

LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Alexandria City Policy stipulates that City departments should ensure that Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) receive the language assistance necessary to allow meaningful access to services offered by City departments. Library staff should assist Persons with Limited English Proficiency in securing Library cards and signing up for Library computers. Any other assistance that uses non-Library staff to assist in translation may violate a patron's expectation of privacy or confidentiality as stated by our privacy policy.

If a person with Limited English Proficiency appears to want to secure a Library card, staff can try to guess the language spoken and find a staff member within their building who speaks their language. If this does not work, staff can display a Language Identification Card supplied by Language Line, the City's translation vendor, and have the LEP person identify his or her spoken language. Library staff can either locate a staff member who speaks the language within the four Library branches (see "Languages Spoken at Alexandria Library" located at service desks) or call Language Line.

Patron Surveys written in English will ask patrons "What languages do you speak?" and "What languages do you read?" Patron Surveys should also be available in Spanish, which is the second most spoken language in Alexandria. Documents on securing a Library card (Welcome to the Library brochure and library card registration forms) and on using our computers will be made available in Spanish.

The Library is NOT responsible for explaining how to use Library computers to LEP patrons other than how to sign up for one. The Library will not use staff or call Language Line to have books or webpages read to LEP patrons nor have classes, or other programs translated.

LEP patrons can only be told directly by Library staff which titles of books or other Library materials are overdue or checked out on their accounts. Using a translator not employed by the Library places the patron's privacy in jeopardy.

Library staff that is asked to translate must be at work though not necessarily in the same building as the LEP person he or she has been asked to translate for. Translating for an LEP person can be considered another duty as assigned in each Library employee's job description; however, no staff member should be forced to translate, to translate for any other City department, or be called at home to translate. The name of the translating staff member can only be given by the translating staff member if he or she chooses to give it.

Procedures on how to call Language Line and how to use Language Line's Language Identification Cards are on the Identification Cards located at service desks.

Adopted 4/04, Reviewed 1/05