



THE JACKSON COUNTY

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FUND

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July 11, 2017

To: Community Mental Health Fund agencies and advisory groups

From: Bruce A. Eddy PhD, executive director
José (Pepe) Torres, Chair, Cultural Competence Advisory Council

Re: Sample Language Access Plan

As you know, Mental Health Levy contracts will require a language access plan (LAP) as a condition of 2018 funding. The LAP may be either a stand-alone document or one part of a larger cultural competence plan. Just over half of current Levy grantees now either have a LAP or indicate that one is under development. With this information, we write with a few updates on language access.

Sample Language Access Plan. Attached is a Language Access Plan template.¹ We do not require a specific LAP format, but this example should be helpful for agencies who have not yet started work. It also provides ideas for agencies and advisory groups interested in updating or improving an existing LAP.

Threshold language groups. The concept of threshold language groups is important to effective service delivery. Major language groups within your area of responsibility (geographic, population, etc.) are identified using population data. This threshold allows an agency to focus on translating key documents and making arrangements for interpreter services in the languages most likely to be used. The upcoming Levy application for funding includes the applicant agency's statement of its threshold language groups.

Ad hoc interpretation. Interpretation should be done by a qualified, impartial person. Ad hoc interpretation (for example, interpretation by a family member) is *not reimbursable** by the Mental Health Levy. For obvious reasons ad hoc interpretation may breach health privacy rules and risks legal liability.

***Reimbursable language access costs.** We continue to have a maximum indirect rate of 30% of unit cost. Language access costs, including interpretation and document translation, are not directly billable as a service unit, but grantees are encouraged to budget them as an indirect cost within the total service unit.

¹Acknowledgement: The template was adapted from an LAP created by the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority.

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