

Language Access Plan

Policies and procedures to ensure equitable access for individuals with disabilities and persons who primarily speak a language other than English.

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**ILLINOIS
STATE BOARD OF
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LANGUAGE ACCESS POLICY

Language Access

Legal Background

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, including language proficiency. (See 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.) The U.S. Supreme Court has affirmed that these protections prohibit conduct that has a disproportionate effect on individuals who primarily speak a language other than English. (See *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974).)

In Illinois, individuals who do not speak English as their primary language may be eligible to receive language assistance from the state through the Language Equity and Access Act (15 ILCS 56/1). The Language Equity and Access Act ensures that all Illinois residents *“have equal access to State services and, in particular, to remove language as a barrier for persons who have limited English proficiency and who may, therefore, be excluded from equitable access to State information, programs, services, and activities.”*

Access for Individuals with Disabilities

Legal Background

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends the anti-discrimination provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by state and local government services, regardless of whether these state or local agencies receive federal funding. (See 42 U.S.C. § 12132.) In 2013, the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division amended its regulations interpreting state and local government obligations under the ADA. (See 28 CFR Part 35.) These regulations address physical accessibility issues, such as access to state buildings, as well as accessibility of communications with state and local agencies. In regard to communications, the regulations require a public entity to *“take appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, members of the public, and companions with disabilities are as effective as communications with others”* and *“furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford qualified individuals with disabilities ... an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, a service, program, or activity of a public entity,”* according to 28 CFR § 35.160. (See also the Language Equity and Access Act, the Illinois Human Rights Act, and the Illinois Civil Rights Act of 2003.)

ISBE Language Access Policy

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) serves nearly a quarter million students identified as English learners. Ensuring that the agency’s programs, services, activities, events, and communications are meaningfully accessible and usable to all persons with disabilities and persons who primarily speak a language other than English is essential to engaging families and communities as partners in the equitable education of Illinois’ students.

Further, providing language access services ensures accuracy in the agency’s message across languages and removes the potential for ethical conflict that may arise when a multilingual individual must rely on a person close to them to translate or interpret for them.

PLAN

ISBE interacts with multilingual individuals in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, in-person visits, meetings, and events; phone calls and conference calls; emails; its website; virtual (online) meetings and events; and printed and online written materials.

The following sections describe ISBE’s commitment to ensure equitable access to services and communications for all Illinoisans.

Language Access Coordinator

ISBE has a full-time Spanish language interpreter/translator called the Language Access Coordinator. Currently, Diana

Torres in the Family and Community Engagement Department serves as the agency's Language Access Coordinator. The Language Access Coordinator collaborates across ISBE departments to conduct language translations and interpretations in Spanish and to coordinate with vendors to provide translations and interpretations in additional languages. Furthermore, the Language Access Coordinator serves as ISBE's primary point of contact for language access issues as well as coordinates with ISBE management and staff to execute this plan and its procedures. Lastly, the Language Access Coordinator is responsible for updating and modifying the Language Access Plan as needed every fiscal year.

Assistance in American Sign Language, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), or live captioning services is coordinated by Sarah Bricker (sbricker@isbe.net) in the Human Resources Department.

Interpretation

Definition

The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning. This includes American Sign Language (ASL).

Plan

ISBE provides interpretation services for all individuals whose primary or first language is not English.

When determining whether a meeting or event should offer interpretation services, agency staff should consider the following:

- Is the meeting a formal, legal proceeding such as a special education meeting in which a person could be deprived of services, knowledge, or information due to a failure to understand the information?
- Is the meeting or event open to the general public?
- Is the meeting or event in a community that may contain a large number of non-English speakers?
- Are we aware of staff/community members who may need ASL interpretation?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, ISBE staff should fill out the [Translation/Interpretation Request Form](#) via ISBE Connects.

ISBE staff should consider the nature of the event and expectations for participation in order to ensure equitable access. For instance:

- Will attendees only receive information through a presentation?
- Will attendees have the opportunity to or be expected to offer comment?

