

2025



**LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR
INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

Toolkit

LIMITED ENGLISH
PROFICIENCY

Introduction

Individuals who are limited English proficient (LEP), meaning they do not speak English "very well," often face language barriers every day when accessing services, such as healthcare or government programs. While localities and federal agencies have made significant progress over the last twenty years to improve access for LEP persons, a U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR) briefing, "[Language Access for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency](#)," can spotlight this often overlooked need to ensure equitable access to government services and federally funded programs for all Americans, including LEP persons.

This briefing will examine the extent to which language barriers impact access to government services and healthcare for individuals with limited English proficiency. The investigation will explore how government agencies and recipients of federal funding provide language access, the challenges of language access, and best practices for improving language access.

"The Commission is dedicated to ensuring that all individuals can access the resources they need to thrive. Millions of Americans rely on government services and federally funded programs, yet too many face barriers simply because English is not their first language. This briefing will help identify solutions and reinforce our commitment to breaking down language barriers so that no one is excluded from access to essential services." -

Chair Rochelle M. Garza

"Today, 25.7 million or 8% of people ages five or older living in the U.S. are LEP. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects LEP Americans and longstanding federal guidance has helped to ensure equitable access to government services and federally funded programs for all Americans, including LEP persons." - **Commissioner Glenn D. Magpantay**

Agenda

Introductory Remarks: 10:00 am - 10:10 am

Panel 1: Overview of the Current Language Access Landscape: 10:10 – 11:20 am

- Dr. Yunju Nam, Associate Professor, University at Buffalo, School of Social Work
- Dan Morenoff, Executive Director, American Civil Rights Project
- Dr. Bill Rivers, Principal, WP Rivers and Associates
- John Tanner, Former Chief, Voting Rights Section, DOJ
- Jacob Hofstetter, Policy Analyst, Migration Policy Institute

Break: 11:20 – 11:30 am

Panel 2: Language Access in Government Services and Healthcare: 11:30 am – 12:40 pm

- Ricardo Martinez, Food and Nutrition Service Language Access Coordinator, USDA
- Eugene Rhee, Civil Rights Manager, Division of Family and Children Services, Georgia Department of Human Services
- Lucas Fonseca, CEO, Language Matters
- Elizabeth Munoz, ADA Corporate Compliance Officer, DHR Health
- Silvina de la Iglesia, Expert on Language Access in Healthcare

Lunch: 12:40 – 2:10 pm

Panel 3: From the Field: Community Advocates' Views on Language Access: 2:10 - 3:20 pm

- Chi-Ser Tran, Supervising Attorney and Director of the Language Access Project, Community Legal Services of Philadelphia
- Adam Carbullido, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
- Bryan Lynip, Teacher, Richland One School District, SC
- Dr. Carlos E. Alemán, CEO, Hispanic and Immigrant Center of Alabama
- Allison Neswood, Senior Staff Attorney, Native American Rights Fund (NARF)

Break: 3:20 – 3:30 pm



Agenda cont'd

Panel 4: From the Field: The Lived Experiences of Individuals with Limited English Proficiency: 3:30 pm - 4:40 pm

- Zahra Rahimi, Impacted Person
- Bigz Bigirwa, Impacted Person
- Jerry Raburn, Impacted Person
- Melisa Laelan, CEO, Arkansas Coalition of Marshallese

Closing Remarks: 4:40 – 4:50 pm

Adjourn Meeting.

Call for Public Comments:

In addition to the testimony collected, via public briefing, the Commission welcomes the submission of material for consideration as we prepare our report. Please submit such information to languageaccess@usccr.gov no later than April 21, 2025, or by mail to OCRE/Public Comments, ATTN: Language Access LEP, U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1331 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 1150, Washington, DC 20425.



