



# Language Access Plan

## I. Purpose and Authority

Nevada’s Senate Bill 318 (SB318) and the federal guidance on Title VI both agree that language should not be a barrier to accessing governmental programs and services. As stated in SB318 “Persons with limited English proficiency require and deserve meaningful, timely access to government services in their preferred language.” Moreover, SB318 makes it clear that it is the responsibility of government to provide that access:

“State and local agencies and entities that receive public money have an obligation to provide meaningful, timely access for persons with limited English proficiency to the programs and services of those agencies and entities.”

The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (NSHPO) is committed to compliance with Nevada Senate Bill 318 to ensure meaningful access to State services and programs for individuals with limited English proficiency.

The purpose of this document is to establish an effective plan and protocol for NSHPO personnel to follow when providing services to, or interacting with, individuals who have limited English proficiency (limited English proficient or LEP individuals). Following this plan and protocol is essential to the success of our mission to encourage the preservation, documentation, and use of cultural resources through state and federal programs, and to educate the public about the importance of our cultural heritage.

## II. General Policy

The NSHPO recognizes that the population eligible to receive its services includes LEP individuals. It is the policy of the NSHPO to ensure meaningful access to LEP individuals. The NSHPO adopts the following policies and procedures to ensure that LEP individuals can gain equal access to NSHPO services and communicate effectively. This Plan applies to all the NSHPO’s programs and services including, but not limited to:

1. Historic Preservation Planning
2. Survey And Inventory
3. National Register and Nevada State Register of Historic Places
4. Historic Property Development, Acquisition, and Covenants
5. Federal Preservation Tax Incentives
6. Review and Compliance
7. Local Government Certification



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8. Nevada Site Stewardship Program
9. Comstock Historic District Commission
10. Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation
11. Technical Advisory Program
12. Nevada Historical Markers
13. Protection of Indian Burial Sites
14. Tribal consultation coordination
15. Maintenance of the Cemetery at the Northern Nevada Mental Health Facility

It is Nevada's policy to grant access to services or programs to every person regardless of their ability to speak, understand, read, or write English. The NSHPO intends to take all reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to its services and programs. The NSHPO seeks to reduce barriers by increasing its capacity to deliver services and benefits to people in their preferred languages.

Toward this end, NSHPO endorses the following policies:

1. NSHPO is committed to equity and will take all reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to all its services, programs, and activities.
2. NSHPO, rather than the LEP individual, bears the responsibility for providing appropriate language services, regardless of the LEP individual's preferred language, at no cost to the LEP individual.
3. NSHPO staff at the initial points of contact have the specific duty to identify and record language needs.
4. Use of informal interpreters such as family, friends of the person seeking service, or other customers is not allowed. Minor children are prohibited from acting as interpreters.
5. No NSHPO staff may suggest or require that an LEP individual provide an interpreter to receive agency services.

### NSHPO Language Access Coordinator:

Rebecca Lynn Palmer, [rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov](mailto:rlpalmer@shpo.nv.gov) or 775-684-3443

The Language Access Coordinator will review and update (if needed) the NSHPO LAP biennially. All NSHPO staff will report language access needs to the Language Access Coordinator.



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### III: NSHPO Language Access Services and Procedures

NSHPO is committed to tracking the languages preferred for communication among our limited English proficient (LEP) members of the public so that we can better provide meaningful timely access to our services and programs without regard to any language impediments.

All services offered by the NSHPO could be received by LEP citizens as well as other members of the public. NSHPO services are offered online through the NSHPO website, in person, via email or telephonic device, or via remote platforms (e.g., Zoom or TEAMS). The public is encouraged to contact NSHPO staff if they are unable to access NSHPO services electronically.

The preferred language of the public receiving services from the NSHPO is US English. The most common method for the public to access services is through the website although email communication is also common. NSHPO believes that LEP members of the public would also use these methods. NSHPO does not track each phone call but does track each email from the public. These records do not indicate that NSHPO has ever had a request for translation or American Sign Language services from LEP individuals. It is unknown whether any of these individuals identify as Indigenous or Refugee.

The NSHPO plans in FY24, if funding permits, to implement a data collection system consistent with the methods that existing services are offered. If this voluntary information is provided, the NSHPO could evaluate the size of the LEP population accessing the division's services. For services offered online through the NSHPO website, NSHPO will research options including voluntary surveys when individuals access the website. All data collected will be archived in NSHPO's existing files.

With the help of its website maintenance contractor, NSHPO will explore the possibility of adding a button to the shpo.nv.gov website that will translate the website to the user's preferred language and if there is a way to track the use of the translation button.

### IV. NSHPO Language Access Services and Procedures

NSHPO does not have any known LEP clients; therefore, does not have full-time or on-demand language access services. Any future language access needs will be addressed in the following manner:

#### Oral/Sign Language Services:

Utilizing the vendors contracted under RFQ 99SWC-S1847 through the Department of



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Administration, Purchasing Division, NSHPO will obtain all necessary translation services for LEP members of the public. Vendors will have at least two years of experience in providing interpretation and translation services to state or local government entities on a 365-days a year, 7-days a week, 24-hours a day basis and will maintain required relevant certifications.

