New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

Language Access Plan

October 2025

Record of Changes

Date	Changes Made	Author
10/2025	Initial version	C. Rosenbaum

Background and Mission

As the coordinating public safety agency for the City of New Orleans, the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (NOHSEP) is responsible for administering the City's crisis and consequence management program. NOHSEP coordinates crises – both natural and man-made – through "all-hazards" planning, information sharing, situational awareness, public safety support and mitigation strategies and programming. Our initiatives build New Orleans' capacity to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from major emergencies and disasters.

NOHSEP's Public Engagement Branch is responsible for managing NOLA Ready, the City's emergency preparedness campaign. NOLA Ready provides information to residents, community organizations, and businesses on how to prepare for and respond to emergencies that might happen in New Orleans.

Scope

This Language Access Plan (LAP) has been developed to outline the responsibilities of NOHSEP and its emergency response partners in ensuring equitable access to emergency information for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP), those who use American Sign Language (ASL), and others with communication needs. This plan aligns with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., and its implementing regulations, which state that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin under programs and activities receiving federal (New Orleans Police Department, 2023) financial assistance. It also aligns with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires effective communication with individuals with disabilities, including those who are d/Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

NOHSEP is committed to providing timely and meaningful access to emergency preparedness, response, and recovery services for LEP individuals. This commitment extends beyond compliance with federal civil rights laws, reflecting our dedication to fostering a more inclusive and resilient community for all residents and visitors of New Orleans. This plan:

- Outlines existing language access services
- Identifies areas for improvement

- Provides guidance on ensuring effective communication with LEP individuals.
- Details procedures for identifying individuals who may need language assistance
- Identifies methods available for providing interpretation and translation, staff training requirements, and strategies for informing LEP individuals about available resources.

By establishing clear protocols, this plan aims to enhance language accessibility across all phases of emergency management.

Four Factor Analysis (Needs Assessment)

Factor 1: Examine the number of people with limited English proficiency in the eligible service population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Detailed Table: *Detailed Household Language by Household Limited English-Speaking Status*), approximately 1.82% of residents in Orleans Parish are considered Limited English Proficient (LEP). Limited English Proficiency, as defined by U.S. Census Bureau, refers to "... [individuals] 5 years or older who self-identify as speaking English less than "very well" (U.S. Census 2008-2012, n.d.).

Language group	# of residents	% of residents	Speak English less than 'very well'		% of total population LEP
Spanish	9,136	5.8%	1,917	21.0%	1.24%
French, Haitian, or Cajun	2,484	1.6%	98	3.9%	0.06%
Vietnamese	1,459	0.9%	400	27.4%	0.26%
Other Indo-European languages	1,311	0.8%	164	12.5%	0.11%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	621	0.4%	79	12.7%	0.05%
Other Asian and Pacific Islander languages	499	0.3%	43	8.6%	0.03%
German or other West Germanic languages	497	0.3%	8	1.6%	0.01%
Russian, Polish, or Other Slavic languages	294	0.2%	9	3.1%	0.01%

Arabic	139	0.1%	21	15.1%	0.01%
Tagalog (incl. Filipino)	122	0.1%	0	0.0%	0.00%
Korean	76	0.0%	32	42.1%	0.02%
Other and unspecified languages	681	0.4%	47	6.9%	0.03%

The American Community Survey estimates that, of the 9,136 Spanish speakers within Orleans Parish, 1,917 (20.9%) are LEP, representing 1.24% of the total population. For Vietnamese speakers, about 400 (27.4%) are LEP, making up 0.26% of the total population.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *Detailed household language by household limited English-speaking status* (Table B16002) [Data set]. 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Target Languages

NOHSEP has identified target languages for language access services based on relevant language groups with more than 500 limited English proficient (LEP) residents that live in Orleans Parish. NOHSEP, informed by community input, established this threshold internally to ensure compliance with language access standards and to effectively serve New Orleans multilingual communities. Based on this standard, NOHSEP has identified Spanish and Vietnamese as priority languages for the development of translated materials and other language access resources. While French is identified as the second most spoken language in New Orleans, it does not meet the threshold of more than 500 LEP residents. Given this, French is not identified as a priority language at this time.