The meeting or event notice should include instructions for an individual to request translation services. Instructions should include the name of the event coordinator and preferred method of contact. Then, that ISBE staff member should complete the internal translation/interpretation request form via ISBE Connects. If attendees register through an online form, add the question "*Do you need Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), live captioning, or interpretation services to access the meeting?*" with a yes or no response option.

ISBE will ensure that information on accessing language services, in the most common languages spoken in Illinois, is available in the reception areas of the Springfield office and at the front desks of ISBE floors in the Chicago office to accommodate individuals who arrive without prior notice and need interpretation services.

The "I Speak" card signage may be used in any other common or public areas as needed.

Translation

Definition

The conversion of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language) to convey the intent and essential meaning of the source text.

ISBE translates its website as well as vital documents and communications into various languages, based on an annual analysis of the languages most commonly spoken by Illinois' English learner students. For example, ISBE translated vital documents such as student discipline policies into Spanish, Arabic, Polish, Urdu, Russian, Gujarati, Filipino (Tagalog), Ukrainian, Mandarin (Chinese), and Hindi.

Vital Documents

Definition

"The Department of Justice defines 'vital' as any document that contains information 'that is critical for obtaining [federal] services and/or benefits or is required by law.' Vital written documents can include bullying, student discipline, and homeschooling policies; consent and complaint forms; written notices of eligibility criteria, rights, denial, loss, decreases in benefits or services; hearing and mediation notices; notices of free language assistance; and written tests that test for competency or applications for a license, job, or skill for which knowing English is not required." – from the Guidance for Recipients of Federal Financial Assistance Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons by U.S. Department of Justice

The state of Illinois has created vital documents in paper and electronic formats that are available on multiple platforms (including websites). Many vital documents were created, issued, or distributed by a state agency to communicate with the public. Examples of vital documents are documents that:

- affect an individual's access to, retention of, termination of, or exclusion from program services or benefits;
- are required by law;
- serve to inform the public about rights, responsibilities, rules, services, resources, or events;
- allow individuals to apply for or participate in programs or benefits;
- notify individuals about their eligibility, participation, or benefits; and
- provide instruction, guidance, or complaint submission processes.

ISBE proactively translates all vital documents, with the understanding that most non-vital documents can be translated by request. ISBE considers vital documents generally to be documents that have or may have a material impact on a student's equitable access to a free and appropriate public education or ISBE-provided programs, services, or benefits. Vital documents include, but are not limited to, consent forms, complaint forms, notices of rights, and special education guidelines. ISBE posts these types of documents and their translations on the agency's website. When determining whether a document should be translated, agency staff should consider the following:

- If the document is not accessible to individuals whose primary language is not English, could students/families be deprived of services, knowledge, or information due to a lack of understanding the information?
- Does the document serve as an official public notice?
- Does the document contain information that is of significant importance to a community that may contain a large number of non-English speakers?
- Is the document specifically addressed or directed to students or their parents or guardians?

If the answer to any of the above questions is yes, ISBE staff should submit a [Translation/Interpretation Request Form](#) via ISBE Connects to translate the document. When submitting the request, staff should click "yes" to the question "Is this a vital document?" If staff are still unsure about the need to translate a document, they should reach out to the Language Access Coordinator at dtorres@isbe.net to make a determination.

Notification of Language Assistance Services Plan

Overview of Standards

The Illinois Language Equity and Access Act requires state agencies to ensure that the general public and individuals

with limited English proficiency (EP) are informed of the availability of free interpretation and translation services as well as how to request them. To meet this requirement, ISBE will provide multilingual public notices in various formats — both digital and physical — to promote broad public awareness. All notices will clearly explain how individuals can request interpretation or translation services that will be made available in the most frequently spoken languages identified through demographic analysis and the State’s Language Needs Assessment Report.

