



Alaska Institute for Justice

Language Access Plan

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Alaska Institute for Justice

First Language Access Plan and Policies developed in 2007
Revised August 2016

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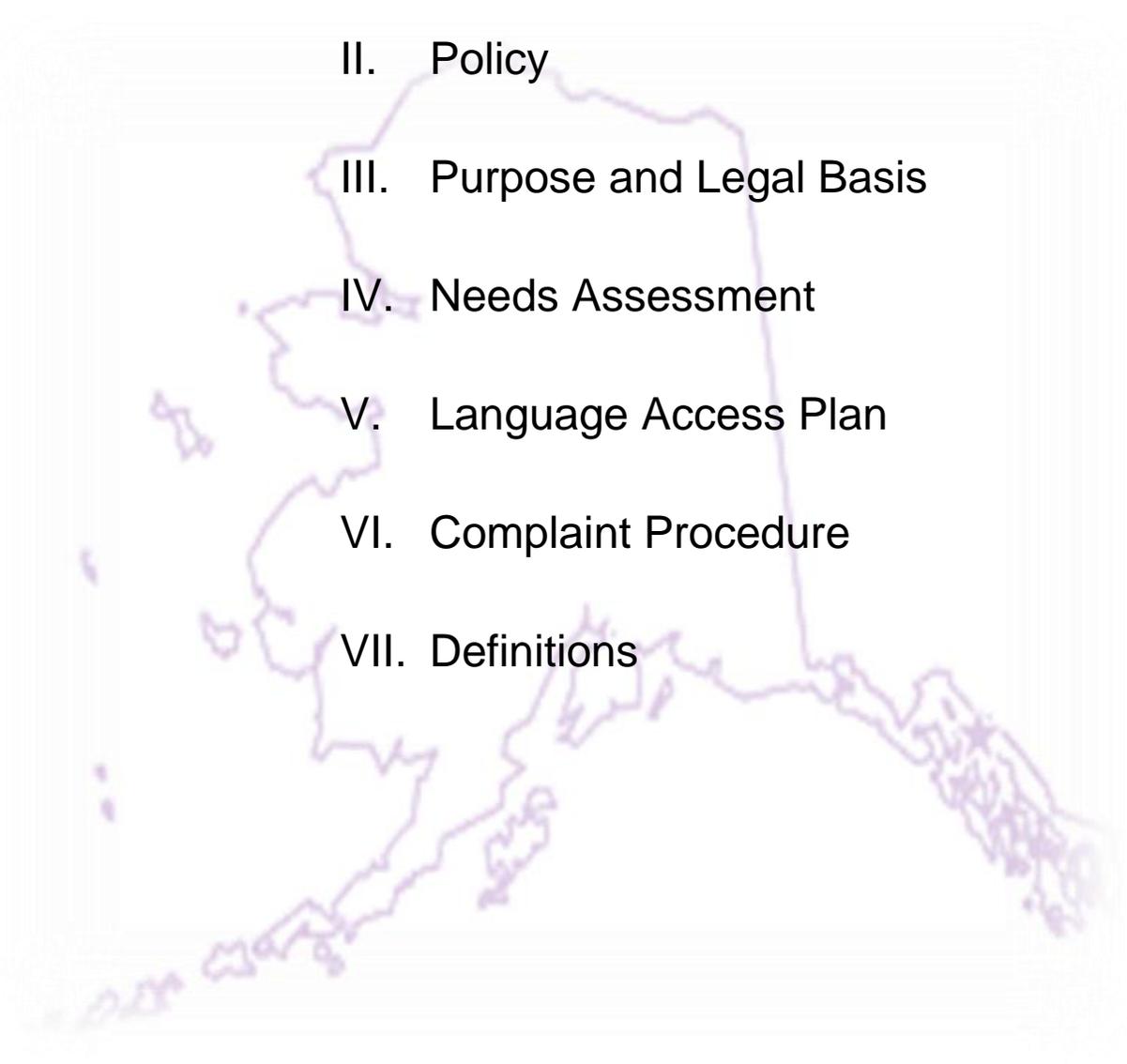
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Effective Language Access Policy Directives and Implementation Plans Include:¹



