



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services



Memorandum

#23-046

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Amanda Hovis, Director
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

DATE: August 9, 2023

SUBJECT: Changes to Policy *CR:10.0 - Providing Oral and Written Program Information to Non-English or Limited English-Speaking Persons*

This memo announces revisions to Texas WIC Policy *CR:10.0 - Providing Oral and Written Program Information to Non-English or Limited English-Speaking Persons*. The revised policy has been reviewed by TALWD and is effective September 1, 2023. At that time, it will be posted in the *Policy and Procedures Manual* on the *WIC Website* at:

<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/wic-providers/wic-policy-procedures-manual>

A Summary of Changes is below:

- Changed all "shall" to "must" throughout the policy with the exception of Procedure II.A – C.
- Guidelines II – Clarified Language Line instructions.
- Added Guidelines III – guidelines added to clarify what staff should do if they experience problems accessing an interpreting session and how to voice a concern, commendation, comment, or question to Language Line services.

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding Texas WIC Policy *CR:10.0- Providing Oral and Written Program Information to Non-English or Limited English-Speaking Persons*, please contact the Information Response Management Group at irm-policy@hhs.texas.gov.

Texas WIC Health and Human Services Commission

Effective September 1, 2023

Policy No. CR:10.0

**Providing Oral and Written Program Information to
Non-English or Limited English Speaking Persons**

Purpose

To ensure that non-English speaking or limited-English speaking persons or parents/caretakers understand WIC Program services and are not discriminated against because they do not speak and/or read English.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.7, 246.8

Policy

Where a significant proportion of the population of the area served by a local agency (LA) is composed of non-English or limited-English speaking persons who speak the same language, LA must ensure that required WIC services are provided to such persons in the appropriate language orally and/or in writing.

Procedures

- I. At the time the appointment is made and there is an indication that interpreter services may be needed, LA staff must ask if interpreter services will be needed and arrange for an interpreter.
- II. The LA must ensure that there are bilingual staff members or interpreters available to serve non-English speaking and/or limited-English speaking persons.
 - A. Under no circumstances shall the LA staff ask or require another applicant or participant to interpret for a client.
 - B. Under no circumstances shall the LA staff allow a child, defined for purposes of this policy as a person under age 16, to interpret for a client.

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- C. Clients may choose to bring a friend or family member, age 16 or older, to interpret for them; however, under no circumstances shall a client be required to do so.
- III. The LA must ensure that all applicable rights and responsibilities are read to non-English/non-Spanish speaking and limited-English/limited-Spanish speaking WIC participants or parents/caretakers of applicants/participants in the appropriate language.
- IV. LA-developed program materials must be written in Spanish when LAs serve a significant proportion of the population that is Spanish speaking.

Guidelines

- I. In some cases, the LA may serve a number of persons possessing little or no ability to speak either English or Spanish. Upon request by the LA, the SA must attempt either to assist the LA in developing program materials suitable to such a population or refer the LA to other sources of assistance such as Language Line Services, local translator and interpreter associations, local churches and refugee resettlement organizations.
- II. Language Line Services may be accessed through the toll-free number 1-800-367-9559, enter client ID: 504020, access code: includes three digits for the LA and two digits for the clinic site, e.g., 00102.
- III. If staff experience problems accessing an interpreting session, contact: InSight Technical Support **844.373.1951**.

To share a concern, commendation, comment, or question: Submit a Voice of the Customer (VOC) to Language Line, at www.language.com and mouse over Client Resources, click on Voice of the Customer.