Website Accessibility

ISBE’s website includes a plug-in that allows the user to select and have all text on the website translated. The languages available for translation are reviewed for the top languages spoken in Illinois.

ISBE will continue to improve the accessibility of all functions of its website, including applications such as the Educator Licensure Information System (which exists on a separate domain from the ISBE website and does not currently offer translation capabilities).

ISBE’s website is also accessible to individuals with disabilities. ISBE’s website was coded to comply with both the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) and the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794d), as amended. ISBE’s website was also designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities consistent with requirements of the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act. It is important to note that third-party websites, applications, or content not owned and controlled by ISBE and the state of Illinois may not be ADA accessible.

ISBE has a large number of documents in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF). PDFs are used to preserve the content and layout of the agency’s hard-copy publications. People using screen-reading devices generally are unable to read PDF documents directly, unless they have an accessibility plug-in installed on their system along with the free Adobe Acrobat Reader. This plug-in is available at no charge from Adobe. Adobe also has online tools that will convert PDF files to HTML upon request.

ISBE’s [Accessibility webpage](#) provides instructions for downloading the free Adobe Acrobat Reader and accessibility plug-in. The webpage also provides an email address, WebAccessibility@isbe.net, to which users can request help regarding the accessibility of ISBE’s website and its contents.

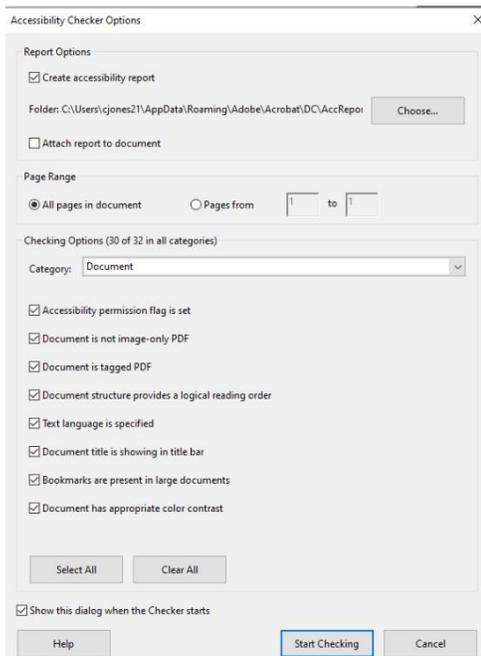
Every document that is posted to the isbe.net website needs to be checked and tested for accessibility by the ISBE staff person submitting the document. All documents by default are saved as PDF documents when posted to the isbe.net website, otherwise the documents are posted in the format requested.

A training video on how to run the Accessibility Checker on different types of documents (PDF, Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and what the issues are and how to fix them is posted on ISBE Connects.

Procedures for Checking a PDF document for Accessibility

1. Open the PDF in Adobe Acrobat Pro.
2. Go to the “Find Tools”  and search for “Accessibility” and select “Accessibility Check.”
3. Ensure that the Accessibility Checker is set up correctly.

The Accessibility Checker settings should be set up like shown below:



4. Click the “Start Checking” button.
5. The Accessibility Checker will open to the left of the document. It can be seen there what elements passed and what elements failed. You will need to correct the issues that are shown in the Accessibility Checker before submitting the document to be posted on the website.
6. Once you have corrected the issues that came up, run the Accessibility Checker again until all items come back as “Passed.”

Procedures for Checking a Word Document

1. Open the document in Word.
2. Click Review and select “Check Accessibility.”
3. The Accessibility Checker will appear on the right side of the document and list the errors in the document.
4. As the issues are corrected, the errors drop out of the Accessibility Checker window.
5. Once there are no issues, the Accessibility Checker will show a message that “No accessibility issues were found.”

Procedures for Checking an Excel Document

1. Open the document in Excel.
2. Click Review and select “Check Accessibility.”
3. The Accessibility Checker will appear on the right side of the document and list the errors in the document.
4. As the issues are corrected, the errors drop out of the Accessibility Checker window.
5. Once there are no issues, the “Accessibility Checker” will show a message that “No accessibility issues were found.”