Limitations & Gaps

The 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimate presents limitations and data gaps that affect the evaluation of NOHSEP language access services in Orleans Parish. The ACS currently does not collect data regarding users of American Sign Language (ASL) in the United States due to internal constraints. Although, one notable study published by Gallaudet University, *"How Many People Use ASL in the United States? Why Estimates Need Updating"* suggests an estimate of 500,000 U.S. residents use ASL as a primary language. With this in mind, NOHSEP will continue to provide translated materials and resources in American Sign Language (ASL) to ensure critical information reaches the d/Deaf and hard of hearing community.

The 2023 ACS 5-year Estimate indicates that Indo-European language speakers represent a small but significant portion of the LEP population. It is estimated that out of 1,311 Indo-

European language speakers, approximately 12.5% (or 164 individuals) are LEP; accounting for 0.11% of the total population of New Orleans. The Indo-European language family includes diverse branches such as Greek, Italic, Celtic, Germanic, Armenian, Balto-Slavic, Albanian, and others. However, the data does not specify which Indo-European languages are spoken locally, limiting NOHSEP's ability to develop targeted language access materials. In order to best serve the diverse needs of the community, NOHSEP will remain committed to providing language access services to all language groups when a need is identified, regardless of population size.

Factor 2: Examine the frequency with which people with limited English proficiency come into contact with the agency

Website analytics provide some indication of how often individuals with LEP engage with NOHSEP resources and services. As of 8/14/25, the Language Access Complaint Form on NOLA Ready's website had been viewed 1,628 times in English, 67 times in Spanish, and 53 times in Vietnamese.

Text alert enrollment provides another indicator of engagement: as of 10/23/25, 247,620 users were subscribed to receive English NOLA Ready text alerts, while 4,857 users were subscribed for Spanish alerts.

While no unified system currently exists to track LEP interactions across outreach programs, engagement can be estimated through the frequent requests NOHSEP receives requests for preparedness presentations in Spanish and Vietnamese, particularly from community-based, faith-based, and nonprofit organizations. NOHSEP also prints and distributes brochures in multiple languages, with the highest demand typically for Spanish and Vietnamese materials.

Factor 3: Examine the importance of the benefit, service, information, or encounter to the person with limited English proficiency

NOHSEP's mission is to ensure that New Orleanians are prepared and connected to emergency information and resources before, during, and after disasters. For individuals with LEP, timely access to emergency information is critical to their safety and survival. Culturally competent interpretation and translation services ensure that individuals with LEP can understand emergency messages and take protective actions. Failure to provide language services can have severe consequences, including loss of life, serious injury, delayed emergency response, and increased vulnerability to hazards.

Factor 4: the resources available to the agency and the costs of providing various types of language services

NOHSEP maintains a contract with a vendor to ensure both standard and emergency language access services. These services include:

- In-person interpreting
- Telephonic and video-remote interpreting
- Translation
- Captioning, dubbing, and transcreation, as needed

To meet the language needs of the New Orleans community, NOHSEP has the following resources in place:

- A contracted vendor for in-person/telephonic/video-remote interpreting and translation services
- Standing partnership with a vendor for in-person and remote American Sign Language interpreting
- Contracted vendor for document translation*
- On-demand and scheduled Over-the-Phone and Video Remote Interpreting*
- Interpretation devices (PocketTalk, Live Simultaneous Interpreting Device)*

Denotes contract held by City's Office of Human Rights and Equity (OHRE)

While NOHSEP does not maintain a budget line item solely for language access, funding for these services is included within NOLA Ready's community engagement and outreach budget. Leveraging existing City contracts and partnerships, as well as partnerships with VOAD partners, enables NOHSEP to expand service capacity as needed. During emergencies, NOHSEP may also utilize emergency funds to ensure timely and effective language access.

