

STATE OF NEVADA

Joe Lombardo
Governor



PHYSICAL THERAPY BOARD

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LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

I. Purpose and Authority

Access to language services is a vital aspect of ensuring equal access to government services and fostering better engagement. Effective communication enables residents to confidently interact with local government staff across various agencies. This is particularly crucial for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) or those for whom English is not their first language.

The State of Nevada, through Nevada Revised Chapter 232 and federal guidance on Title VI addresses the barriers that persons with limited English proficiency face in accessing governmental programs and services.

Persons with LEP require and deserve meaningful, timely access to government services in their preferred language. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the government to provide that access:

State and local agencies and entities that receive public money have an obligation to provide meaningful, timely access for persons with limited English proficiency to the programs and services of those agencies and entities.

The Nevada Physical Therapy Board (NVPTB) is committed to complying with NRS 232.0081 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 2 C.S. § 561 et seq. (Act 172 of

2006) to ensure meaningful access to State services and programs for individuals with limited English proficiency.

The purpose of this Language Access Plan (LAP) is to establish a reasonable and effective plan and protocol when providing services to or interacting with individuals who have limited English proficiency. Following this Plan and protocol will ensure the NVPTB is inclusive of persons with LEP as it strives to meet its mission and statutory requirements to protect the public interest by ensuring that only competent physical therapists and physical therapist assistants are licensed in the state of Nevada.

II. General Policy

The NVPTB recognizes that the population eligible for its services may include LEP individuals, and is committed to ensuring meaningful access. The NVPTB will adopt the following policies and procedures to ensure that LEP individuals can gain equal access to the services the Board provides and regulates.

It is Nevada's policy to grant access to services or programs to every person regardless of their ability to speak, understand, read, or write English. The NVPTB intends to take all reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals with meaningful access to its services and programs. The NVPTB seeks to reduce barriers by increasing its capacity to deliver services and benefits to people in their preferred languages.

The NVPTB endorses the following policies:

- The NVPTB is committed to equity and will take all reasonable steps to provide LEP individuals meaningful access to all its services, programs, and activities.
- NVPTB staff at the initial points of contact have the specific duty to identify and record language needs.
- The NVPTB, rather than the LEP individual, bears the responsibility for providing appropriate language services, regardless of the LEP individual's preferred language, at no cost to the LEP individual.
- The use of informal interpreters such as family, friends of the person seeking service, or other customers is not allowed. Minor children are prohibited from acting as interpreters.

- NVPTB staff may not suggest or require that persons with LEP provide an interpreter to receive agency services.

NVPTB Language Access Coordinator:

Executive Director

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III. Profile of NVPTB Clients

Preliminary assessments indicate that the NVPTB has a limited LEP constituency. The Board's primary role is to license and regulate physical therapists and physical therapist assistants. All applicants must fulfill eligibility requirements including English language proficiency and the passing of a national physical therapy examination, which is available exclusively in US English.

The NVPTB currently collects limited demographic information from applicants for licensure; however demographic information does not include LEP status, whether the applicant identifies as indigenous or as a refugee. The NVPTB has no known request for language accommodations over the last ten years. The NVPTB will periodically carry out demographic surveys that include questions regarding the preferred language(s) of applicants and licensees. This is to better evaluate language access requirements and to ascertain if an individual identifies as Indigenous or as a refugee.

The NVPTB is committed to tracking the preferred languages for communication with individuals with LEP so that we can provide meaningful, timely access to NVPTB services, assistance, and programs without regard to language impediments.

The preferred language of the public and individuals receiving services from the Board is US English. The primary content used by NVPBT customers is the telephone, website, and email communications. The website will be updated to include a phone number and email address for person(s) with LEP to contact if they require access in a language other than English.

IV. Language Access Services and Procedures

The NVPTB does not have staff who can provide language assistance services.

The NVPTB does not have any known LEP applicants or licensees. It is unknown if any applicants or licensees identify as Indigenous or refugees. The NVPTB has never received a request for translation, American Sign Language services, support, or assistance from persons with LEP.

Language access needs will be addressed in the following manner:

All staff will be made aware of appropriate language services. The NVPTB will document requests for language accessibility to monitor requests and responses by the agency.

The NVPTB will take steps to publicize the availability of language access services on the ptboard.nv.gov website. Those seeking services may also request language assistance by contacting the Board by email which is posted on the Board's website. If the need arises, NVPTB will utilize one of the active statewide contracts for translation and interpreter services offered by the state, which can be found here: https://purchasing.nv.gov/Contracts/Documents/Translation_Interpretation/

Staff Training Policies and Procedures

The NVPTB will ensure that its staff are familiar with this LAP. Staff will inform the Language Access Coordinator if language access services are requested. The Language Access Coordinator will periodically remind staff about the LAP and the agency's responsibility to provide language access if requested.

NVPTB will provide resources for staff to improve their cultural competency and ability to work with diverse groups by utilizing educational materials and tools including the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Cultural Literacy Strategies website – <https://dhhs.nv.gov/Programs/CHA/MH/Toolkit/culturalliteracystrategies/>.

V. Implementing The Language Access Services

To achieve the objectives of this Plan, the Language Access Coordinator will provide staff with the necessary training to ensure they are familiar with the Language Access Plan and associated policies. The training will include:

- Responding to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals via phone, in writing, or, in person.
- Utilizing internal or state-approved language access resources for assistance.

- Recording the communication method and language preference of LEP individuals to better meet their service needs and guarantee equitable access during their engagement with NVPTB.
- Reporting such interactions to the Language Access Coordinator.

In addition, the NVPTB will use internal and state-sanctioned resources to provide information in languages other than English.

VI. Evaluation of and Recommendations for the Language Access Plan

The NVPBT is committed to providing our limited English-proficient individuals full access to our services and is committed to monitoring the policies and procedures stated above to ensure that limited English proficiency Nevadans receive equitable access to Board services.

The Language Access Coordinator will continue to develop and monitor this plan and update it biennially based on applicant data, documented language accommodation requests by staff, and demographic information gathered from surveys and public feedback. Additionally, the NVPTB will track any expenses incurred by using external, state-approved resources.

The NVPTB is exempt from the State Budget Act; all expenses are covered by fees collected from licensed professionals.

Suggested Legislative Amendments

NVBPT proposes that certain agencies be considered for exemption from maintaining a Language Access Plan. Smaller agencies and independent regulatory Boards that cannot provide language access roles could benefit from a shared State-assigned liaison to provide those duties for multiple smaller agencies and State Boards on an as-needed basis, similar to an assigned Deputy Attorney General (DAG).