



STATE OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

DIVISION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
CIVIL RIGHTS BUREAU

January 2, 2013

Re: Nassau County Police Department (NCPD)'s Language Access Services for Persons of Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The purpose of this letter is to memorialize the Nassau County Police Department (NCPD)'s cooperation with the Attorney General's Office (OAG) and commitment to implementing and maintaining policies, procedures and training protocols to help ensure that individuals of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are provided meaningful access to NCPD services regardless of the individual's LEP status.

By way of context, Nassau County, New York has a population of 1,339,532 people, 14.6 percent of whom identify as Hispanic. Moreover, an estimated 11.2 percent of Nassau County residents five (5) years of age or older speak English less than "very well" or have a limited ability to read, speak or understand English. As language for LEP individuals can be a barrier to accessing important police services, the NCPD recognizes the need for timely, effective and accurate communication between NCPD employees and the LEP communities they serve. While the NCPD had previously implemented some components of a language access plan, including use of a telephonic interpreter service, its own bilingual officers, and translation of certain written materials and public notices, under the leadership and direction of Nassau County's Police Commissioner, the NCPD has expanded and strengthened its language access services to better serve Nassau County's LEP population and, in turn, the community at large.

Accordingly, the Nassau County Police Department has, and remains committed to, the following:

1. Taking reasonable steps to ensure that its officers¹, and its civilian employees who have regular contact with the public, effectively communicate with LEP persons and provide them with timely and meaningful access to all of the services and benefits the NCPD provides including, without limitation, when responding to calls for assistance; making traffic stops; taking complaints; interviewing victims, witnesses or subjects of criminal investigations; making public service announcements and issuing safety alerts.
2. Taking reasonable steps to ensure that its officers, and its civilian employees who have regular contact with the public, are annually trained on how to effectively communicate with LEP persons and provide them with timely and meaningful access to all NCPD services and benefits. The NCPD will also distribute the following policies regarding serving LEP communities to all officers and

¹ "Officers" includes all uniformed employees or volunteers of the NCPD, both full-time and part-time.

civilian employees who have regular contact with the public: POL 4000, OPS 3132, OPS 3132-A, OPS 6310, OPS 6310-A, along with notification 2032/12-007 (collectively "LEP policies").

3. Taking steps to recruit, hire and retain bilingual NCPD officers and staff and maintain a mechanism for testing the proficiency level of its bilingual officers and staff.
4. Translating vital documents, and relying upon translated materials made available through other law enforcement entities, agencies and courts.
5. Making English and Spanish-language Personnel Complaint Forms available at all NCPD buildings and on the NCPD website and when a complaint relates to language access, providing written notice of the disposition of the complaint to the complainant in the language (English or Spanish) that the complaint was written in.
6. Periodically convening with the Office of the Attorney General's Civil Rights Bureau (hereinafter "Bureau") to discuss the NCPD's provision of language access services to LEP individuals, including those efforts outlined in this letter and consistent with the NCPD's LEP policies. During those meetings, the OAG and the NCPD will jointly discuss and review: (a) data on language access services captured by the NCPD, (b) documentation concerning in-service training sessions on the LEP policies, and (c) copies of all forms and documents translated pursuant to the LEP Policies.

The contents of this letter neither constitute nor suggest any accusation or admission of wrongdoing on the part of the NCPD, or any violation of any laws, regulations or administrative pronouncements applicable to the NCPD. While the NCPD is fully committed to maintaining an effective language access plan, should future budget, resource or personnel constraints arise, the NCPD will meet with the OAG to discuss the relevant constraints and to identify alternative and/or cost-effective LEP policies.

**NASSAU COUNTY
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

By: 
Thomas V. Dale, Commissioner
Nassau County Police Department
1490 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, New York 11501

Date: 1/29/13

**ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF
THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

By: 
Kristen Clarke
Civil Rights Bureau Chief
120 Broadway, 23rd Floor
New York, New York 10271

Date: 2/4/13