Local Educational Agency (LEA) Responsibilities toward

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Households

This serves as a reminder to local educational agencies (LEA) of their responsibilities to LEP households (i.e. English Learners). LEAs must provide sufficient notice to households of free language assistance services for individuals with LEP. It is the responsibility of the LEA to ensure that its free and reduced-price applications (both paper and web-based) along with other materials (e.g., the notification letter, application instructions, notices of verification, etc.) are available in a language that the LEP household can understand. While LEAs are not required to make online application tools available in all languages, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages LEAs to ensure that language barriers do not prevent individuals with LEP from navigating the site.

In addition to providing free and reduced-price application materials in appropriate languages, LEAs must also ensure that qualified and competent interpreters, who understand confidentiality requirements at the program level, are available and being consistently used. Bilingual staff members who communicate with individuals with LEP, or who serve as interpreters or translators, should be assessed and receive regular training on proper interpretation and translation techniques, ethics, specialized terminology, and other topics as needed. Without regular assessment and training, bilingual staff may not be able to provide the language access services necessary to ensure that individuals with LEP have meaningful access to the LEA’s program.

If a LEA cannot meet the needs of its language assistance services, it can contract with language assistance services providers. These providers must have qualified and competent translators and interpreters. The cost of these services is an allowable expense to the nonprofit school food service account in accordance with 2CFR §200.459 professional service costs.

LEAs should use the HCNP document, [*Taglines and Providing Meaningful Access to the Child*](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/FreeRed/TaglinesForeignLanguage.pdf)[*Nutrition Programs*](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/FreeRed/TaglinesForeignLanguage.pdf)*,* to develop taglines to communicate with parents and guardians within the school district or institution. The tagline helps to inform the English learner parent/guardian (in their spoken language) of who to contact within the district or institution if they need language assistance services.

Please share this memorandum with district administrators to ensure compliance with the federal and state regulations.

Questions may be directed to your HCNP School Nutrition Specialists.

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