



Information Update – Limited English Proficiency – Requirements, Policies, and Next Steps

To: Chair and Board of Directors
Through: President/CEO Inez P. Evans
From: 2022 Peterson Fellow Grace Olsen
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BACKGROUND:

I performed a review of other transit agency LEP plans, sampling twenty different agencies and their strategies for encounters with LEP individuals. The most common strategy includes the translation of vital public documents and media releases. Other strategies are mostly equal with a reliance on bilingual employees; contracted-out language assistance, translation, and interpretation; language identification cards; and staff training on LEP strategies.

The places that IndyGo can go above and beyond are the strategies that are unique and not common among agencies. For example, Kansas City, MO, and Michigan's DOT have culminated a directory of all bilingual employees that can easily be contacted if language assistance is needed. Other methods include destination cards and picture books (St. Cloud, MN). There is disagreement about the use of informal translators. Hill Co., TX states that an LEP person may use an informal interpreter, but in Dallas Co., TX, informal interpreters are discouraged beyond use in an emergency. Phoenix, AZ has many above-and-beyond methods including translated direct mailers, not just translations available upon request or online. Similarly, they also have multi-lingual ticket vending machines, including extra accessibility measures such as Braille translations.

I found that IndyGo can improve to better serve LEP populations. For employees, there are no LEP-specific orientation and training materials. HR is in the process of converting current operator new hire materials into online formats with the opportunity to translate into other languages in the future for ESL candidates. Providing detailed LEP strategy training as well as translated orientation documents would provide a more inclusive environment for English-Speaking and LEP employees alike.

Further, IndyGo could replicate some of the unique strategies from my review. These include a directory, visual destination cards, and more translated documents. This could include the utilization of existing programs such as the Transit Ambassador program. This provides an opportunity to aid immigrants and LEP individuals in understanding the program through individualized methods.

Overall, small steps could be taken by IndyGo to be more accommodating to LEP individuals. For example, to remove the intimidation that an LEP individual may experience when approaching someone who does not appear to be bilingual, steps could be taken to make bilingual employees more identifiable. One possibility is through a nametag add-on to identify languages spoken. This is just one small move IndyGo could make to better serve LEP populations.

The full report can be found [here](#).

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the report.

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