Programs and Services

NOHSEP offers a wide range of services and interacts with the public in various ways:

Public Outreach and Preparedness

NOLA Ready, NOHSEP's public engagement campaign, provides a direct connection between NOHSEP and the city served, striving to ensure that New Orleanians are prepared and connected to emergency information before, during, and after disasters. Residents can engage with NOLA Ready by visiting the website, signing up for emergency text alerts,

participating in free preparedness presentations, and connecting with NOLA Ready on social media.

NOLA Ready strives to ensure that messaging is simple and actionable for residents, resulting in emergency communications that are easy to understand and participate in. In order to make emergency information accessible to a wide audience, NOLA Ready strives to produce written information primarily at a 5th grade reading level.

Individual Preparedness Education

NOLA Ready offers 12 guides and resources to help New Orleanians prepared for emergencies. Most of these guides are readily available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. All guides can be printed and provided in any language upon request. NOLA Ready utilizes a variety of strategies to promote and publicize the availability of emergency preparedness guides. In addition to distribution at resource fairs and local events, we conduct targeted outreach to community groups, social service providers, and other agencies.

Emergency Communications

NOLA Ready sends emergency alerts through text, email, or voice call, allowing residents to choose their preferred method of receiving emergency notifications, seasonal updates, and event information. A separate opt-in code is available for Spanish-language emergency alerts. During emergencies, NOHSEP has the capability to activate the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) in English and Spanish. Emergency messages are also shared with a Spanish-language WhatsApp group and amplified through ASL interpreter volunteers for an ASL-accessible Facebook group. We maintain a database of pre-translated alerts for all-hazards in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Social and electronic media

The NOLA Ready website provides information about emergency preparedness in English and Spanish. Both languages are written at a fifth grade reading level. Using a Google Translate widget, the website is also able to be translated into 101 additional languages. During emergencies, the NOLA Ready website is presented in "emergency mode", highlighting key safety information in both English and in Spanish. The NOLA Ready website meets WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standards.

New Orleans residents can engage with NOLA Ready on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. By following these pages, residents can integrate emergency preparedness information

into their newsfeed. On social media, information is available primarily in English, and occasionally offered in Spanish and Vietnamese. NOHSEP works with community partners to share important preparedness and emergency information on their social media platforms.

Community Engagement

NOLA Ready offers free emergency preparedness presentations to community groups, businesses, and residents in their preferred language. Presentations can be provided in any language with advance notice via an interpreter or qualified bilingual staff member.

As part of its year-round outreach, NOLA Ready builds trust with the community by collaborating with partners across the disaster cycle, many of whom serve non-English speaking populations. Through partnerships with community-based organizations, faith-based groups, non-profits, businesses, and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), NOLA Ready facilitates information sharing while also receiving critical support during emergencies. These partners help amplify emergency messaging, provide direct assistance to residents, and ensure that linguistically diverse communities stay informed. By engaging these networks through trainings, community events, resources fairs, and joint preparedness initiatives, NOLA Ready strengthens its ability to communicate vital information.

NOLA Ready Volunteer Corps (NRVC)

NOLA Ready also manages the NOLA Ready Volunteer Corps. Volunteer engagement for NRVC is multipronged and includes both training and activations. NRVC hosts trainings throughout the year for volunteers to enhance their skills in support of emergency operations.

Trainings are either developed in-house or are given by a qualified and experienced partner. Once trained, volunteers are able to support emergency operations run by the City of New Orleans. Bilingual volunteers are encouraged to join, and may help bridge language gaps during events and emergencies by providing general language support, such as relaying basic information or assisting residents in connecting with professional interpreting services.

Operations

NOHSEP is the coordinating agency for emergency operations in New Orleans, overseeing the activation and operation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). NOHSEP leads

coordination of exercises and drills to ensure readiness, manages on-scene response efforts, and facilitates information sharing across local, state, and federal agencies. In addition, we guide recovery operations to restore essential services and provide support to affected communities.

Exercises/Drills

NOHSEP hosts exercises and drills to evaluate preparedness activities, identify planning or procedural deficiencies, measure improvements, and obtain feedback from internal and external participants. NOHSEP staff, our partners, and the public are often invited to participate. During these events, language support is available upon request to ensure that all participants can engage effectively.