Procedures for Checking a PowerPoint Document

1. Open the document in PowerPoint.
2. Click Review and select “Check Accessibility.”
3. The Accessibility Checker will appear on the right side of the document and list the errors in the document.
4. As the issues are corrected, the errors drop out of the Accessibility Checker window.
5. Once there are no issues, the Accessibility Checker will show a message that “No accessibility issues were found.”

If you are having trouble making your document accessible, please contact [Amanda Underfanger](#) and [Lori Bildilli](#) for assistance.

Link Text

ISBE uses link text that is clear and unambiguous to ensure screen readers will appropriately and accurately describe

the link destination. ISBE ensures that link text is written so that any sentence with a hyperlink could stand alone and still provide complete information about the destination of a link. For example, we do not link sentences such as, “Learn more” or “Click here.” As much as possible, we ensure hyperlinks are descriptive and distinct; that is, linked text reflects the title or purpose of the destination page, with links to the same URL using the same text and links to different URLs using different text.

Video Accessibility

ISBE includes captioning on all videos shared externally to make them accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Video and Webinar Recordings

ISBE utilizes YouTube as its online video platform because it offers the following accessibility features:

- Provides full playback on-screen captioning as well as real-time visual and audio playback.
- YouTube video playback supports caption and assistive technology using SRT files. An SRT file (otherwise known as a SubRip Subtitle file) is a plain-text file that contains critical information regarding subtitles, including the start and end timecodes of your text to ensure your subtitles match your audio, and the sequential number of subtitles.

To post videos on the ISBE website, ISBE posts the video on YouTube and links to the YouTube video. For short videos posted directly to social media channels, ISBE first adds captions to the video file.

ISBE web administrators provide written transcripts of webinars upon request.

- Go-to-Meeting provides a full transcript as a Word file.
- Go-to-Webinar provides a full transcript in Rich Text Format (.RTF).

Web administrators ensure staff use their full names upon logging in to ensure transcripts will contain the names of the speakers and their comments.

Podcast

The *We Love Illinois Schools* podcast features interviews with educators on a variety of topics related to education in Illinois and is available on most podcast platforms as well as the ISBE website.

- **Transcripts:** The podcast is made accessible to all audiences by providing a transcript of the audio content. ISBE currently utilizes Otter.ai, a voice-to-text transcription software that uses artificial intelligence to pick up the voice in an audio feed, process it through an AI algorithm, and provide transcription. After each episode of the podcast is recorded, ISBE’s communications staff feeds the audio through the software to produce the transcription. Afterward, the copy is reviewed for any spelling errors or inaccuracies and sent to the podcast producer who conducts a second review of the transcript before it is uploaded to the podcast page.
- **Show Notes:** *We Love Illinois Schools* provides show notes, which serve as a brief summary of the topics discussed in every episode. The show notes are concise and provide context about where to find more information about the subjects discussed. We also include links mentioned in the episode, as well as links related to the guest, their organization, school district, or other affiliations.
- **Audio:** Accessibility begins with clear audio. Too much cross-talk or constant interruptions between participants can make it difficult for those hard of hearing to understand the conversation. ISBE’s podcast producers use quality sound equipment and software to maintain audio levels and audio quality during recording to ensure crisp sound quality. Producers also conduct a post-production check of audio to remove bleeding from microphones to avoid echoes, delays, and ambient sound.

Email Communications and Social Media

ISBE includes alternative text for images in external communications, including mass emails and social media that

cannot be read by a screen reader. The image is described in context based on what details the image adds to the text. Descriptions of images in ClickDimensions emails and on social media are kept short and concise at roughly 140 characters or fewer. The ISBE Communications team refrains from using the word “graphic” or “image” in image descriptions and uses empty alt (alt=“”) for images with no visual meaning, like spacers or background textures. If any words are present in the graphic, the team includes those words verbatim in the alt text description.