### Written Language Services

NSHPO does not have employees that are trained or certified to provide written language services in languages other than English. If the need arises, NSHPO will contract with a State-approved vendor for written language services. NSHPO will use the list of approved vendors located on the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division website.

[https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation\\_ Interpretation/](https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation_ Interpretation/)

### Community Outreach and Engagement

NSHPO does not have employees that are trained or certified to provide language services in-house for languages other than English. NSHPO will take steps to publicize the availability of language access services on the SHPO.nv.gov website and NSHPO data request form.

NSHPO will provide resources for its staff to improve their cultural competency and ability to work with diverse groups by utilizing the educational materials and tools on the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Cultural Literacy Strategies website.

<https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/CHA/MH/Toolkit/culturalliteracystrategies/>

### Procedures and Resources for LEP Community Outreach:

NSHPO will participate in any Department-lead outreach efforts. NSHPO will seek available grants to conduct additional survey and inventory for cultural resources in LEP dominant communities through existing community organizations and panels of community representatives previously established to communicate with underrepresented communities in rural and urban locations.

## **V. Implementing NSHPO's Language Access Services**

NSHPO is committed to providing LEP members of the public full access to our services and programs. If language access services are requested, employees will inform the NSHPO Language Access Coordinator. The Language Access Coordinator will take the appropriate steps as outlined in this document to secure a qualified person to provide the needed service(s).



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Accessing Appropriate Oral/Sign Language Services: If oral/sign language services are needed, employees will inform the NSHPO Language Access Coordinator. The Language Access Coordinator will secure a qualified person to provide the needed service by utilizing the list of approved vendors located on the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division website [https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation\\_Interpretation/](https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation_Interpretation/).

Accessing Appropriate Written Language Services: According to NSHPO's stated policy on the determination of "vital" documents, the following procedures should be followed to access qualified written language services. This applies both to written information intended for broad distribution as well as written communications between NSHPO and individual members of the public:

If written language services are needed, employees will inform the NSHPO Language Access Coordinator. The Language Access Coordinator will secure a qualified person to provide the needed service by utilizing the list of approved vendors located on the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division website

[https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation\\_Interpretation/](https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation_Interpretation/).

Language Services Quality Assurance: NSHPO is committed to ensuring that all language service providers it uses are qualified and competent to provide those services. NSHPO will secure qualified professionals by utilizing the list of approved vendors located on the Department of Administration's Purchasing Division website

[https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation\\_Interpretation/](https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation_Interpretation/)

## Staff Training Policies and Procedures

NSHPO believes that the appropriate provision of language services is vital to the fulfillment of its mission. Towards that end, NSHPO ensures that its staff are familiar with its language access policies, this LAP, and the above procedures for providing said services.

## **VI. Evaluation of and Recommendations for NSHPO's Language Access Plan**

NSHPO is committed to monitoring the performance of the above policies, procedures, and resources to ensure that its LAP is responsive to the needs of both NSHPO and the people it serves. NSHPO will review, evaluate, and update (if needed) its LAP biennially.

## Processes for Monitoring and Evaluation

Parties Responsible for LAP Maintenance: The NSHPO Language Access Coordinator will be



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responsible for reviewing and updating (if needed) the NSHPO LAP biennially.

Criteria and Methods for LAP Evaluation: At NSHPO language access has not been a barrier to doing business and the agency has never had a request for translation services. Based on this history, NSHPO will simply track its LAP's performance by tracking the number of requests for language access services using an Excel spreadsheet.

## Evaluation Outcomes and Proposed Changes

Performance Monitoring Data: NSHPO has served approximately 5,000 individuals over the past four biennia (Fiscal Year 2015 through Fiscal Year 2022). None of these individuals were LEP; therefore, no language access services were needed.

Proposed LAP Revisions: This is the first LAP that NSHPO has prepared. Therefore, there are not proposed revisions at this time.

Proposed Budgetary Implications: Based on the lack of need for language access services in the past, NSHPO does not foresee the need for significant funding for language access services in the FY24/25 biennium. Funding will be needed; however, to provide a translation button on the NSHPO website. It is our hope that this can be accomplished under our current website maintenance contract.

Suggested Legislative Amendments: NSHPO proposes that certain agencies be exempt from having to maintain a Language Access Plan. If it can be demonstrated that the agency does not serve LEP individuals, an LAP should not be required. Alternatively, agencies with no LEP individuals, or smaller agencies that do not have the capacity to provide language access roles, a liaison that works for ONA could be assigned to provide those duties for the agency on an as needed basis, similar to an assigned Deputy Attorney General (DAG).