On-scene Response

NOHSEP leads the response efforts during large-scale multi-agency events. In the event of a major declared disaster, NOHSEP may coordinate evacuation efforts through the City Assisted Evacuation (CEA) program. We may also support residents through city-managed shelters, extreme temperature relief centers, and other necessary services. When facilities are opened to the public, we strive to provide signage and vital information in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. We accommodate other language needs as they arise through the use of interpreters or bilingual staff and volunteers.

Recovery

After an emergency, NOHSEP may open a post-disaster recovery resource center, where residents can receive information about available recovery services. NOHSEP also works with disaster recovery nonprofit partners, faith-based organizations, and ethnic media groups to disseminate recovery information and resources to LEP residents. When facilities are opened to the public, we strive to provide signage and vital information in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. We accommodate other language needs as they arise through the use of interpreters or bilingual staff and volunteers.

Language Access Policy

During an emergency, NOHSEP strives to provide unified, accurate, and timely public messaging and response. Recognizing New Orleans' linguistic diversity, NOHSEP makes

every effort to make information accessible to all New Orleanians, regardless of English proficiency. NOHSEP's language access policies are based on the following core principles:

1. **All public-facing programs and services should be accessible to individuals with limited English proficiency,** with language services provided in languages identified as necessary based on the population's needs.
2. **Language services are provided upon request or if a need is identified**, regardless of population data.
3. **Language access must be fully incorporated into emergency response efforts**, coordinated by NOHSEP's Disaster Accessibility Coordinator in collaboration with the whole community.

While the language support capabilities of partner agencies may vary, we work closely with these agencies to ensure consistent language access during the provision of emergency services. NOHSEP continuously evaluates how it interacts with and supports limited English proficiency and other vulnerable populations.

NOHSEP uses the following guidance when providing or coordinating language access services:

Interpretation/Translation: Official interpretation and translation services must be provided by certified professionals through approved language vendors. This applies to all public communications, including emergency information, brochures, guides, social media, notices, presentations, and other materials. Automatic and machine language tools may be used for non-critical information only when the matter is time-sensitive and no other reasonable option is available. This may include situations like:

- On-the-fly signage in shelters or resource centers
- Brief social media updates
- Verbal and/or written guidance or directions

In all cases, translations **must be reviewed by a fluent speaker** of the target language. **Automatic translation should not be used for official documents, emergency alerts, medical and legal matters, or other life-safety related messages.**

Volunteers/Staff: Bilingual volunteers and staff may be used to address the basic, immediate language needs of people in need of language access assistance. They may help with tasks such as interpreting basic directions or translating simple signage. Volunteers and staff may also assist if there is an immediate life safety concern and when

quick translation/interpretation cannot be secured by any other reasonable method. **Volunteers should not be used for translation of official documents or interpretation of critical matters, such as case management, crisis counseling, healthcare, or legal services.**

Additional Considerations:

- Individuals or family members affected by a crisis or disaster generally should not be used as interpreters for the larger community
    - Family members or friends may assist if the specifically requested by the LEP individual, but only for simple, non-critical messages where accuracy and confidentiality aren't at risk.
- Children under the age of 18 should not provide interpretation or translation unless there is an immediate life-safety concern or other extenuating circumstances (e.g., adult speaker of the language not available through any reasonable method)
- Interpreters should have fluency in both the source and target language, an understanding of the cultural context, norms, and values of both languages, and experience interpreting in a variety of settings
- Automatic translation tools are not always accurate and should be treated as temporary supports, not a replacement for human translation

Notice of Service Availability

NOHSEP is responsible for coordinating the development of citywide emergency plans. These plans address the need for language assistance during emergency events by identifying lead agencies who are responsible for providing services to affected residents and resources available to these agencies.

NOHSEP is the lead coordinating agency for emergencies in the City of New Orleans. As such, NOHSEP works with lead agencies in each incident to ensure multilingual signage is available. In addition, NOHSEP's logistic warehouse contains multilingual signage kits for cooling/warming centers and emergency resource centers. During emergencies, additional signage specific to the incident may be translated as needed to reflect the languages of the affected community.