ISBE uses Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) as its social media platforms. Facebook offers an artificial intelligence-generated translation service that allows users to click “See Translation” for posts written in languages other than their preferred language, unless translation has been disabled in the user’s settings. X offers a similar service. It offers users a “Show translation” button at the top of a post if the original post appears in a language other than the language the user has selected as their primary language.

ISBE primarily sends mass email communications in English with some exceptions.

Hashtags

The ISBE Communications team produces numerous social media campaigns that use hashtags to share related content and increase engagement. To ensure that social posts can be accurately read by a screen reader, hashtags utilize Pascal Case (also known as Title Case) where the first letter of each word is capitalized in multiple word hashtags. Pascal Case allows screen reader technology to distinguish words in a hashtag, increases legibility, and makes the hashtag overall easier to read for everyone. Instead of #weloveillinoischools, we write #WeLovellinoischools.

Text Accessibility

The ISBE Communications team refers to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which adhere to the POUR principle of accessibility that ensures information is Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust. ISBE adheres to the following guidelines for social media content and ClickDimensions marketing emails:

- Spell out acronyms first. This helps screen readers and people unfamiliar with acronyms understand the context.
- Use emojis in moderation. Do not use emojis as a replacement for text. Do not use emojis to convey nuanced emotions.
- While emojis have built-in alt text descriptions that can be read by screen readers, different platforms make different emojis available and display the same emojis in different ways, thereby giving the same emoji different meanings.
- Avoid run-on sentences. Use short and concise sentences.
- Present the most important information first.
- Avoid jargon and overly technical language to make posts more accessible to those new to the subject matter, non-native speakers, or people who experience cognitive impairments.
- Avoid integrating cute fonts. They may be popular in social bios and posts, but they don’t work well with assistive technologies.
- Avoid all caps. All caps make words harder to identify by their shape, and screen readers may read them as acronyms — not full words. (For example: text versus TEXT).

Color & Contrast

The ISBE Communications team ensures the accessibility of font and hyperlink colors through the use of color-contrast-checking tools. ISBE’s graphic designer utilizes WebAIM’s Contrast Checker to assist with choosing a color scheme with sufficient levels of contrast between the text and background colors to ensure individuals with visual impairments can perceive the text. This tool compares two colors and reports on the contrast ratio between them. Additionally, the ISBE Communications team has made available to agency staff [Brand Standards](#) that provide approved combinations of ISBE’s brand colors that meet contrast requirements.

Braille

ISBE does not have a current contract for braille translation. However, braille translation for vital documents is

available upon request when a person who is visually impaired needs access to printed materials that cannot be equitably accessed online and/or via a screen reader.

Determining Language Needs

To fulfill ISBE's commitment to social responsiveness, ISBE staff understand the language needs of those accessing the programs, services, and activities within ISBE's jurisdiction as being critical to its mission. An annual assessment can help the agency determine if it communicates effectively with individuals of limited English proficiency and appropriately manage its language access program planning.

ISBE's Language Access Coordinator will work alongside department directors to create call logs to determine the number of calls that required language line usage and compile data every year from January-December.

ISBE lists Spanish, Arabic, Polish, Urdu, Russian, Gujarati, Tagalog, Ukrainian, French, and Vietnamese as the top 10 languages spoken by students in Illinois, based on data from the Home Language Surveys from the Multilingual/Language Development Department. The state requires districts to collect a Home Language Survey for every new student. This information is used to count the number of students whose families speak a language other than English at home. It also helps to identify the students who need to be assessed for English language proficiency.

Staff Training

ISBE will provide all new staff with language access services training during new employee onboarding to the agency and will provide all staff with annual refresher training thereafter. The training equips ISBE staff with the knowledge to:

- Identify and assist callers and visitors who may need interpretation services.
- Identify documents for translation and make the translation request.
- Identify meetings and events that need to offer interpretation services and make the interpretation request.