¹ https://www.lep.gov/resources/2011_Language_Access_Assessment_and_Planning_Tool.pdf

I. Introduction

The Alaska Institute for Justice (AIJ) houses three programs: Alaska Immigration Justice Project; Language Interpreter Center; and Research and Policy Institute. Founded in 2005, the Alaska Institute for Justice, formerly named 'Alaska Immigration Justice Project', made the decision to open the Language Interpreter Center in 2007 to ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) Alaskans could receive professional interpreter services when accessing medical, legal and social service resources, including legal services provided by Alaska Immigration Justice Project staff. The Language Interpreter Center has three goals: 1) train bilingual Alaskans on the ethics, roles and responsibilities of interpreting; 2) provide a referral service for trained interpreters to work with medical, legal and social service professionals; and 3) train medical, legal and social service professionals on the ethics, roles and responsibilities of working with interpreters. Prior to opening the Language Interpreter Center, there was no Alaska-based interpreter training program to ensure that bilingual Alaskans understood the roles, responsibilities and ethics of interpreting. In addition, there was no Alaska-based interpreter referral service.

II. Policy

The Alaska Institute for Justice takes all reasonable steps to ensure the provision of timely and meaningful language access to limited-English-proficient (LEP) Alaskans and deaf or hard-of-hearing Alaskans seeking services through the Alaska Institute for Justice. The Alaska Institute for Justice identifies and informs these individuals that language assistance services are available.

III. Purpose and Legal Basis

The purpose of this Language Access Plan (LAP) is to provide guidance to AIJ staff to ensure equal access to the services provided by the Alaska Institute for Justice for LEP individuals and individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. AIJ provides language access for LEP individuals and individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing because AIJ's mission is to protect and promote the human rights of all Alaskans. AIJ's Language Access Plan is a critical component of this mission and ensures that all Alaskans have access to the services provided by AIJ. AIJ also receives federal funding and must ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. National origin discrimination includes not providing services to LEP people.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, provides specifically that no person shall "on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Non-compliance with Title VI can jeopardize a program's federal funding. Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rather than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

IV. Needs Assessment

The Alaska Institute for Justice followed the Department of Justice four-factor guidelines to determine AIJ's language needs and development of a Language Access Plan to provide clients with timely and meaningful access to its services.

Statewide in Alaska:

According to demographics from the US Census American Community Survey 2010-2014 **about 109,156 (16.2%) people in Alaska do not speak English at home.** Approximately **33,948 (31.1%)** of those people do not speak English "very well."² These people are unable to access services at organizations that do not have a language access plan. Each community in Alaska is diverse and each community has different language needs.

Subject	Alaska					
	Total		Percent of specified language speakers			
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Speak English "very well"		Speak English less than "very well"	
			Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Population 5 years and over	673,802	+/-150	95.0%	+/-0.2	5.0%	+/-0.2
Speak only English	83.8%	+/-0.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Speak a language other than English	16.2%	+/-0.4	68.9%	+/-1.1	31.1%	+/-1.1
Spanish or Spanish Creole	3.3%	+/-0.2	73.5%	+/-2.6	26.5%	+/-2.6
Other Indo-European languages	2.4%	+/-0.2	77.8%	+/-3.3	22.2%	+/-3.3
Asian and Pacific Island languages	5.4%	+/-0.2	54.0%	+/-2.5	46.0%	+/-2.5
Other languages	5.1%	+/-0.2	77.7%	+/-1.3	22.3%	+/-1.3
PERCENT IMPUTED						
Language status	3.6%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Language status (speak a language other than English)	3.0%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Ability to speak English	3.6%	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

Table 1: Alaska -Language Spoken at Home, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates²

² <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages>

Enter "Alaska;" select "Origins and Languages" tab at left; select link "Language Spoken at Home"

Anchorage:

One out of ten (**28,754 or 10.42%**) of Anchorage residents are immigrants. Although immigration status is not equivalent to limited English proficiency, recognizing the percentage of immigrants residing in Anchorage provides important information regarding the language access needs of Anchorage residents. According to the United States Census Bureau, **48,852 or 17.7%** of Anchorage residents 5 years old and up speak a language other than English at home³. The Anchorage School District is Alaska’s largest school district serving 48,447 students. The Anchorage School District demographics demonstrates the city’s language diversity. In 2015, more than **5,745** students who speak **99** different languages are served in the English Language Learner program.⁴

