpretation and translation.
4. City website is professionally translated into the five most spoken languages.

For additional information on language assistance tools at the City, feel free to contact the City Manager's Office at 425-452-7228 or CityManager@bellevuewa.gov.