NOHSEP has a dedicated Disaster Accessibility Coordinator who works with people with Access and Functional Needs (AFN) and limited English proficiency (LEP). This individual's role includes scheduling preparedness events in languages other than English and

increasing awareness among immigrant communities of the agency's translated educational materials.

NOHSEP strives to ensure that information about language services is visible and accessible through the following measures:

- **Multilingual Signage:** Public-facing facilities used during emergency operations should display posters stating *"You have the right to free interpreting services"* in the 18 most commonly spoken languages
- **Staff Guidance:** Prior to opening emergency shelters and resource centers, public-facing staff are encouraged to review guidance on identifying individuals with LEP, accessing interpreting services, and following appropriate language access practices
- **Public Notice on Complaint Forms:** NOHSEP's online language access complain forms include a notice informing individuals of their right to free interpreting and translation and services
- **Collaborative Outreach:** NOHSEP coordinates with partner agencies to expand awareness of language access rights and strengthen outreach to communities with LEP

Provision of Language Services

Interpreting

Since the majority of events the agency participates in are by request from community organizations, the agency works with these organizations to identify the needed languages. When possible, we use bilingual/multilingual staff to conduct the events in the target language. If bilingual/multilingual staff is not available, in-person interpreting is provided by a pre-established vendor.

Outreach to communities with limited English proficiency is conducted by NOLA Ready Community Engagement programs as described in Section: Programs and Services.

NOHSEP also maintains an established relationship with a vendor for providing telephonic and video-remote interpreting in a wide range of languages, including those less commonly spoken. This resource can be used when a service center or emergency shelter is open, and the lead agency is unable to provide interpreting in any other way.

Translation

NOHSEP works with an approved vendor to translate the agency's public education materials, signage, NOLA Ready alert messages, and during emergency for quick turnaround translations. NOHSEP also engages bilingual/multilingual staff, volunteers and community partners to review and provide feedback on translated material. In addition, the translation vendor maintains dictionaries of most commonly used terms for linguistic consistency.

Plain language is an essential element of emergency communications, allowing members of the public to quickly understand life-saving messages, regardless of the medium.

In order to make emergency information accessible to a wide audience, NOLA Ready strives to produce written information primarily at a 5th grade reading level.

Documents are reviewed for clarity before translation and edits are made when necessary. All NOLA Ready outreach materials use plain language principles:

- Content is written in short sentences.
- Content is broken down with lists and headers.
- Content is written in the active voice.
- Content does not contain jargons.

Emergency Communications

NOLA Ready alerts are the main way in which NOHSEP distributes information to the public during emergency events. The language access capabilities of the program are described in Section: Programs and Services. In addition, the agency has the ability to activate the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) and Emergency Alert System (EAS) during major emergencies. WEA and EAS are both issued in English and Spanish. The language capabilities of the WEA and EAS program are regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

During an emergency, NOHSEP works to make certain that agencies involved in the emergency response provide a unified, accurate, and timely message to the public. Considering New Orleans's ethnic and linguistic diversity, NOHSEP makes every effort to make sure that the information is available and accessible to all New Orleanians. While the capability of NOHSEP's partner agencies to provide language assistance may vary, we work in tandem with these agencies to support language access to the populations they serve whenever they provide emergency services.

Alternative Communication Tools

Picture communication boards can be used to support effective interactions with individuals who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, nonverbal, or have limited English proficiency. An example of a picture communication board can be found in Appendix C.

Training

NOHSEP has developed a language access training that will be reviewed with all employees on an annual basis. Topics covered in the online training for staff include:

- New Orleans demographics
- Language access legislation
- Overview of the agency's Language Access Policy and Plan
- Description of language access services available to the public
- Best practices for working with an interpreter
- Considerations for cultural competency

This training will be continuously reviewed and updated as language access resources and expertise develop within the agency. The long-term objective is to implement mandatory training for all new employees, supplemented by recurring sessions for staff who regularly interact with the public.

Evaluation and Improvement

Data Collection and Monitoring

NOHSEP uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau to determine demographic information for the population in New Orleans. Depending on the need, the agency utilizes either decennial census data or American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate data.