Individuals in the following areas, who are more likely to interact directly with individuals needing interpretation and translation services, should receive department-specific training regarding language access services:

- Call Center
- Family and Community Engagement Department
- Front Desk Receptionists
- Multilingual/Language Development Department
- Public Relations Department
- Special Education Department

Bilingual Staff

ISBE has several multilingual staff members who can speak, read, and write in languages other than English. In general, ISBE uses professional services for translation and interpretation. In other words, ISBE **does not** rely on multilingual staff members to conduct interpretation or translation services.

However, ISBE may wish to maintain a directory of multilingual staff across the agency who volunteer, on a limited basis, to:

- Review professional translations to ensure the translation retains the meaning of industry-specific terminology and terms of art.
- Conduct in-person interpretation for visitors who arrive impromptu at ISBE offices.
- Conduct an interim translation of a document needed on an urgent basis and sooner than the professional translation service can provide.

Professional services must always be used for legal and special education proceedings.

PROCEDURES

Interpretation

Meetings

ISBE staff should schedule events and meetings with individuals who need interpretation services far enough in advance to secure the appropriate service. The Language Access Coordinator speaks Spanish and conducts Spanish-language interpretation. ISBE staff should request interpretation services **two weeks in advance of any event**. Enter the information listed below in the [Translation/Interpretation Request Form](#) via ISBE Connects so the Language Access Coordinator can arrange interpretation services. For in-person ASL interpretation, please contact Sarah Bricker at sbricker@isbe.net. Jeff Seiler will be cc'd on all interpretation communication as he is the agency's contact for billing.

- Name of the event
- Name and information of ISBE staff member as contact for the event (full name, email, phone number)
- Number of interpreters needed and type of interpretation such as specific spoken language(s), American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, ASL interpreter-tactile, Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART)
- Duration of interpretation
- Format of the meeting (virtual or in person)
- Date and time of the event
- Location of the event, if applicable, or link to virtual meeting
- Any presentations, agenda, or relevant information that would be useful to the interpreter.

The department may request an estimated cost before proceeding with booking. Once the booking is confirmed, the Language Access Coordinator will give the requesting staff the appropriate contact information. The requesting department or Language Access Coordinator will handle further preparation or day-of coordination with the interpreters, such as ensuring they have the necessary event registration information.

Phone Calls

Language Interpretation

ISBE staff should follow the procedures below when receiving a call from an individual needing interpretation:

- If the caller speaks Spanish, forward the call to the Language Access Coordinator who will take written notes of the call as well as collect the individual's phone and email contact information. The Language Access Coordinator routes the information via email to the appropriate department/person within ISBE for a response. The department provides the response back to the Language Access Coordinator for translation of the information. The Language Access Coordinator will send back to the caller via a phone call or email the translated information.
- If the caller speaks a language other than Spanish, the person who received the call may opt to either of the following:
 - Make a note of their phone number and do their best to collect the caller's name and language. Then, enter a phone call interpretation request through the [Translation/Interpretation Request Form](#) via ISBE Connects. The Language Access Coordinator will contact Propio Language Services and schedule a conference call that includes the caller, translator, and the interpreter. Once the caller's needs or questions are understood, the Language Access Coordinator will establish a second conference call between the caller, the interpreter, and appropriate ISBE staff. If the receiver can determine the language, they may call Propio Language Services using the instructions below to help resolve the caller's issue. If it is an issue that does not pertain to their department, then they may take the caller's information and follow the instructions above.
- If ISBE staff need to place a call to person who speaks a language other than English, they may call Propio Language Services themselves using the following directions.
 - Use the switchhook, link button, or conference button on your phone to start a three-way call.
 - Dial 866-828-3280 to reach the state-contracted Propio Language Services.
 - Enter the following:
 - Press 1 for Spanish.