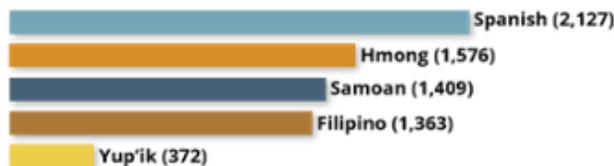
Subject	Anchorage Municipality, Alaska									
	Total		Native		Foreign born		Foreign born; Naturalized citizen		Foreign born; Not a U.S. citizen	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH										
Population 5 years and over	275,999	*****	247,245	+/-1,395	28,754	+/-1,395	16,102	+/-1,092	12,652	+/-1,187
English only	82.3%	+/-0.7	89.9%	+/-0.6	16.4%	+/-1.8	20.1%	+/-2.4	11.7%	+/-2.5
Language other than English	17.7%	+/-0.7	10.1%	+/-0.6	83.6%	+/-1.8	79.9%	+/-2.4	88.3%	+/-2.5
Speak English less than "very well"	6.2%	+/-0.4	1.6%	+/-0.3	45.3%	+/-2.3	39.2%	+/-2.8	53.1%	+/-3.7

Table 2: Anchorage -Language Spoken at Home, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates³



Non-English languages spoken

Most ASD families — 80 percent — speak English at home. The remaining 20 percent speak 99 languages. As of October 2014, there were 5,745 students eligible for English Language Learner services. The most frequent languages spoken by those students were:



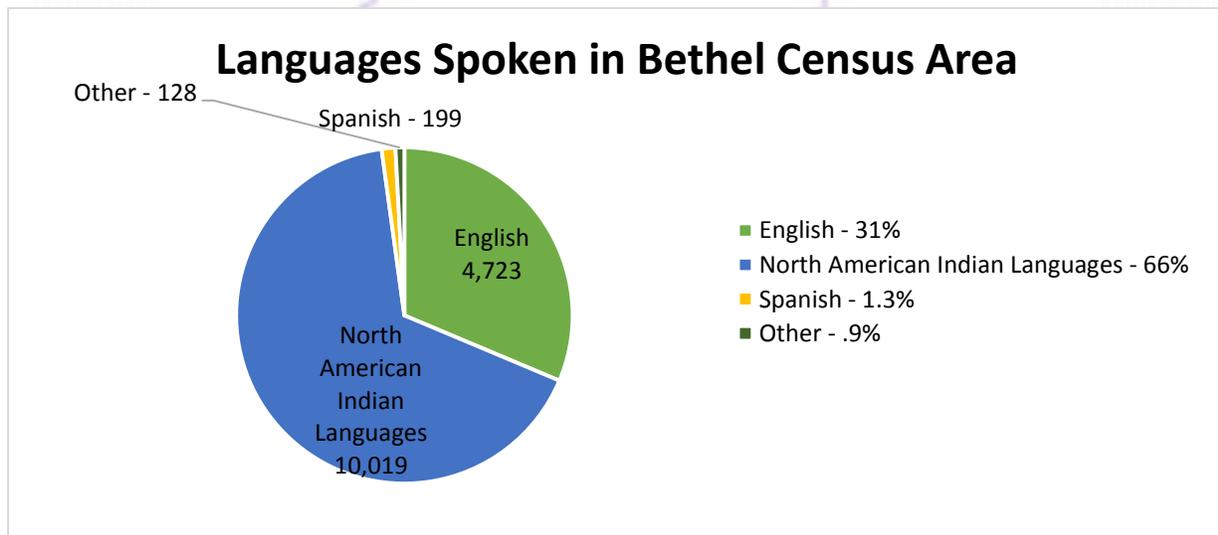
Graph 1: Anchorage School District English Language Learner Program, December 2015⁴

³ <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages> Enter "Anchorage Municipality;" select "Want more?" link at bottom; select table titled "Selected Characteristics of the Native and Foreign-Born Populations, 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates"

