

BILINGUAL SERVICES **1440**
(No.29 February 2014)

TABLE OF CONTENTS **1440.1**
(No.29 February 2014)

1440.2	Public Bilingual Services Plan
1440.3	Public Contact Language Survey
1440.4	Interpretive Services
1440.5	Publications, Forms and Education
1440.6	Other Program Information
1440.7	Highlights of Public Affairs Offerings
1440.8	Supplemental Bilingual Services
1440.9	CAL FIRE Bilingual Staffing Policy
1440.10	Bilingual Certification
1440.11	Bilingual Pay
1440.13	New Employee Language Skills Survey
1440.13	List of Bilingual Certified Employees
1440.14	Bilingual Services Act Contact Person
1440.15	Guidelines for Assisting Limited English Proficient Member of the Public
1440.16	Translation Service Instructions
1440.17	Language Access Complaints

PUBLIC BILINGUAL SERVICES PLAN **1440.2**
(No.29 February 2014)

The Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (Act) was enacted to provide for effective communication between all levels of government in the state and the people of this state who would otherwise be precluded from utilizing public services because of language barriers (California Government Code, Section 7290 (et.seq.)

State agencies directly involved in furnishing information or services to the public of which a substantial portion is non-English speaking, must make the information and services available in the language of the non-English speakers. The Act defines a "substantial number of non-English-speaking people" as five percent or more of the population served. The Act requires that when state and local agencies serve a "substantial number of non-English-speaking people," they must employ a "sufficient number of qualified bilingual staff in public contact positions" and translate documents explaining available services into the non-English languages.

To fulfill the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) objective to serve the people of California to the best of its ability, and to ensure compliance with the Act, the Department is required to plan for communication with an increasingly diverse population. The CAL FIRE Public Contact Bilingual Services Plan is described in this policy section.

PUBLIC CONTACT LANGUAGE SURVEY

1440.3

(No.29 February 2014)

As mandated by the ACT, a language survey is conducted by the department every two years to assess the public's need for bilingual services. The results are submitted to the State Personnel Board (SPB) which reports the statewide survey results to the Legislature. During a two week survey period, the Department identifies:

- The number of public contact positions in each field office.
- The number of bilingual employees in public contact positions and the languages they speak.
- The number of people served by each office, identified by the specific language they speak, and its percentage of the total contacts.
- The number of anticipated vacancies in public contact positions for the coming year.
- Whether contracted telephone-based interpreters are used to serve any language needs of the Department's clients.

Upon completion of the survey, the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer reports results to the Director. The report includes a reassessment of the Public Contact Bilingual Services Plan elements and, if identified, areas for improvement or changes.

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

1440.4

(No.29 February 2014)

CAL FIRE contracts with a telephone interpreting and translation agency to provide translation services for non English speaking public contacts received by CAL FIRE. Because of the logistical, transient nature and workweek constraints of CAL FIRE's public contact positions, the use of interpreters is the most appropriate and efficient method to provide services to the non English speaking public. These services are available in approximately 140 non English languages, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Each Regional Administrative Officer or designee issues the appropriate contract for these services. Sacramento Headquarters services are provided under the Northern Region contract.

Region offices, unit headquarters, fire stations, Sacramento Headquarters (Human Resources and Public Affairs units), and the area offices of the State Fire Marshal are issued instructions to assist staff who receive contacts from non English speaking and Limited English Proficient (LEP) members of the public.

These instructions and the numbers on them are not to be shared with any member of the public. The process to access translation services is fully described in the instructions which are included in this [Handbook Section 1440.16](#) and are also posted on the intranet and in all Emergency Command Centers.

**PUBLICATIONS, FORMS, AND EDUCATION
PROVIDED BY THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE** **1440.5**
(No.29 February 2014)

The Act provides state agencies with guidelines for translating written materials into other languages. Materials explaining services must be translated into any language meeting the five percent standard set by the Act. To adhere to State Act requirements, CAL FIRE distributes bilingual information and materials on public safety issues. Spanish translation documents are available to the public through the CAL FIRE Communications Office and on the CAL FIRE public internet.