Social Media Amplification

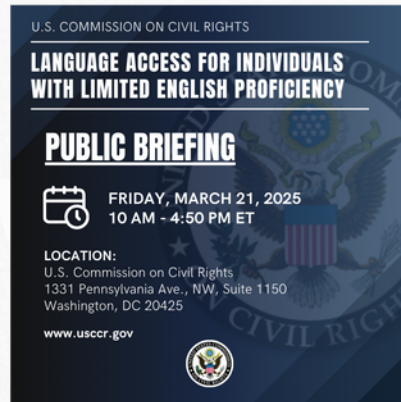
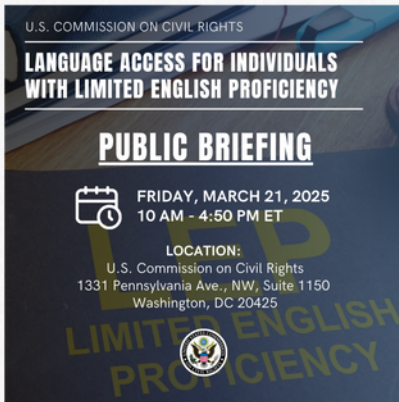
SAMPLE POSTS:

The @USCCRgov will hold a briefing on March 21, 2025, to examine the extent to which language barriers impact access to government services and healthcare for individuals with limited English proficiency. #LEP #LanguageAccess

For more info: <https://www.usccr.gov/meetings/2025/03-21-language-access-individuals-limited-english-proficiency>

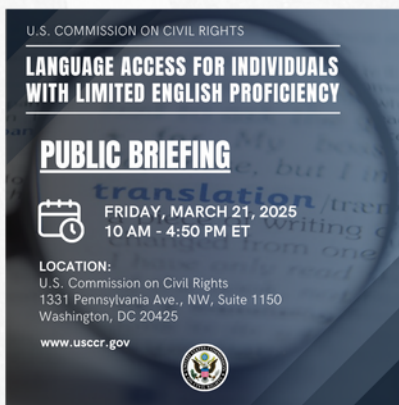
Today, 25.7 million or 8% of people ages five or older living in the U.S. are limited English proficient (#LEP). March 21, 2025 @USCCRgov will hold a briefing on #languageaccess for individuals with limited English proficiency. #CivilRights

For more info: <https://www.usccr.gov/meetings/2025/03-21-language-access-individuals-limited-english-proficiency>



KEY HASHTAGS:

#USCCR
#USCCRBriefing
#LEP
#LimitedEnglishProficiency
#LanguageAccess
#CivilRights



PRESS RELEASE:

<https://www.usccr.gov/files/2025-03/lep-press-release.pdf>


GRAPHICS CAN BE FOUND HERE



Panelists

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Dr. Yunju Nam
Associate Professor,
School of Social Work at the University at Buffalo,
State University of New York

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS


LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Dan Morenoff
Executive Director,
American Civil Rights Project

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: John Tanner
Former Chief,
Voting Rights Section,
DOJ

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Lucas Fonseca
CEO,
Language Matters

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Elizabeth Munoz
ADA Corporate Compliance Officer,
DHR Health

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Silvina de la Iglesia
System Director of Language & Accessibility Services,
Mount Sinai Health System in New York

PANELIST GRAPHICS

PANELIST BIOS



U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Chi-Ser Tran
Supervising Attorney,
Director of the Language Access Project,
Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Bryan Lynip
Teacher,
Richland One School District, SC

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Adam P. Carbullido
Director of Policy and Advocacy,
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations
(AAPCHO)

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Dr. Carlos E. Alemán
CEO,
Hispanic and Immigrant Center of Alabama (IHICA)

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Allison Neswood
Senior Staff Attorney,
Native American Rights Fund (NARF)

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY



Panelist: Eugene Rhee
Civil Rights Manager,
Division of Family and Children Services

PANELIST GRAPHICS

PANELIST BIOS



U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS



**LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**



Panelist: Ricardo Martinez
*Food and Nutrition Service,
Language Access Coordinator,
USDA*

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS




**LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**




Panelist: Jacob Hofstetter
*Associate Professor,
Policy Analyst,
Migration Policy Institute*

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS



**LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**



Panelist: Jerry Raburn
*Student,
UCLA*

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS



**LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**



Panelist: Zahra Rahimi
*Student,
William & Mary*

PANELIST GRAPHICS

PANELIST BIOS

Follow Us On:

FACEBOOK:

United States Commission on Civil Rights

LINKEDIN:

United States Commission on Civil Rights

INSTAGRAM:

@usccrgov

X:

@USCCRgov

BLUESKY:

@usccrgov

Subscribe to our Newsletter:

https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/atHcR7E/USCCR_signup