⁴ <http://www.asdk12.org/aboutasd/>

Bethel Census Area

The 2010-2014 US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates indicate that about 29% of the population of the Bethel Census Area speaks English less than “very well.”⁵ This means that one out of every four people speaks English less than “very well.”⁵ Central Alaskan Yup’ik is spoken in Southwest Alaska from the Bristol Bay to Norton Sound. Yup’ik has the largest body of speakers of any Native language in Alaska, with 10,400 native speakers. It is one of the only Alaska Native languages still being spoken by children (in some communities) as a first language.⁶



Graph 2: Bethel, Alaska-Language Spoken at Home, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates⁷

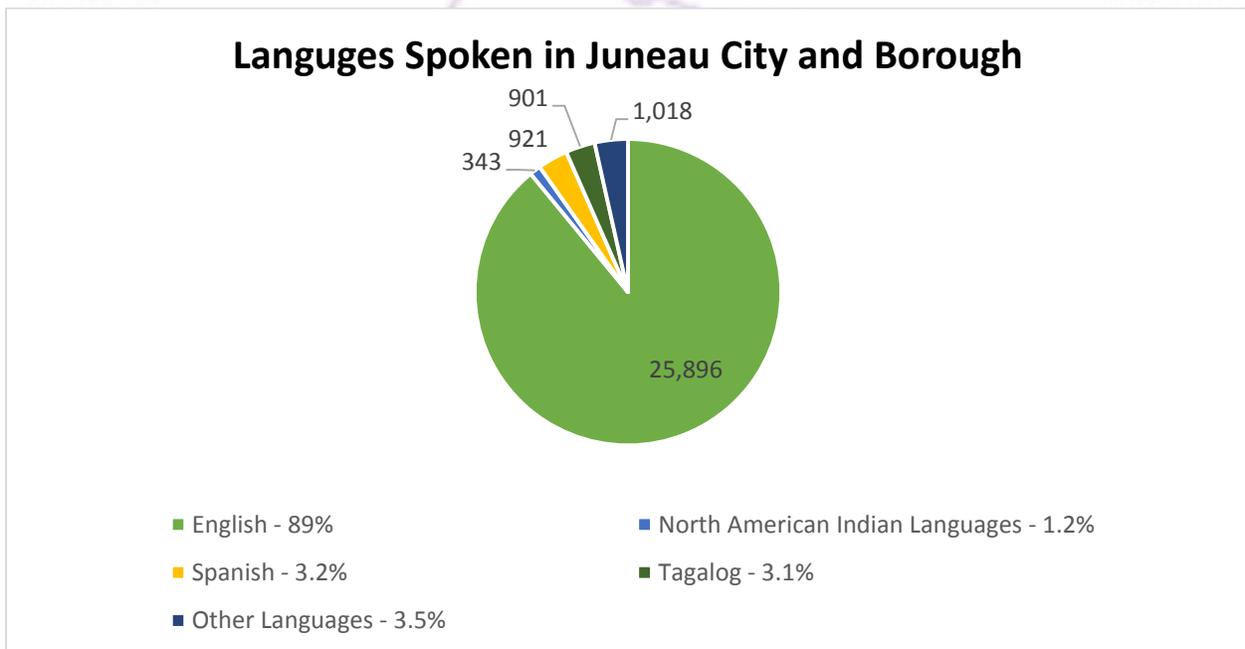
⁵ http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml Enter “Bethel, Alaska;” select “Origins and Languages” tab at left; select link “Language Spoken at Home”

⁶ <http://www.alaskanativelanguages.org/#!centralalaskanyupik/ljyw3>

⁷ https://apps.mla.org/map_data Under “County” section select state pull down “Alaska;” select county pull down “Bethel (CA);” select year “2010”

Juneau

According to the 2010-2014 US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates about 3,083 people in Juneau do not speak English at home.⁸ About 2,230 people living in Juneau were born outside of the United States.⁹ Tlingit is spoken in Southeast Alaska from Yakutat to Ketchikan and by Inland Tlingit speakers in Canada.¹⁰



Graph 3: Juneau, Alaska-Language Spoken at Home, U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates⁸

⁸ http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml Enter "Juneau City and Borough, Alaska;" select "Origins and Languages" tab at left; select link "Language Spoken at Home"