A special page has been created on the CAL FIRE Website at http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_spanish.php to access these translated documents online.

Public Education also uses materials obtained from other sources, including the USDA Forest Service and private vendor catalogs, which are available in other languages.

OTHER PROGRAM INFORMATION **1440.6**
(No.29 February 2014)

The Communications Office keeps the Director informed about the use of translated electronic/print documents and public announcements broadcast in languages other than English.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFERINGS **1440.7**
(No.29 February 2014)

In the event of the need to communicate an issue or statement to a specific non-English speaking or LEP segment of the population, the Communications Office will use subcontractors.

The Communications Office maintains a current copy of the Metro Media Guide, a complete listing of California's ethnic publications and broadcast entities to ensure information is provided to these targeted populations during an emergency situation.

Because CAL FIRE is only one agency that is called to action during disasters, the Communications Office also works with the Office of Emergency Services and other emergency service providers to ensure that news releases reach these populations.

Upon request for translation services at public meetings, either a translator will be provided or the Department's contracted interpretation and translation agency will be accessed to provide services.

SUPPLEMENTAL BILINGUAL SERVICES

1440.8

(No.29 February 2014)

The ECC Operations class devotes one hour per class discussing the translator services that dispatch/command centers may access when faced with a language barrier. Since systems vary throughout the state, students are instructed to obtain additional training at their dispatch/command center on the procedures involved in dealing with the contracted translator services.

The CAL FIRE Academy provides a one-hour Spanish immersion instruction module for all Basic Fire Control training classes. Additionally, students are instructed during their Academy training on the use of a guide card with key emergency phrases in Spanish that they carry with them on duty. The Peace Officer training class offers eight hours of commands in languages other than English. Audio and video training is used during the training classes and made available to students for future use.

CAL FIRE BILINGUAL STAFFING POLICY

1440.9

(No.29 February 2014)

Permanent CAL FIRE staff is surveyed for bilingual skills through the Public Contact Language Survey or through a language skills survey included in the CAL FIRE New Employee packet. CAL FIRE will continue to establish either a certified bilingual staff position or provide 24 hour - 7 day a week translation services when public contact rate at locations with 25 or more employees is at 5% or higher. This threshold is set by the Act. Because of the nature of emergencies, in some instances CAL FIRE may determine that a 2.5% contact rate with the non-English speaking public will be the threshold for determining whether bilingual staffing is required.

Consistent with available openings, minimum bilingual staffing levels may be met by certification of existing staff, voluntary transfer or movement of staff, or through assignment, reinstatement or new hire through the bilingual certification hiring process.

BILINGUAL CERTIFICATION

1440.10

(No.29 February 2014)

There are three types of bilingual positions:

1. The position exists in a work setting where there is demonstrated public contact where bilingual skills are clearly needed.
2. The position is in a work setting where public contact is limited and bilingual skills will be needed infrequently.
3. The position is in a work setting where there is no public contact, but the employee in that position is willing to provide interpretive services as needed for the department.

Employees who use bilingual skills for work-related purposes and are willing to act as interpreters may be eligible to become certified. Eligibility is determined by the employee passing a language fluency test. Region and Headquarters program coordinators work directly with bilingual testing entities when their services are needed. At management's option, (Deputy Director or the Region Chief) certified bilingual staff may be at any civil service level. The intent is to have certified bilingual staff at the major public contact positions such as receptionist. In some circumstances, the bilingual employee may be anywhere within the specific unit (e.g. Administrative Officer, Fire Captain, etc.)

BILINGUAL PAY

1440.11

(No.29 February 2014)

Government Code Section 18850 provides the authority by which the SPB adopted the Bilingual Salary Program. To qualify for a bilingual pay differential, contingent upon the employee's bargaining unit contract, an individual must be certified as bilingual. The use of bilingual skills should be on a continuing basis averaging 10 percent of the time, or in the Department's judgment, a sufficient number of non-English speaking persons are in positions where contact for information or services requires a full or part-time bilingual position. Use of bilingual skills includes any combination of conversation, interpretation, or translation work. The time standard is calculated based on the time spent conversing, interpreting, or transcribing in a second language and time spent on closely related activities performed directly in conjunction with the specific bilingual transactions.