During emergencies, NOHSEP coordinates with other agencies and organizations involved in emergency response operations, as well as with community partners, to obtain accurate information regarding language access needs in the field. NOHSEP maintains situational awareness of language needs that arise in the field and coordinates with responsible service agencies to meet those needs.

Complaint Process

NOHSEP maintains a website with human-translated content in Spanish and Vietnamese detailing the language access complaint process. The site informs the public of their right to file a complaint if they feel that they have been denied adequate language access services due to their limited English proficiency. Complaints may be submitted online via this site, or with assistance from a 311 operator. NOHSEP will not retaliate or take other adverse action against individuals who have filed a language access complaint.

Individuals are informed of their right to file a complaint and the procedures to do so through:

- Online complaint forms on NOLA Ready's website in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- Multilingual signage distributed at outreach events, service locations, and through partners
- Multilingual postings on NOLA Ready's social media channels

NOHSEP's Disaster Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for receiving, tracking, and resolving language access complaints. Complaints received through the online submission form on NOLA Ready's website are sent to the NOLA Ready group email and automatically uploaded to the language complaint tracking system. A compiled record of complaints is also accessible by request through the City of New Orleans' Office of Information Technology and Innovation (ITI).

The Disaster Accessibility Coordinator reviews all complaints received and discusses them with relevant communications staff and/or language service vendors to address the issue. If a response to the complaint is required, it will be provided within 14 business days of the complaint's submission. Otherwise, the complaint will be resolved within 14 business days of submission. All resolutions, including specific actions taken and any planned follow-up measures, will be documented in the language complaint tracking system.

Future Activities

NOHSEP is committed to continuously improving language access across all phases of emergency management. The following goals and activities identify opportunities to strengthen equitable access to preparedness, response, and recovery information:

1. **Leverage community partnerships to expand outreach and increased the linguistic and cultural consistency of NOHSEP's materials**
   a. Expand the Train-the-Trainer program with LEP community leaders to build capacity for multilingual preparedness trainings
   b. Conduct annual meetings with Spanish and Vietnamese media outlets
   c. Expand recruitment of multilingual volunteers to support emergency operations
   d. Collaborate with community organizations to utilize existing trainings on cultural awareness and inclusive interactions
   e. Continue to provide NOLA Ready trainings in Spanish, Vietnamese, ASL, and other languages as requested
2. **Increase internal language capacity and improve coordination of multilingual communications during emergencies**
   a. Prioritize recruitment and hiring of multilingual staff within NOHSEP
   b. Explore ways to utilize City reserve staff for language support during emergencies
   c. Develop and implement a standardized language fluency assessment for City employees
   d. Update and expand the City of New Orleans staff language directory
   e. Create an on-call list of qualified employees who can approve pre-translated emergency messages in other languages
   f. Develop and deliver annual staff training on language access procedures, working with interpreters, and communicating effectively with individuals with LEP
3. **Expand multilingual Emergency Alerts and Warnings**
   a. Establish a Standard Operating Procedure for sending Vietnamese-language text alerts
   b. Complete the contract with DeafLink AHAS to provide accessible alerts in American Sign Language (ASL)
   c. Review and expand the inventory of pre-translated emergency messages
4. **Strengthen multilingual resources and materials**
   a. Fully translate all preparedness subpages on the NOLA Ready website
   b. Design and produce culturally competent preparedness materials for various hazards
   c. Conduct accessibility review of NOLA Ready digital materials (website, social media, graphics)
   d. Develop a central hub for translated and accessible materials to ensure consistency and ease of use

Appendix A – Terms and Definitions

ACS: American Community Survey

AFN: Access and Functional Needs

ASL: American Sign Language

CART: Communication Access Realtime Translation (a real-time, word-for-word transcription of spoken language into text)

CEA: City Assisted Evacuation

d/Deaf: denotes both people who are "Deaf" (those who identify as part of the Deaf community and cultural) and "deaf" (those with an audiological hearing loss)