- Press 2 for all other languages.
 - Enter the two-digit language code or press 99 for a live attendant if language is unknown.
 - Use [Propio Language Codes](#) link to find the two-digit language code.
- Enter the four-digit agency/customer number for ISBE: **3846**.
- Brief the interpreter. Summarize what you wish to accomplish and give any special instructions. The interpreter may also ask for your desk telephone number. Give them your department's main number instead.
- Add the non-English speaker to the line by switch hooking again or pressing the link or conference button on your phone.

When the call is completed, the staff member must email Jeff Seiler at jseiler@isbe.net with the subject line "Propio call." The body of the email should include the time, date, and billing department responsible for the call.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

ISBE's TTY/TDD line at 888-261-2708 is available for any individual who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Impromptu Visits

Receptionists at ISBE offices should call the Language Access Coordinator if a visitor needs interpretation services. The Language Access Coordinator is currently based in the Chicago office and can handle the visit in person, if available.

Similar to the procedures for handling phone calls:

1. If the visitor speaks Spanish, the Language Access Coordinator will find out what the visitor needs, take written notes of the conversation, and collect the individual's contact information. The Language Access Coordinator routes the information via email to the appropriate department/person within ISBE for a response. The department provides the response back to the Language Access Coordinator for that person to translate and send back to the caller. If the Language Access Coordinator is not available, take note of the visitor's information and email it to dtorres@isbe.net.
2. If the caller speaks a language other than Spanish, the Language Access Coordinator will contact Propio Language Services and schedule a conference call between the caller, the translator, and the interpreter. Once the caller's needs or questions are understood, the Language Access Coordinator will establish a second conference call between the caller, the interpreter, and appropriate ISBE staff.

Public Comment

ISBE, as a general rule, will provide language services for the purpose of facilitating public comments at meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Individuals wishing to provide public comment and needing interpretation services should contact the Language Access Coordinator, Diana Torres, at 312-814-5818 at least 10 business days in advance of the meeting to request interpretation, if possible.

Every public meeting notice will contain the following language: *"Individuals who need special accommodations, including Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART) or live captioning services to access the meeting should contact the Superintendent's Office no later than five business days prior to the meeting. Contact the ISBE Superintendent's Office at 217-782-2221 or TTY/TDD at 217-782-1900. Individuals who need language interpretation services (including American Sign Language) to provide public comment at the meeting should contact the ISBE Language Access Coordinator at 312-814-5818 or TTY/TDD at 217-782-1900."*

1. The Language Access Coordinator will communicate the request to the meeting coordinator. The meeting coordinator will add the person to the queue for public comment.
2. If the individual speaks Spanish and the Language Access Coordinator is available, the Language Access Coordinator will provide interpretation services for the individual at the meeting.

3. If the individual speaks a language other than Spanish or if the Language Access Coordinator is not available, the Language Access Coordinator will contact Propio Language Services to book the vendor.
 - a. The vendor will provide a quote to the Language Access Coordinator.
 - b. The Language Access Coordinator will forward the quote to the department associated with the meeting for appropriate approval before proceeding with booking.
4. Once the appropriate interpreter is confirmed for the meeting, the Language Access Coordinator will use Propio Language Services, if needed, to confirm with the individual that they have been added to the public comment queue and communicate any public participation guidelines or instructions for the meeting. (The public participation guidelines for Board meetings and Board committee meetings are available in multiple languages on the ISBE [Board Meetings webpage](#) using the translation plug-in.)
5. The Language Access Coordinator or interpretation service will provide a written summary in English of the individual's comments for the purposes of inclusion in the minutes of the meeting.

The Open Meetings Act requires ISBE to post meeting agendas 48 hours before a meeting. Interpretation services often need a minimum of 10 business days' notice in order to provide services. Sometimes, the appropriate interpretation service cannot be secured in time to allow the individual to provide live public comment at a meeting. In such cases, the Language Access Coordinator will request that the individual provide written comment. Next, the written comment will be translated into English following the procedures for translation listed below. The English translation and original submission will be sent to the department associated with the meeting for delivery to the appropriate members of the committee/task force/Board and included in the minutes of the meeting.