The Department is required to maintain certified employee bilingual information on form STD 897 Bilingual Pay Authorization. Regions and Sacramento Headquarters, for audit purposes, must maintain documentation of all positions receiving bilingual pay. CAL FIRE Personnel Services Specialists, dependent on the employee's MOU, must immediately notify the State Controller's Office in any case where, through a duty change or a change in the employee's work status, the employee is not eligible for continued bilingual differential pay. Again, contingent upon the employee's bargaining

unit contract, CAL FIRE shall ensure that bilingual differential pay will not automatically continue if the employee no longer provides bilingual services. The employee must be in a public contact position, certified in language fluency and language usage to be eligible for bilingual differential pay.

NEW EMPLOYEE LANGUAGE SKILLS SURVEY **1440.12**
(No.29 February 2014)

At intake, as part of the CAL FIRE New Employee Orientation package, newly hired permanent employees complete a survey to identify additional language skills and interest in providing bilingual language services for CAL FIRE. New employees are asked to complete and return the New Employee Language Skills Survey form to their Area/Unit Personnel Office. It then becomes part of their personnel file. Disclosure of information on the form is pursuant to conditions of California Civil Code 1798.24(d). The Area/Unit personnel staff note the employee's response in the file, maintain a copy, and forward the original to Region Office personnel. The Region Office personnel update the Region's listing with the information received and forward a copy to the Sacramento Headquarters EEO Office.

LIST OF BILINGUAL CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES **1440.13**
(No.29 February 2014)

The names of certified bilingual staff are posted on CAL FIRE's intranet and are included in the Emergency Response Directory (ERD) kept in the unit Command Centers, Region Command Centers, Sacramento Command Centers, and Sacramento Headquarters Public Affairs for use during emergencies or other operational needs.

BILINGUAL SERVICES ACT CONTACT PERSON **1440.14**
(No.29 February 2014)

The contact person for issues related to limited English proficient (LEP) inquiries and complaints and for Bilingual Services Act questions is the CAL FIRE Bilingual Services Coordinator in the EEO Office at Sacramento Headquarters.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSISTING LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC **1440.15**
(No.29 February 2014)

During direct (face-to-face) contact with a Limited English Proficient (LEP) client who is requesting services from CAL FIRE, if you believe that you are unable to communicate effectively with the person in English, ask, "Do you speak English?" If the response is "yes", continue to assist the person in English. If the response is "no" or you don't think the person understands the question, do the following:

1. Attempt to communicate with the person in English to the extent necessary to assist the person in accessing interpreter services.
2. Attempt to determine the language of the LEP client by asking, "What language?" and by showing the person the Languages List (embed hyperlink).
3. Look at the list of Bilingual Certified CAL FIRE employees posted on the Intranet under Bilingual Services. If the language of the LEP client is listed, contact one of those bilingual employees.
4. If there is no CAL FIRE staff available to act as an interpreter, contact our telephone interpreter service contractor **Avant Page**. Use the [Avant Page Instructions](#) on the Instruction Card or the instructions contained in Handbook Section 1412.16. The **Avant Page** customer service representative who answers your call is trained to assist you with language identification.
5. If you are having difficulty providing service to the person, contact the Bilingual Services Coordinator Michele Villados on (916) 653-0430.

If you are **communicating by telephone with a LEP client** who is requesting information, and you believe you are not communicating effectively with the person in English, ask the person, "Do you speak English?" If the response is "yes," then continue the conversation in English. If the response is, "no," or you don't think the person understands your question, do the following:

1. Attempt to communicate with the person in English to the extent necessary to assist the person in accessing interpreter services.
2. Ask the person, "What language?" If the caller identifies a language, ask the caller to hold and place the caller on hold. Then perform steps 3, 4, and 5 listed above for direct contact clients. If the client does not identify a language, contact **Avant Page** for language identification assistance.

