

REVISED LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

(2/12/2015, Amended in Committee)

[Administrative Code - Language Access Requirements for Departments]

Ordinance amending the Administrative Code to expand the scope of the Language Access Ordinance to apply to all City Departments that provide information or services directly to the public, revise complaint procedures, and enhance the annual departmental compliance plan requirement.

Existing Law

Chapter 91 of the Administrative Code sets forth language access requirements for all departments. The Language Access Ordinance requires City departments that are classified as Tier 1 departments to translate written materials that provide vital information to the public about the departments services or programs. Departments that are classified as Tier 2 departments are required to translate all publicly posted documents.

The threshold limit for determining whether a City department is required to provide language services in a language other than English is determined by either 10,000 City residents or 5 percent of those persons who use the department's services.

Tier 1 departments are required to submit an Annual Compliance Plan to the Mayor's Office, the Immigrant Rights Commission, and Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA).

Amendments to Current Law

This legislation would abandon the Tier 1 and Tier 2 department classification and expand the scope of the Language Access Ordinance to apply to all City departments that provide information or services directly to the public. Former Tier 2 departments would be required to comply with new translation requirements by July 2016.

This legislation would no longer require City departments to determine whether 5 percent of those who use their services speak another language other than English. The threshold limit for determining whether a City department is required to provide language services in a language other than English is 10,000 City residents who share who speak another language other than English.

This legislation would require OCEIA to provide notice to City departments and the public before certifying a new language.

This legislation would require City departments to make good faith efforts to translate publicly posted signage providing information about the department's services and programs. Departments could prioritize translation of written materials by giving the highest priority to materials that affect public safety and critical services.

This legislation would revise the complaint process to set forth a timeline for resolving complaints.

This legislation would revise the Annual Compliance Plan to clarify the information that would be useful in evaluating Language Access Services. Former Tier 1 departments would file Annual Compliance Plans beginning in October 2015, and former Tier 2 departments would file Annual Compliance Plan beginning in October 2016.

This legislation sets forth the responsibilities of City departments, OCEIA, and the Immigrant Rights Commission in complying with this Ordinance.

Background Information

This legislative digest reflects amendments adopted by the Rules Committee on February 12, 2015.

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