DAC: Disaster Accessibility Coordinator

EAS: Emergency Alert System

EOC: Emergency Operations Center

FCC: Federal Communications Comission

Interpretation: the process of converting a spoken or signed message from one language to another

IPAWS: Integrated Public Alert and Warning System

LEP: Limited English Proficiency

NOHSEP: New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

NRVC: NOLA Ready Volunteer Corps

OPI: Over-the-Phone Interpreting

Translation: the process of converting written text from one language to another

VOAD: Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

VRI: Virtual Remote Interpreting

WCAG: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

WEA: Wireless Emergency Alerts

Appendix B – Language Identification "iSpeak" Poster

Appendix C – Picture Communication Boards

Source: Autism Society - Community Communication Board (English)

Autism Society - Emergency Communication Board (English)

Autism Society - Emergency Communication Board (Spanish)

Autism Society – Emergency Communication Board (Vietnamese)

Appendix D – Plain Language Resources

Use the following checklist when writing or editing content to assess whether your content is in plain language.

- ☐ **Written for easy reading by the average reader:** measure reading level to make it its not too high for your audience. You can use the [Hemingway](#) tool to check reading level. NOLA Ready's target is Grade 5 or lower.
- ☐ **Organized to serve the reader's needs:** content should be organized around what the reader wants to know and their potential next steps.
- ☐ **Has useful headings:** headings act as landmarks to help people understand what they are about to read. Make headings as clear as possible to help readers scan content.
- ☐ **Uses short sections and short sentences:** overly complex sentences can be hard to parse. Review long sentences for core points and break them up into shorter sentences. Consider grouping them by theme or timeline of events to increase clarity.
- ☐ **Uses the simplest tense possible.** Speak in the simple present tense when possible.
- ☐ **Uses active voice, not hidden verbs:** Use the strongest, most direct form of the verb.
- ☐ **Omits excessive words:** Have one main idea per sentence.
- ☐ **Uses common, familiar words:** avoid technical jargon, figurative language, acronyms
- ☐ **Places words carefully:** avoid large gaps between the subject, object, and verb. Put exceptions last. Place modifiers correctly.
- ☐ **Uses lists and tables to simplify complex materials:** when possible, break up large chunks of texts into bulleted lists or tables

When you're making word choices, pick the familiar or commonly used word over the unusual or obscure. The table below lists some common complex words and suggested substitutes:

Say...	Instead of...
Aid, help	Assist, assistance
Begin, start	Commence
Carry out, start	Implement
For, so	In order that

If	In the event of
Use	Utilize
Buy, get	Acquire
Find out	Ascertain
Work with	Collaborate with
Use, build on	Leverage

This checklist is adapted from the State of California Office of Data and Innovation's [Plain Language Checklist](). For more guidance on writing in plain language, visit [digital.gov/topics/plain-language]().

Appendix E – NOLA Ready Translated Materials

- **Guide to Hurricanes:** [Spanish](), [Vietnamese]()
- **Hurricane Prep Card:** [Spanish](), [Vietnamese]()
- **Guide to Power Outages:** [Spanish](), [Vietnamese]()
- **Guide to Tornadoes:** [Spanish](), [Vietnamese]()
- **Emergency Preparedness for Seniors and People w/ Disabilities:** [Spanish](), [Vietnamese]()
- **Important Document Checklist:** [Spanish](), [Vietnamese]()
- **Family Emergency Plan Doorhanger:** [Spanish]()
- **Generator Safety Doorhanger:** [Spanish]()
- **Carbon Monoxide Safety Doorhanger:** [Spanish]()
- **Extreme Heat Safety (NOHD):** [Spanish]()
- **Infants and Extreme Heat:** [Spanish]()
- **NOLA Ready Volunteer Corps:** [Spanish]()

Appendix F – Translated Emergency Messages and Terms

- [NOLA Ready Translation Bank]()
- [NOLA Ready Translation Style Guide]()
- [Critical Safety Messages - Translation Library]()
- [CalAlerts - Emergency Notification Language Templates]()
- [Spanish-English Glossary of Emergency Terms]()
- [Vietnamese-English Glossary of Emergency Terms]()

Appendix G – References

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