AVANT PAGE INSTRUCTIONS

(No.29 February 2014)

1440.16

AVANT PAGE INSTRUCTIONS

1. If you are communicating by telephone with a LEP client, use "Conference Hold" to place the caller on hold before calling for interpretive services.
2. Dial **1 (866) 537-9270**.
3. You will hear, "Thank you for calling Avant Page."

4. Tell the operator:

- Your code is **CAL FIRE**
- You are calling from the **Dept of Forestry and Fire Protection**
- Your **name, phone number** and **Unit**
- The **language you need**, if known, or ask the operator for assistance
- Your **client's name**, if known

5. The operator will connect you with an interpreter.

6. Ask the interpreter the questions you want to ask the Limited English Speaker. The interpreter will ask the questions and give you the answers.

Keep your questions short and to the point, to make sure you get the answers you require. If you need help in this procedure, don't hesitate to ask the interpreter for assistance.

Languages

- Afrikaans
- Amharic
- Arabic
- Armenian
- Assamese
- Azerbaijani
- Baltic
- Baluchi
- Bangla
- Bashkir
- Belarusian
- Belorussian
- Bengali
- Bhojpuri
- Bosnian
- Brazilian Portuguese
- Bulgarian
- Burmese
- Bushman
- Cambodian
- Catalan
- Chaldean
- Chinese
- Chinese - Simplified
- Chinese - Traditional
- Croatian
- Czech
- Damara
- Danish
- Dari
- Dinka
- Dogri
- Dutch
- English
- English - American
- English - Australian
- Eskimo
- Estonian
- Farsi
- Fijian
- Finnish
- Flemish
- French
- French Canadian
- Gaelic
- Georgian
- German
- Greek
- Greenlandic
- Guarani
- Gujarati
- Haitian-Creole
- Hausa
- Hawaiian
- Hebrew
- Hindi
- Hmong
- Hungarian
- Icelandic
- Igbo
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Kannada
- Kazakh
- Khmer Cambodian
- Kikuyu
- Konkani
- Korean
- Kurdish
- Kyrgyz
- Laotian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Macedonian
- Maithili
- Malagasy
- Malayalam
- Malay
- Manipuri
- Marathi
- Marshallese
- Masai
- Mien
- Mizo
- Mongolian
- Nahuatl
- Ndebele
- Nepalese
- Norwegian
- Oriya
- Oromo
- Pedi
- Persian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Pushto
- Romanian
- Russian
- Sanskrit
- Sepedi
- Serbian
- Shangane
- Shona
- Sindhi
- Singhalese
- Siswati
- Slavic
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Somali
- Sotho
- Spanish
- Spanish - Latin
- Swahili
- Swazi
- Swedish
- Tagalog
- Tamil
- Tartar
- Telugu
- Thai
- Tibetan
- Tshivenda
- Tsonga
- Tswana
- Turkish
- Turkmen
- Twi
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Uzbek
- Venda
- Vietnamese
- Xhosa
- Xitsonga
- Yiddish
- Yoruba
- Zulu

LANGUAGE ACCESS COMPLAINTS

1440.17

(No.29 February 2014)

1. Post both copies of “Notices for Posting” in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) in a conspicuous place in facilities that have contact with members of the public.
2. If you receive a language access (translation) complaint from a Spanish-speaking member of the public, refer the person to the posting.
3. If you receive a language access (translation) complaint from a Limited English Proficient (LEP) person whose language is not Spanish, provide the client with the name and telephone number of the CAL FIRE Language Access Complaint Coordinator.
4. That contact person is Michele Villados. Her telephone number is (916) 653-0430. She works with LEP complainants, Administrative Officers, and other CAL FIRE staff members to resolve complaints.

[Handbook Table of Contents](#)

[Forms and Forms Samples](#)