⁹ http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml Enter "Juneau City and Borough, Alaska;" select "Origins and Languages" tab at left; see "Foreign Born Population" at top of page

¹⁰ <http://www.alaskanativelanguages.org/#!tlingit/qce0s>

V. Language Access Plan

The Alaska Institute for Justice has established the following Language Access Plan to ensure meaningful and timely language access to serve LEP individuals in our community. The Language Access Plan will:

1. Identify LEP individuals
2. Provide language assistance
3. Provide written notice of language assistance availability
4. Train staff
5. Monitor and update Language Access Plan

1. Identifying LEP Individuals

AIJ staff have contact with limited-English-proficient (LEP) individuals at the office with and without appointments, at community events, over the phone and through contacts from the Alaska Institute for Justice website . The following methods are used to identify and determine the appropriate form of language assistance:

- Translated signage stating: “I need an interpreter” is displayed in the front office. Signage is translated into Arabic, Farsi, Hmong, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Nepali, Nuer, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, and Yup’ik.
- “I Speak” Language Identification Guides are available at the front office and in every office. These include many languages, such as Arabic, Farsi, Hmong, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Nepali, Nuer, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Yup’ik, and other languages
- The LEP individual may self-identify as LEP by asking for an interpreter and telling what language he/she speaks.
- If available, multilingual AIJ staff may assist to determine the LEP’s preferred language.
- When encountering an LEP individual telephonically, AIJ staff uses multilingual staff to establish immediate contact or telephonic interpreter services through Telelanguage language services. (See AIJ Staff Language Access Procedures for more information.)
- AIJ utilizes a case management system to track interpreter needs – this allows other employees who encounter the LEP individual to know immediately if interpreter services are needed.

2. Providing Language Assistance

After determining that a person is limited-English-proficient or deaf or hard-of-hearing, AIJ staff will take appropriate steps to procure the language assistance needed. Language assistance for

LEP individuals is provided through oral interpretation and written translation. Sign language interpretation is provided for deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals. AIJ currently uses the AIJ Language Interpreter Center for in-person and telephonic interpretation and translation services. Multilingual staff who have completed oral proficiency language screening and interpreter training provide interpreter services for AIJ staff, if needed. If an AIJ staff member is not available or does not have the appropriate language skill, AIJ staff contact Telelanguage language services, private contract oral language interpreters or sign language interpreters.

Oral Language Services

An oral language interpreter is a trained professional who converts a message, thought, or expression from the source language into a message, thought, or expression in a target language either simultaneously or consecutively after one party has finished speaking. All interpreters hired by AIJ are trained through the Language Interpreter Center, or another qualified interpretation service provider. Family members, friends, and children should **never** be used for interpretation services with an LEP individual.

Face-to-face Interpretation: A face-to-face interpreter should be used for appointments that have been scheduled in advance, and involve the LEP individual coming into the office or a pre-determined location to receive services.

Telephonic Interpretation: Telephonic interpretation is done over the phone in emergency situations or when no face-to-face interpreter is available. AIJ will access a telephonic interpreter through the Language Interpreter Center or multilingual staff. If the Language Interpreter Center interpreter or multilingual staff person is not available, AIJ staff will use Telelanguage language services or a private contracted interpreter.

Sign Language Services

A sign language interpreter is a trained professional who facilitates communication and conveys all auditory and signed information so that both deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may fully interact with hearing individuals. Sign language interpreters can be in-person, or digitally present through video remote interpreting. AIJ staff will contract with a private interpreter for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Written Language Services

Translation is the written rewording of words or text in the source language to the target language, while keeping the same meaning. Translations should be completed only through qualified agencies such as the Language Interpreter Center or the American Translators Association.

- AIJ has translated legal service agreements, consent forms and questionnaires in Spanish, Tagalog, Russian and Korean.
- AIJ's website is translated into Korean, Chinese, French, Russian, Spanish and Tagalog.
- AIJ provides translation for clients who have written documents in need of translation.
- AIJ uses sight translation when written documents need to be translated into the client's language or when the documents are written in the client's language and need to be translated into English for AIJ staff.