Virtual Meetings

ISBE maintains a free auto-captioning service for recordings of videos (currently Kapwing, funded through the Public Relations Department) and an auto-transcription service (currently Otter, funded through the Public Relations Department). ISBE also has vendors available for Communications Access Realtime Translation (CART) or live captioning services and access to ASL interpreters through Propio Language Services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and need live access to a webinar.

To request CART service for a virtual meeting, use the [Translation/Interpretation Request Form](#) via ISBE Connects at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Translation

ISBE staff ensures the translation of appropriate documents through the following procedures. ISBE staff will also follow these steps if they receive an email in a language other than English and need the Language Access Coordinator to provide the information back to them in English.

1. Access ISBE Connects and click on the "Communications" button.
2. Click on the [Translation/Interpretation Request Form](#) and fill out all appropriate boxes.
3. Upload the document or email verbiage in Microsoft Word format or copy the text in the description box.
4. The Language Access Coordinator will translate the document or email into Spanish. If the department requests additional languages, or the Language Access Coordinator is unable to translate the document, the Language Access Coordinator will send the document to ISBE's translation vendor (currently Multilingual Connections).
 - a. The vendor will provide a quote to the Language Access Coordinator.
 - b. The Language Access Coordinator will forward the quote to the department requesting the translation for appropriate approval before proceeding with translation. If and once the quote is approved by the appropriate department, the Language Access Coordinator will forward the approval to the vendor to begin the translation.
 - c. If the document consists of two pages or fewer, the vendor will provide the translation(s) within three business days.

- d. If the document consists of more than two pages, the vendor may need five business days or more to complete the translation, depending on the requested languages and the number of pages.
5. The Language Access Coordinator will then provide the completed translation(s) to the requester.

Translation of videos, other multimedia content, and files graphically designed in a file format/software other than Microsoft Word (such as Adobe InDesign) cannot currently be conducted in-house or via ISBE's contract with its translation vendor, Multilingual Connections. These translations must be procured separately by the requesting department via the Request for Quote process.

Vendors

ISBE utilizes the following vendors for language access services:

- Translation – Multilingual Connections (state master contract renewed annually) and Google Document Translation Hub (access granted to ISBE staff via Kelly Spence at 217-785-0902, Kelly.Spence@Illinois.gov) at the Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT)
- CART – Classroom Captioning
- ASL – Propio Language Services or independent contractor
- In-person interpretation, including ASL – Propio Language Services or separately procured independent contractor
- Virtual and phone call interpretation – Propio Language Services (contracted with DoIT; Jeff Seiler in ISBE Facility Management tracks ISBE's usage of the service for DoIT)
- Transcription – Otter.ai (billed annually)
- Video captioning service – Kapwing (billed annually)

Concern Resolution Process

Federal and state laws and regulations require the state of Illinois to comply with all nondiscrimination laws, including (but not limited to) the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Civil Rights Act of 2003, the Illinois Human Rights Act, and the Language Equity and Access Act. This includes ensuring that all individuals can meaningfully access state of Illinois services, benefits, and programs. If you feel you have been denied and/or restricted access to state services, benefits, or programs on the basis of your age, race, sex, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, or any other protected reason, please complete the [Language Access Complaint Form](#) found at isbe.net and submit via email to LanguageAccess@isbe.net or mail to:

Illinois State Board of Education
Communications Department
Family and Community Engagement
555 W. Monroe St., Suite 900
Chicago, IL 60661

If one is not satisfied with the findings or corrective action taken in response to a complaint, please reach out to the Governor's Office of New Americans at GOV.NewAmericans@illinois.gov to elevate the unresolved complaint.

In addition, a civil rights complaint can be filed with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office of Civil Rights Complaint Portal or by email, mail, or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 200 Independence Ave., SW Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201; 800-386-1019; 800-537-7697 (TDD); OCRComplaint@hhs.gov.