3. Training Staff

- AIJ's Language Access Plan is distributed to all staff.
- Staff new to AIJ will have a language access orientation. During the orientation, new staff will review the Language Access Plan. Included in the orientation will be information on how to identify language access needs of LEP individuals, instructions on accessing interpreter and translation services and understanding the role and ethics of a professional interpreter.
- All AIJ staff will have language access training once a year. During the language access training staff will contribute suggestions for enhancing or changing the Language Access Plan.

Training workshops available through the Language Interpreter Center:

- **Working with Interpreters**
This workshop provides an overview of the roles, ethics, and responsibilities of a trained interpreter and provides tips for AIJ staff on how to work with interpreters. This is a required workshop for all AIJ staff.
- **Multilingual Worker/Interpreter Training**
This workshop explains the roles, ethics, and responsibilities of a trained interpreter and the difference between the roles, ethics, and responsibilities of a multilingual worker.

Only employees who have completed this training will be authorized to interpret when an in-person interpreter or telephonic interpreter is unavailable.

- Additional language assistance training may be available depending on AIJ staff needs.

4. Monitoring and Updating Language Access Plan

AIJ assigns an employee to be the Language Access Coordinator for the office. The Language Access Coordinator is in charge of the following; 1) orientation of new employees to the Language Access Plan, 2) provide and/or coordinate annual language access training for all AIJ employees, 3) monitor, evaluate and update AIJ's Language Access Plan and make recommendations to the executive director based on staff input.

AIJ's Language Access Plan is reviewed on an annual basis and updated as needed. AIJ will review annual statistics gathered through an internal tracking system for language assistance requests in order to revise and update the existing Language Access Plan. AIJ will consider the following items when reviewing the Language Access Plan:

- Has there been a significant change in the demographics or language needs of the LEP population served by AIJ based on language assistance requests?
- Are there any additional vital documents that will require translation?
- Has staff received an adequate amount of training? Are there new multilingual employees who should receive the multilingual worker/interpreter workshop?
- Have there been any complaints or issues regarding language assistance in the past year?

VI. Complaint Procedure

Any LEP individual has the right to file a complaint against AIJ if the individual feels that his/her rights to meaningful language access have not been met by AIJ. AIJ shall take all reasonable steps to investigate each complaint and inform LEP individuals about the availability of complaint forms.

All complaints alleging a violation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act or the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act should be referred to the AIJ Language Access Coordinator. The Language Access Coordinator will investigate all complaints with regard to Title VI noncompliance. The Language Access Coordinator will inform the LEP individual of its determination of compliance or noncompliance. If the determination is noncompliance, the coordinator will inform the LEP

individual of the steps that will be taken to correct the noncompliance. If the individual is not satisfied with the findings, they may appeal to the Alaska State Commission for Human Rights.

VII. Definitions

Consecutive Interpreting: The interpreter waits for the speaker to finish a sentence or idea in the source language, and then interprets the speaker's words into the target language.

Certified Court Interpreter: An interpreter who has passed the National Center for State Courts written exam and oral exam, and has demonstrated the ability to interpret consecutively, simultaneously, and sight translate while maintaining language accuracy.

Interpretation: The facilitating of oral or sign-language communication, either simultaneously or consecutively, between users of different languages, while retaining the same meaning with accuracy.

Language Assistance Services: Oral, written, and sign language services needed to assist LEP or deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to communicate effectively with staff in order to provide meaningful language access.

Limited English Proficient (LEP): An individual whose primary language is not English, and has a limited ability to speak, read, write, or understand English.

Meaningful Language Access: Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication.

Certified Medical Interpreter: An interpreter who has passed either the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI) test or the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters (NBCMI) exams.

Multilingual Employee: A staff member who has demonstrated oral proficiency in English and any other languages he/she may speak.

Qualified Language Interpreter: An interpreter who has successfully completed training from a professional language service provider, such as the Language Interpreter Center.

Sight Translation: The oral reading of a text by an interpreter from the source language into the target language while retaining the same meaning with accuracy.

Simultaneous Interpreting: The interpreter begins to interpret a sentence or idea into the target language as it is being spoken in the source language.

Source Language: The language from which the text or spoken word is to be translated or interpreted.

Target Language: The language into which the text or spoken word is to be translated or interpreted.

Translation: The conversion of written text from one language into another, while still retaining the same meaning with accuracy.